بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

يَرْفَعِ اللّٰهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مِنْكُمْ

وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ

**Allah exalts those of you who
believe and those who are given
knowledge to high ranks**

Holy Qur'ān (58 : 11)

Aims and Objectives

1. To provide a forum for scholars to make analytical studies of Islamic topics and themes.

2. To advance the cause of better understanding of the Qur'ān and the *Ahl al-Bayt*'s (*'a*) contribution to Islam.

3. To publish English translations of Arabic and Persian works of Muslim scholars.

4. To endeavor to find Islamic answers to questions relating to the social, political, and moral problems of today.

* * * * *

Scholars and writers from all over the world are invited to contribute to this journal.

Manuscripts should be typed double-spaced on one side of the page. (Standards: A4 or 8.5″ × 11″.)

References and notes should be listed at the end of the article and should contain complete bibliographical information.

Books and other items sent to the journal for review are welcomed.

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SYSTEM OF TRANSLITERATION
OF ARABIC CHARACTERS

CONSONANTS :

ء	'		ز	z		ق	q
ب	b		س	s		ك	k
ت	t		ش	sh		ل	l
ث	th		ص	ṣ		م	m
ج	j		ض	ḍ		ن	n
ح	ḥ		ط	ṭ		هـ	h
خ	kh		ظ	ẓ		و	w
د	d		ع	'		ى	y
ذ	dh		غ	gh			
ر	r		ف	f			

VOWELS :

Long: ا ā   Short : ـَ a   Doubled : ـيّ iyy (final from ī)

آ Ā   ـُ u   ـوّ uww (final from ū)

و ū   ـِ i   Diphthongs : ـَو au or aw

ي ī   ـَى ay or ai

Contents

Is the *Ta'wīl* of the Qur'ān Known Only to God?

Bahā' al-Dīn Khorramshāhī

This question, which has been posed by Muslims since the era of the revelation of the Qur'ān, has been answered in two ways. Most scholars of the Ahl al-Sunnah believe that the *ta'wīl* of the Qur'ān, that is, its inner and esoteric meanings and interpretation of ambiguous and difficult verses of the Qur'ān, known as the *mutashābihāt*, are known only to God. Most of Shi'ī scholars and some belonging to the Ahl al-Sunnah and other sects believe that the *ta'wīl* or true interpretation of Qur'ānic *mutashābihāt* is also known to those who have learned knowledge of the scripture and are, as referred to by a Qur'ānic phrase, "firmly grounded in knowledge" (*rāsikhūna fī al-'ilm*). This difference of opinion arises from different readings of the seventh verse of *Sūrah Āl 'Imrān*. Before dealing with the main issue, we must clarify some Qur'ānic terms and related issues. One of these issues is the problem of variant readings. Three terms which are involved here

are *mutashābihāt, ta'wīl,* and *rāsikhūna fī al-'ilm,* which we shall try to clarify in the course of this article to the extent that is sufficient and necessary.

Variant Readings:

In the realm of human languages, there is no script pertaining to any of the well-known languages that may perfectly represent the sounds of that language as pronounced by its fluent speakers. Nowadays, most dictionaries give pronunciation of words before describing their meanings. Obviously, the written form of words does not often indicate their precise phonetic form and pronunciation. All scripts have certain inadequacies and defects which give rise to possibility of error in reading and writing. The Arabic-Persian script is basically the original script of the Qur'ān, which was first written in the Kufic hand. Later on it developed into *Naskh* and, in Iran, grew into *Nasta'līq.* In the Kufic script there are several letters or groups of them which are distinguished from one another only by diacritical marks which were not used in early texts for centuries. Even later when their use acquired currency the possibility of error in writing and reading remained and continues to remain to the present day. It is for such reasons, as well as due to the innate or past inadequacies of some scripts, such as the absence of written signs for vowels, for instance, that there arose the problem of variant readings, especially in ancient texts. Such a problem has existed even in more recent texts such as the Dīwān of Ḥāfiẓ[3] which pertains to the 8th/14th or 9th/15th century and is in fact eight or nine centuries younger than the Qur'ān. Following are some examples out of scores of cases where variant readings exist in the collection of the poems of Ḥāfiẓ *muhayyā/ muhannā; tajammul/ taḥammul, qiṣṣeh/ woṣleh; Shaykh -e Jām/ shaykh-e khām.*

With greater reason the same problem of variant readings rose in the case of the Holy Qur'ān in the early era due to several

difficulties such as the absence of the diacritical point and other diacritical marks as well the absence of signs of punctuation and a scientific tradition of writing and related rules. Given these factors, it was impossible for such a problem not to have arisen and it was actually their natural product. Differences of readings arose during the lifetime of the Prophet (ṣ) also. The tradition of *sab'ah aḥruf* (lit. seven letters, meaning that the Qur'ān could be recited with seven acceptable readings) refers to the same matter. The collection and compilation of the first Qur'ānic codex (*muṣḥaf-e imām*), a task whose beginnings date back to the time of the Messenger of God (ṣ), was completed during the rule of 'Uthmān with his efforts and at the participation of a number of eminent Companions consisting of the scribes of the Qur'ān and some *ḥuffāẓ*, who had memorized the Qur'ān by heart. With the utmost care and precision that was possible during that era of Islamic history, the official version of the scripture of Islam was prepared in several copies some years before the end of 'Uthmān's caliphate around the year 28 of Ḥijrah. One of the copies was kept at Madinah, another at Makkah, and four or five others were sent to important parts of the Islamic world, including Kūfah, Baṣrah, Syria, and Baḥrain, each accompanied with a *qārī* and expert of the Qur'ānic text. The oral tradition of recitation of the Qur'ān existed from the times of the Prophet (ṣ) and it continues to the present day. Today there are masters of the art and science of *qirā'ah* whose tradition goes back to the reciters and experts of *qirā'ah* of the early Islamic eras. They are the custodians of the correct reading and recitation of the Holy Qur'ān, and the present-day official versions of the Qur'ān (the Cairo version and the recent Madinah version) have been written under their supervision and care.

In the history of the science of *qirā'ah*, there have been seven readings (which go back to the seven leading qaris, the reading of each of whom has been narrated by two authorities, thus bringing the number of the readings to fourteen) and ten other

readings each of which originated from the most outstanding and oldest experts of Qur'ānic recitation belonging to the early centuries of Islamic history. There are many reliable books which record these differences of readings, including *Al-Qirā'āt al-Sab'* by Ibn Mujāhid (d. 324/935), *Al-Taysīr fī al-Qirā'āt al-Sab'* by Abū 'Amr Dānī (d. 444/1052), *Al-Ḥujjah lil-Qurrā' al-Sab'ah* by Abū 'Alī Fārisī (d. 377/987), and *Al-Nashr fī al-Qirā'āt al-'ashr* by Ibn al-Jazarī (d. 833/1428).

To illustrate the character of most of the variant readings pertaining to the sevenfold or the tenfold *qārīs*, we may cite some examples. In the first *sūrah* of the Qur'ān some *qārīs* have read *al-Ḥamd* with *fatḥah* or *kasrah* on the *dāl* (thus reading it *al-Ḥamda* or *al-Ḥamdi* respectively). Or in the same *sūrah*, the phrase *mālik yawm al-dīn* (in which the word *m.l.k* is recorded in the 'Uthmānī script without an *alif*) the word has been read *malaka yawmid-dīn*, *maliki yawmid-dīn*, *mālik yawmid-dīn*, instead of the most prevalent reading *māliki yawmid-dīn* (in accordance with the present-day official versions of the Qur'ān, which are in accordance with the narration of Ḥafṣ from 'Āṣim). The instances of variant readings in the Qur'ān according to Dānī's work, *al-Taysīr*, are about eleven hundred, most of which are of little significance, pertaining, for instance, to the difference of pronouns and changes in verbs from second to third person or vice versa, such as *ya'malūn/ta'malūn*. However, the most important and significant instance of the variance in readings in the entire Qur'ān pertains to the seventh verse of *Sūrah Āl 'Imrān* which we shall discuss in detail.

Mutashābihāt:

One of the branches of Qur'ānic studies pertains to the study of the *muḥkam* and *mutashābih* verses in the Qur'ān. In the same way that the verses of the Qur'ān are divided into Makkan and Madenise, *nāsikh* and *mansūkh* (the abrogating verses and the

verses abrogated; of course, most of Qur'ānic verses are neither *nāsikh* nor *mansūkh*), they are classified into *muḥkam* and *mutashābih*. The term *muḥkam* derives from *iḥkām*, in sense of making firm and strong, and a *muḥkam* word or verse is one whose meaning is clear and without ambiguity and vagueness. In the words of Rāghib Iṣfahānī a *muḥkam* verse is one which is free from ambiguity in respect of wording and meaning such as most of the verses relating to legislation (*āyāt al-aḥkām*), ethics, and moral and spiritual exhortations.

Mutashābih derives from *tashābuh*, meaning similarity, and derives from the same root as *shubhah* (ambiguity, uncertainty, doubt) and *ishtibāh*, meaning making or becoming subject to doubt. According to Rāghib Iṣfahānī a *mutashābih* phrase or verse is one whose literal sense is not the same as its real meaning. According to Shaykh Ṭūsī, a *muḥkam* verse is one whose meaning is understood from its literal import due to its clarity and without the need of any [external] indication, and a *mutashābih* verse is one whose literal meaning does not disclose its actual meaning without recourse to some external guidance and indication.[1] In other words, *mutashābih* refers to texts of an ambiguous character that require interpretation (*ta'wīl*) and have correct as well as wrong interpretations, as is the case with most of the verses of the Qur'ān dealing with the creation, the creation of man, the heavens, the nature of Divine ordaining (*taqdīr*), Divine attributes and acts.[2]

The great majority of Qur'ānic verses are *muḥkam* and a minority, about two hundred, are *mutashābih*.[3] A number of these *mutashābih* verses are those which attribute hands, ears, eyes and a face to God or mention His sitting (*istiwā*) on the Throne ('*arsh*, and both words involve subtle complications) or describe His 'coming' or as capable of being seen. The Qur'ān itself repeatedly refers, expressly or implicitly, to the qualities of *iḥkām* and *tashābuh* in its verses, and the most famous of them is the seventh verse of *Surah Āl 'Imran* under discussion.

A question which naturally arises is as to why basically
there should be any ambiguous and difficult verses in a text like the
Qur'ān with its superb clarity and eloquence. Would it not have
been better if all Qur'ānic verses and passages were *muḥkam*, that
is, clear and free from all ambiguity? In reply it must be said that
the Qur'ān has been revealed in the dress of human language and
speech and in accordance with the normal criteria of linguistic
expression. Human language contains a range of linguistic forms
from simple and ordinary words and expressions to subtle, literary
and artistic metaphorical forms, similes, allegories and parables,
and ambiguity is invariably associated with metaphorical
expression. Zamakhsharī and Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī do not consider the
existence of the *mutashābihāt* as a defect but as a mark of aesthetic
excellence and as being conducive to the development of culture
and science.[4] Imam 'Alī (*'a*) states that the Qur'ān is amenable to
various interpretations[5] and there is a consensus of opinion among
most Qur'ānic specialists, especially the Mu'tazilah and the Shī'ah,
that the *mutashābihāt* are not to be taken in their literal sense but
are to be reinterpreted. Only the literalists and some extremists
among the Ash'arites and Ahl al-Ḥadīth are of the opinion that they
are to be taken in their literal sense. Hence there is the famous
statement of Mālik ibn Anas concerning the meaning of *istiwā* in
relation to God: "The *istiwā'* is known; its character is unknown;
belief in it is obligatory; and any questioning concerning it is
heresy (*bid'ah*)."[6] Among the most important of early works on
the topic of the *ta'wīl* and interpretation of Qur'ānic *mutashābihāt*
is *Mutashābih al-Qur'ān* by Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār Hamadānī (d.
415/1024) the great Mu'tazilī theologian, *Ḥaqā'iq al-Ta'wīl* by
Sharīf Raḍī, the compiler of the *Nahj al-Balāghah* (d. 406/1015),
of which only the fifth volume is extant and has been published,
and *Mutashābih al-Qur'ān wa Mukhtalifuh* by Ibn Shahr Āshūb.

Ta'wīl:

In the same way as the term *mutashābih* was understood in contrast with the term *muḥkam*, *ta'wīl* is also to be understood in contrast with *tafsīr*. The simplest meaning of *tafsīr* is that it is a science of understanding the Qur'ān or explaining the meanings of God's words in the Qur'ān within the limits of human capacity.[7] The word *ta'wīl* derives from awl in the sense of returning and reverting to something.[8] Both *tafsīr* and *ta'wīl* have been used in the Qur'ān in the sense of exposition and explanation (*Furqān*, 32). Muḥammad Hādī Ma'rifat is of the opinion that the word *ta'wīl* occurs seventeen times in the Holy Qur'ān: (1) five times in the sense of the ultimate outcome (*ma'āl*; 4:59; 17:35; 7:35 twice; 10:39); (2) eight times in the sense of interpretation of dreams (12:6, 21, 36, 37, 44, 45, 100, 101), and (3) four times in the sense of interpreting the *mutashābih* (3:7, twice; 18:78, 82).

Some scholars consider *ta'wīl* to mean foregoing the literal meaning of a text for its metaphorical sense without violating the norms of Arabic language for metaphorical usage, and in consonance with metaphorical relations, such as referring to a thing by the name of something similar to it or by its cause or that of something which is closely associated with it.[9] Some have held *ta'wīl* to mean interpretation of *mutashābihāt* and the finding of a second meaning for the text which is called its inward or esoteric sense (*baṭn*) as opposed to its apparent and literal meaning (*ẓahr*).[10] In *tafsīr*, one does not require any indication external to the text for its understanding, including any rational or theoretical explanation. But in *ta'wīl* one stands in need of a clear indication external to the ambiguous text. Some have stated that *tafsīr* relates to denotation (*'ibārat*) while *ta'wīl* relates to connotation (*ishārat*). Muḥammad Ḥusayn Dhahabī, a scholar of the Qur'ān and history of *tafsīr*, writes that *tafsīr* relates to narration (*riwāyah*) and *ta'wīl* to critical study (*dirāyah*).[11] The Qur'ān itself speaks about the necessity of *ta'wīl* and so have the Imams (*'a*), the Companions and Qur'ānic

scholars of later eras. But not everyone is competent to do the
ta'wīl of the Qur'ān and the Qur'ān itself (in accordance with
evidence to be cited) as well as many traditions point out that
erroneous and illegitimate *ta'wīl* is the work of the perplexed
victims of false and misleading creeds. However, a correct and
legitimate *ta'wīl*, which unravels the meanings of the Qur'ānic
mutashābihāt, is the duty of "those who are firmly grounded in
knowledge" (*rāsikhūna fī al-'ilm*), that is, those who are learned in
religion, who follow a correct creed, and understand the subtleties
of language and discourse. Later in this article we will have more
to say about the *rāsikhūn* who know the *ta'wīl* of the Qur'ān.

The Seventh Verse of *Sūrah Āl 'Imrān*:

As pointed out earlier the main topic of this discussion is
the seventh verse of *Sūrah Āl 'Imrān*, which has been the subject of
controversy among the scholars of the Qur'ān since the era of
revelation. That verse is as follows:

هُوَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَنزَلَ عَلَيْكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ مِنْهُ ءَايَٰتٌ مُّحْكَمَٰتٌ هُنَّ أُمُّ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَ أُخَرُ مُتَشَٰبِهَٰتٌ فَأَمَّا
ٱلَّذِينَ فِى قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَٰبَهَ مِنْهُ ٱبْتِغَآءَ ٱلْفِتْنَةِ وَ ٱبْتِغَآءَ تَأْوِيلِهِ وَ مَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْوِيلَهُ
إِلاَّ ٱللَّهُ وَ ٱلرَّٰسِخُونَ فِى ٱلْعِلْمِ يَقُولُونَ ءَامَنَّا بِهِ كُلٌّ مِّنْ عِندِ رَبِّنَا وَ مَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلاَّ أُوْلُوٱ ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ.

*[He it is who has send down upon thee the Book; in it are
clear verses (*muḥkamāt*), which are the mother of the Book, and
others are ambiguous (*mutashābihāt*). Those in whose heart is
sickness follow the ambiguous of them, seeking dissent and seeking
their* ta'wīl, *and none knows their* ta'wīl *except Allah and those
firmly grounded in knowledge. They say, "We believe in it; all is
from our Lord'; yet none remembers but men possessed of minds
(according to the other reading, the translation of the relevant part
of the verse will be as follows: and none knows their* ta'wīl *except
Allah, and those who are firmly grounded in knowledge say, "We
believe in it; all is from our Lord'.]*

The difference between the readings consists of the presence or absence of a halt after the word *Allāh* in the verse. It is the most significant of cases related to variant readings throughout the Qur'ān and in the history of Qur'ānic hermeneutics. Both the readings are justifiable from the viewpoint of grammar and syntax.

1. In the reading involving a halt (*waqf* or *faṣl*) after the word *Allah* (referred hitherto as the *qirā'ah* with *waqf*, as opposed to the *qirā'ah* with *'aṭf*, or *waṣl*), the verse means that no one except God knows the *ta'wīl* of the *mutashābihāt*. In this reading the phrase *wa al-rāsikhūna fī 'ilm* stands at the beginning of the next independent sentence. Pickthall's translation of this verse, which is on the basis of the reading with *waqf* is as follows:

He it is Who hath revealed unto thee (Muḥammad) the Scripture wherein are clear revelations—They are the substance of the Book—and others which are allegorical. But those in whose hearts is doubt pursue, forsooth, that which is allegorical seeking (to cause) dissension by seeking to explain it. None knoweth its explanation save Allah. And those who are of sound instruction say: We believe therein; the whole is from our Lord; but only men of understanding really heed.

2. According to the reading with *'aṭf*, there is no halt in the text after the word *Allah*; that is, *wa al-rāsikhūna fī al-'ilm* is in conjunction with *Allah*. On this basis the verse means that the *rāsikhūn* also know the *ta'wīl* of the *mutashābihāt*. Mīr Aḥmad Ali's translation of this verse which follows this reading is as follows:

He it is Who hath sent down to thee (O Our Apostle Muḥammad!) 'the Book' of it there are (some) verse decisive those are the Basis of the Book, and others are ambiguous; but those in whose hearts there is perversity, they are after that which is ambiguous therein seeking to interpret (to suit their selfish

motives) *while none knoweth its (*hidden) *interpretation except God and those firmly rooted in knowledge; say they: ''We believe in it, all is from our Lord'' but none mindeth save those endowed with (*Wisdom).

1. Those who approve the *qirā'ah* with *waqf* consist of almost all of the Ahl al-Sunnah, including Ubay ibn Ka'b, Ibn Mas'ūd, 'Urwah ibn Zubayr, Ḥasan Baṣrī, 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz, Mālik, Kisā'ī, Farrā', Akhfash, Jubbā'ī, Ṭabarī, Maybudī, Imam Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī, Qurṭubī, Ibn Jauzī, Abū Ḥasyān Gharnāṭī, Nayshābūrī, Wā'iz Kāshifī, and Qāsimī.

2. Those who prescribe to the *qirā'ah* with *'atf* consist of some scholars of the Ahl al-Sunnah and the majority of the Shī'ah, some of the eminent among whom from the Ahl al-Sunnah are: (a) Mujāhid, Naḥḥās (grammarian), 'Ukbarī (grammarian), Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār (in *Tanzīh al-Qur'ān*), Zamakhsharī, Ibn Fūrak, Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, Bayḍāwī, Zarkashī (in *al-Burhān*), Abū al-ṣu'ūd 'Imādī, Ālūsī, Maḥmūd Ṣāfī (contemporary grammarian), and Shaykh Muḥammad 'Abduh; and from the Shī'ah (b) the Infallible Imams ('a) (who as mentioned in a tradition of Imam Ṣādiq ('a) in *al-Kāfī* and 'Ayyāshī's exegesis are reported to have said: ''We are the *rāsikhūna* fī 'ilm and we know the *ta'wīl* of the Qur'ān), Qummī, 'Ayyāshī, Sharīf Raḍī, Sharīf Murtaḍā (in the thirty-third *majlis* of his *Amālī*), Ṭabrisī, Abu al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Mullā Fatḥ Allāh Kāshānī, Mullā Muḥsin Fayḍ, Shubbar, Balāghī, and Mughniyah. There is a third group consisting of those who maintain a neutral position and consider both the readings as valid. They include Ibn 'Abbās, Ibn Kathīr, Shaykh Ṭūsī, Shawkānī, 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī, and Muḥy al-Dīn Darwīsh (contemporary grammarian).

Reasons in Favour of the *Qirā'ah* with *'Atf*:

1. It was mentioned that in accordance with the reading with *'atf*, that is, without any halt between *Allāh* and *rāsikhūna fī al-'ilm*, the verse means that besides God ''those who are firmly

grounded in knowledge" also know the *ta'wīl* of the Qur'ān. There is a consensus among the Shī'ah on this reading and only two scholars from leading Shī'ī exegetes (Shaykh Ṭūsī among early scholars and 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī among contemporaries) have held both the readings to be acceptable. That is, these two also do not reject the reading with *'atf.* Had the Shī'ah been alone in subscribing to this reading it could be said that they have favoured this reading due to their veneration for their Imams (*'a*) and in conformity with their belief about the nature of their Imamate. However, fortunately, a considerable number of Sunni authorities (Zamakhsharī, Bayḍāwī and 'Abduh among exegetes and Naḥḥās among early grammarians and Maḥmūd Ṣāfī among contemporary grammarians, Zarkashī among scholars of Qur'ānic sciences and Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār, Ibn Fūrak and Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd among eminent theologians) agree with the Shī'ī reading of this verse. That which can be concluded is that hardly anyone from among the Shī'ah accepts the Sunni reading of this verse, whereas many of leading Sunni scholars agree with the Shī'ah in approving the reading of the verse with *'atf,* implying the *rāsikhūn*'s knowledge of the *ta'wīl* of the Qur'ān.

2. There are verses in the Qur'ān which mention those who have a special knowledge and who know the inner meanings of the Qur'ān:

بَلْ هُوَ اٰيَاتٌ بَيِّنَاتٌ فِى صُدُورِ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ وَمَا يَجْحَدُ بِأَيَاتِنَا اِلَّا الظَّالِمُونَ

Nay; rather they are clear signs in the breasts of those who have been given knowledge. (29:49)

فَسْئَلُوا اَهْلَ الذَّكِرِ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

Question the people of the Remembrance if you do not know. (16:43; 21:7)

*. . . If they had referred it to the Messenger and those in
authority among them, those of them whose task it is to
investigate would have known the matter.* (4:83)

3. The Qur'ān is a book of guidance revealed in clear
Arabic in the language of the people and is the bearer of a Divine
message. If the *ta'wīl* of the Qur'ān be unknowable to the learned
and the erudite among the people, it would mean that God has sent
a scripture containing inscrutable riddles and paradoxes, whereas
the same scripture repeatedly claims to be a clear Book which
removes doubts from the face of the truth. It is contrary to its own
purpose. Moreover, God has commanded the audience of the
Qur'ān to contemplate and reflect upon its meanings, and that is a
reasonable invitation only if it be possible to understand them, if
not for everyone at least for the scholars and the learned in the
teachings of religion.

4. The context of the verse leads one to expect the *rāsikhūn*
to know the *taw'īl* of the Qur'ān rather than to be ignorant of it. As
Sayyid 'Alī Kamālī has pointed out if the phrase *wa al-rāsikhūna fī
al-'ilm* be not conjoined to *Allah*, the qualification of being well-
grounded in knowledge would be pointless, as many believers
lacking learning but possessing a sound faith declare, ''We believe,
and all of it is from our Lord,'' for such a belief is an essential part
of the Islamic creed and is not limited to those who are well-
grounded in knowledge. Hence Mujāhid has said, ''If the only
distinctive mark of the *rāsikhūna fī al-'ilm* be to declare 'We
believe', there is nothing wrong if the non-*rāsikhūn* also make such
a declaration, and then there would be no difference between the
rāsikhūn and others.

5. If we accept the reading with *waqf,* it would mean that
even the Prophet of Islam (ṣ), the bearer of Messengerhood and
receiver of the Qur'ānic revelations did not know the *ta'wīl* of the
Qur'ānic *mutashābihāt* and such a view would be contrary to the

general consensus of Muslims. However, if we accept that the Prophet (*ṣ*) knew the *ta'wīl* of the Qur'ān, it would mean that he did so due to his being well-grounded in knowledge, otherwise there is no other verse in the Qur'ān that may justify his knowledge of the *ta'wīl* of the Qur'ān. Therefore, as the knowledge of *ta'wīl* derives from being well-grounded in knowledge, it follows that others too, including the Infallible Imams (*'a*) and others who are learned in religion, may also know the *ta'wīl* of the Qur'ān.

Prof. Muḥammad Hādī Ma'rifat writes that in accordance with the principle of divine grace (*luṭf*) it is necessary that there should exist scholars who possess the knowledge of the correct *ta'wīl* of the *mutashāhibāt* in order to defend the faith and the teachings of the Qur'ān against misinterpretations of deviant persons.[12]

Sayyid 'Alī Kamāli Dezfūli has been led by his research to the conclusion that the Prophet (*ṣ*), Imam 'Alī (*'a*) and the other Infallible Imams, may peace be upon them, are the *rāsikhūn* par excellence. According to Prof. Ma'rifat many among Islamic scholars, especially those who have been specialists in the field of Qur'ānic sciences from Ṭabarī to 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī, may be included in the category of the *rāsikhūn*. Apparently, infallibility or the office of Imamate is not necessary for one to qualify for this category. However, there are traditions reported in early Shī'ī sources of ḥadīth which indicate that the Imams of the Prophet's Household are the *rāsikhūn*, and there are many narrations from Imam Ṣādiq (*'a*) and other Imams in which they have declared:

نحن الراسخونَ فى‌العلمِ فنحن نَعلم تأويلَه

We are those who are firmly grounded in knowledge and we know the *ta'wīl* of the Qur'ān.[13]

6. If the argument based on Shī'ī traditions be unacceptable to some people, including Sunni brothers, there is a famous

tradition narrated by Shī'ī and Sunni sources which is very significant for our discussion, and that is a tradition comprising a prayer made by the Messenger of God (ṣ) for Ibn 'Abbās, the outstanding scholar of the Qur'ān and an eminent Companion:

اللَّهُمَّ فَقِّهْه فى الدِّينِ و عَلِّمْه التأويلَ

"O God, make him learned in the religion and teach him *ta'wīl*!"

This tradition clearly indicates that *ta'wīl* is something that can be learnt and acquired through scholarship and erudition.[14]

7. Throughout the history of Qur'ānic exegesis those who have subscribed to the reading with *waqf* (and who therefore do not consider the learned capable of knowing the *ta'wīl* of the Qur'ān), such as Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī, have conducted themselves in their commentaries in such a manner as if they knew the *ta'wīl* of the Qur'ān. It is sufficient for one to refer to their comments under the *mutashābih* verses to see that they have made greater effort than Shī'ī exegetes to interpret these verses and have gone to great lengths in interpreting them.

8. For a change of flavour we may pose this question to those who subscribe to the reading with *waqf*: Do you consider the present verse (3:7) to be *muḥkam* or *mutashābih*? If they say that it is *muḥkam*, that would be contrary to what is quite obvious and evident, for this verse has a greater ambiguity than any other verse in the Qur'ān and that is why it has been a subject of controversy among scholars of the Qur'ān for more than fourteen centuries. Hence they will be compelled to admit that it is *mutashābih*. Then we may ask them another question: Do you try to find the *ta'wīl* of this *mutashābih* verse or not? If their reply is negative, we may ask them as to how they had understood its meaning. And if their reply is in affirmative, it will imply that they consider themselves able to know the *ta'wīl* of the Qur'ān. Hence their position is self-

contradictory, for in accordance with their approved reading they consider only God to know the *ta'wīl* of the *mutashābih* verses. Therefore, the conclusion is that knowingly or unknowingly they agree with us, their opponents, and practically affirm what they reject verbally. Hence this controversy and dispute is merely verbal.

NOTES:

1. Al-Ṭūsī, *Tafsīr al-Tibyān*, s.v. 3:7.

2. Muḥammad Hādī Ma'rifat, *Al-Tamhīd*, iii. 8.

3. *Ibid.*, iii. 14.

4. Al-Zamakhsharī, *Al-Tafsīr al-Kashshāf;* Fakhr Rāzī, *Al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*, s.v. 3:7.

5. Imam Ali, *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Letter 77.

6. Al-Qurṭubī, *Tafsīr*, s.v. 7:54.

7. Sayyid 'Ali Kamālī, *Qānūn-e Tafsīr*, pp. 27, 46-47.

8. Fīrūzābādī, *Al-Qāmūs*.

9. Ghazzālī, *Al-Mustasfā*.

10. Op. cit., note 2, iii. 28.

11. Muḥammad Ḥusayn Al-Dhahabi, *Al-Tafsīr wa al-Mufassirūn.*

12. Op. cit., note 2, iii. 36.

13. Al-'Ayyāshī, *Tafsīr*, s.v. 3:7; Muḥammad Bāqir Al-Majlisi, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, xxiii, "kitāb al-Imāmah," bāb 10, see also *ibid.*, xcii, 92.

14. For the sources of this tradition see *Qānūn-e Tafsīr*, op. cit., note 7, p. 314.

Rationalism and Literalism in Islamic Theology

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The following study is a quick look at Muslim theologians' manner of dealing with the problem of "reason and revelation". Bearing in mind that very little work has been done on the subject, justice cannot really be done to this broad and complicated issue in a short article like this. The article is in fact a historical report, but incidentally, it raises points for theological consideration.

As we will see later, efforts to solve the question of reason and revelation and unite religiousness with rationalism is one of the most important issues to have occupied the minds of Muslim scholars, whether those who have honoured the intellect in acquiring knowledge of religion, or those who have conceived of religion as being beyond the understanding of the intellect. However, both groups have shown their concern about the problem.

The struggle between reason and religion is not a simple matter for an open-minded person. If reason is rooted in the virtue

and essence of man, religion is also inherent in his most fundamental and ultimate truth. To confine religion in the narrow part of experience and reason is like limiting reason to a few general rules and regulations. The ample efforts made by Muslim scholars to unite reason and religion reveal that this ventures story will not end merely by giving a general rule and proposing a simple solution.

We shall see in this study that reason and rationalism concerning religion have had different meanings in different times and places, even in the early centuries of the Islamic thought. We hope that this revision and assessment of the views of Muslim scholars on the subject will loosen the entangled knots of the problem and enable us to be led to a new solution. As will be noticed, the solutions proposed during the history of Islamic thought have often been inclined to either side of the extreme. From the first movements of mind to the present time, we are faced with two opposite trends among Muslim scholars. First, there are rationalists, who are looking for some justifications and interpretations of religious texts and are also trying to incorporate as much religious belief into special philosophical forms as possible. Secondly, there are literalists, who tend to alienate reason and prevent its entry into the secured realm of religion. Having regard to the moderate Qur'ānic manner the latter should of course be remarked as strange. There are, however, thinkers, who have made efforts with a view to bringing reason and religion into peace and establishing moderation, but, eventually, they have slipped on one side, or due to continuous hesitation among various opinions, have failed to give a comprehensive opinion. Among such thinkers, Ghazzāli seems to be the best example.

What we said above relates to both Shi'ah and Sunni scholars. It will be remarked, however, that literalism in the Shi'ah Imamiyyah, who have the privilege of *Riwāyāt* of the *Ahl al-Bayt*

('a), with their specific characteristic, is quite different from that of Salafiyyah in the Sunnite school. For the same reason, the Shi'ah theologians are far from the Sunnite theologians.

At the end of this introduction, it is worth pointing out that with one exception, this historical study extends to the 6th century of Hijrah. Until the fifth century, the evolution of Islamic Theology was almost independent of and distinct from the two movements of philosophy and sūfism. Since then, due to serious confrontation and interactions of these three fields, their education was severely affected by one another. Ever since, neither Ghazzāli could meditate without philosophy and mysticism, nor was Ibn Rushd able to ignore theology and mysticism. So, from that time issues in theology, mysticism, and rationalism became gradually more difficult and complicated. Therefore, to analyze its procedure, we would have to make further studies. Here, we will end this study with a brief account of Ghazzāli's doctrines and a short report on Ibn Rushd, with the hope to have another opportunity to continue these discussions.

Traditionalists (Ahl al-Ḥadīth) and the Beginning of Literalism

Literalism is the first general tendency of mind in Islam. This is not, of course, peculiar to Islam. In all religions, the prime tendency is towards revelation and protection of religious traditions. In a society where the worth of the presence of the prophet is still felt and the echo of revelation is heard in all its locations, it is quite rational for any foreign tradition to fade away and for any opposite voice to be silenced.

Literalism is not only a theological school, but above all, it is an insight and a cultural ground from which different thoughts grow. Thus, ideas such as Murji'ah, fatalism, Khārejīgarī, *Tashbīh*, *Tajsīm* and tens of others that for centuries influenced Islamic thought, appeared from that insight. This trend of mind gradually evolved as a form of independent thought called by different names

like traditionalists (Ahl al-Ḥadīth), Ḥanabilah, Ḥashawiyyah and Salafiyyah.

In reaction to extreme literalism, another trend of mind gradually developed in Islamic society, with its ultimate form appearing later in the Mu'tazilah denomination.

At the beginning, the difference between these two trends seemed to be the issue of fatalism and free will, but as their struggles expanded it was realized that their difference was in fact in the method of their understanding religious texts. In this respect, traditionalists (Ahl al-Ḥadīth) relied on literal meanings of the Qur'ān and *riwāyāt*, while Mu'tazilah tried to open the way for interpretation and justification of such texts by getting assistance from reason.

Factors Resulting in Rationalism

It is to be remarked that the tendency to employ reason is itself found in the Qur'ān. Contrary to religious texts of Judaism and Christianity, the Qur'ān emphatically reminds its readers of contemplation and using the mind.[1] Judaism is a religion of law and history; Christianity is a religion of faith and morality. But, Islam, in addition to having all these features, requires man to learn about himself and the universe, and invites him to look at existence, history, law and morality with clear insight.

However, there are also external factors that have influenced Islamic rationalism. The expansion of Islam and confrontation of Muslims with other cultures had two consequences for Islamic thought. On the one hand, the mind of the Islamic society was affected gradually by foreign sciences and thoughts, and, on the other, the Islamic schools were encouraged to defend the foundations of their religion against other religions and philosophies.[2] Therefore, if we see some times that the Mu'tazilah go to an extreme, we should find the reason in the above factors. In any case, if the first Islamic century is considered as the period of

domination of literalism, the second and third centuries should be regarded as the period of dominance of rationalism. It is to be remarked that rationalism, even at the zenith of its dominance, was usually the idea of a minority in the society; the religious majority always preferred faith and absolute obedience to rational reasoning. That is why the public opinion of the Sunnite people is always inclined to religious tradition and they dislike the entry of reason in the realm of religion.

When Mu'tazilah thought culminated, theological differences within this denomination began to increase, and the excessive use of reason weakened and devalued the virtue and essence of religion, which is faith in God, His worship and obedience and submission to Him. The growth of rationalism, on the one hand, and its deterioration as well as dogmatism of Ḥanābilah on the other, were causes which persuaded the scholars of the Sunnite school to revise their traditional outlooks. In fact, the second and third Islamic centuries were the period of resistance to literalism and liberation of mind from prejudice. In the wake of the forth century literalism came to a new stage. Two great men from the Sunnite school worked separately with a view to reviving and revising religious thoughts and some ideas from Mu'tazilah theology. They were Abū al-Ḥasan Ash'arī (d. 330 A.H.) in Khorāsān and Transoxiana.[3] The difference between them was that Matirīdī got close to the Mu'tazilah but Ash'arī maintained Ḥanbalī principles of thought in new forms. Hence, Ash'arī was considered as a middle line between the Traditionalists (Ahl al-Ḥadīth) and Mu'tazilah, but Matirīdī was regarded as a middle line between the Ash'arī and Mu'tazilah. Thus, in the forth century the links between literalism and rationalism was completed and their first approach was established.

Ash'arī and Mātirīdī

To know the importance of these two theological schools it

is best to compare briefly their tren ds of mind with Mu'tazilah. But, it would be necessary first to all, to know the position of Traditionalists (Ahl al-Ḥadīth) and Mu'tazilah.

From the outset, the Islamic scholars recognized theoretical and practical aspects for the concept of reason. Mu'tazilah and Traditionalists had, of course, differences in both aspects. This was not clear, though, at the beginning, but, some important theological problems of that time like *Tashbīh* and Tanzih as well as fatalism and free will were revealed to be the manifestation of these two aspects. Traditionalists were of the opinion that the qualities of the Almighty should be accepted literally as worded in the verses of the Qur'ān and *riwāyāt*, giving no right to intellect and reason to question or interpret them. The statement of Mālik ibn Anas made in reply to a question put to him about God's , *"'ala al-'Arsh"* might be the best example of the thinking of this group. He said: *"Al-Istiwā'* is known, but its quality is unknown. It is necessary to believe in it and any question about it would be innovation".[4] In defining the Ḥanābilah, Ash'arī also says: "Whatever, they say about God is just taken from the Qur'ān and *riwāyāt*. They say nothing more".[5]

This was the idea of the traditionalists with regard to theoretical intellect. They went even so far as to say that man is bound, and his acts are created by God. From this point of view, acts of God may not be questioned, and in this regard no judgment of reason may be accepted; as wisdom has no power of understanding good and bad, in their view goodness and evil are not inherent in acts; so, these qualities can vary with the intentions of agents.

On the contrary, the Mu'tazilah believed in the judgment of reason, both in rational knowledge and rules of reason.[6]

Some Mu'tazilah, like Naẓẓām, claimed that man even has the power of understanding goodness and evil of all acts. Generally, in this view, the role of revelation is known and

clarified by intellect. The words of Shahristānī in his regarding the ideas of Abū ʿAlī Jābāʾī (d. 303 A.H.) and his son, Abū Hāshim (d. 321 A.H.) is in fact the illustration of the kind of rationalism believed by the Muʿtazilah. He is explicit:

> They both agree that knowledge of God and appreciation of the Beneficent as well as recognition of good and bad are all rationally necessary. They have made rational shariah and linked shariah of the prophet to contractual rules and regulations and also to (specified) temporary worships, to which reason could have no access. [They also believe that] by virtue of reason and wisdom it has become necessary for the All wise (God) to give rewards to the obedient and punish the wrong doer. However, to know whether rewards and punishments are temporary or permanent should be learned through revelation.[7]

Another difference between the traditionalists and the Muʿtazilah was the question whether knowledge of God is a theoretical matter to be sought or is an obvious matter which is essentially and naturally understood through intellect.

Literalists were of the opinion that knowledge of God is a clear and obvious matter. Thus, they used to avoid discussions and arguments on the subject. On the contrary, the Muʿtazilah maintained the idea that knowledge of God can of be gained only through the mind and reasoning. On the basis of this idea the Muʿtazilah instituted theology and prepared the rules and principles for knowing of God as well as His attributes and acts.

Ashʿarī was brought up in a prejudiced Sunnite family. His father was a scholar of Ahl Al-Hadīth (traditionalists). At the beginning he was inclined to the Muʿtazilah denomination and for some years he learned theology from the scholars of this group, in particular from Abū ʿAlī Jābāʾī. But gradually he came to realize

the weakness of the ideas and their contradictions with the Sunnite school and eventually departed from the Mu'tazilah. Ash'ari adopted the principles of the Hanbali thought [8] and tried to defend such principles rationally. He made a distinction between theoretical and practical aspects of intellect and believed in the knowledge of intellect, but still emphasized that intellect would not be able to realize good and evil acts.[9]

With the above distinction, Ash'ari could draw the traditionalists (Ahl al-Hadith) one step further towards intellect and as such could also develop theology, which was till then in sole control of the Mu'tazilah and give it public acceptance. In his treatise called *Istihsān al-Khaud fi al-Kalām* he founded the principles of this thought and replied to the idea of traditionalists who had prohibited theology. Ash'ari also founded the rational theology of the Sunnite school first in his books. *Al-Ibānah 'an Uṣūl al Diānah* and later another book, *Al-Luma'*. The significance of Ash'ari and his works could be seen in his influence on the three theologians who came after him, namely Qāḍi Abū Bakr, Bāqlāni (d. 403 A.H.), Abū Isḥāq Isfarāyini (d. 418 A.H.) and Imam al-Haramayn Juwayni (d. 478 A.H.). These three scholars took advantage of the way opened by Ash'ari and paved the way for the interference of intellect in theological issues.

Although, apparently, reason was used by Ash'ari only for establishing and defending the principles of Ahl al-Hadith, but once reason came to the scene, religious ideas began to be restricted one after the other. Thus, the theory of resemblance by the reservation at *"bilā kayf"*,[10] the idea of fatalism by the limiting condition of "kasb"[11] and the non-creation of Qur'ān by the reservation of *"Kalām anfusi "*[12] left the old conception of Ahl al-Hadith and found a rational form. More important was that knowledge of God and His attributes which none considered an obvious and clear matter, had to be proved by reasoning. In all such issues Bāqlāni[13] got ahead of Ash'ari and gave intellect more

authority to conceive and interpret religious beliefs. With emergence of.Juwaynī, theology in the Ash'arī school found quite a rational and polemic form. In the preface of his book, entitled *Al Shāmil fi Uṣūl al Dīn*, [14] he discussed in detail the principles of the rational method, and also replied to those who had asserted that reasoning was a kind of innovation and useless. This part of the book is worth comparison with *Al-Mughnī* written by Qāḍi 'Abd al-Jabbār (d. 415 A.H.).[15]

We can see the influence of *Al-Mughnī* even on *Al-Shāmil* written by Juwaynī. Although he is not regarded as the founder of the theology; nevertheless, with his appearance, the rational tendency in Ahs'arī theology reached it summit.[16]

With in that period traditional literalism was under pressure from two sides. On one side, the Mu'tazilah were progressing as a result of their closeness and solidarity with the Shī'ah school, and, on the other, the Ash'arī theology was threatening literalism as a consequence of accepting rational thinking. Virtually, being under the lashes of rationalism, the Salafiyyah, in its extreme form, could not straighten its back till the emergence of Ibn Taymiyyah in the 7th century (d. 661-728 A.H.). The Sunnite ideas were so influenced by Ash'arī thought in explaining of that the doctrine of the Sunnite school on the issue of intellect, Shahristānī could find no definition clearer than the Ash'arī's statement.[17]

Thus, in definition of *uṣūl* and *furū'* of religion, he would conveniently accept the definition specifying that "the *uṣūl* of religion is rational and construed by reasoning, but the *furū'* of religion is open to suspicion and can be found by analogy (*qiyās*) and *ijtihād*."[18]

In the fifth century, theological discussions and arguments were so wide spread that Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad Ghazzālī (d. 507 A.H.), who was Juwaynī's student, embarked upon challenging the extreme rationalism and diverting the Ash'arī's theology to a different direction. We shall later come to Ghazzālī is theory in this

article.

Rationalism in Mātirīdiyyah

Simultaneous with the Ash'arī movement another character from traditional scholars of Khorāsān rose who pursued the same objects of Ash'arī. But contrary to the Ash'arī, who were pursuing the course of Ḥanbalī, Mālikī, this scholar (Mātirīdī) followed the practice of Ḥanafī. We know that Abū Ḥanīfah (d. 150 A.H.) was one of the scholars who was of the *Aṣḥāb al-Ra'y* and in all religious regulations and principles (*aḥkām*) would rely an analogy (*qiyās*). Therefore, for moderating literalism and admitting rational elements to religious ideas, practice seemed an easier way. As stated before, the Ashā'irah honoured theoretical knowledge of reason with no attention to practical judgment; but Mātirīdī applied even practical reason in theology and in this respect became very close to the Mu'tazilī's thought. He accepted the idea of rational goodness and evil and considered unbearable duties as void. He also believed that the acts of God are all wise and that justice is one of His attributes.[19] Mātirīdī was not content by this. So he put more credit on the power of reason even in its theoretical aspect and used item analysis of details of theology. In his view, man is power and freedom and his will is effective for acts to come into existence. Although Mātirīdī accepted the theory of "acquisition" (*kasb*) and held that God is the Creator of the acts of man, unlike Ash'arī, he believed that man is quite free in his "power of acquisition" and he is the person who acts by free will.

Although at the outset the ideas of these scholars prevailed in the Ḥanafiyyah denomination, with the expansion of the Ash'arī school, even the Ḥanafī scholars adhered to Ash'arī. As a result, Matirīdī's thought did not gain public acceptance among Sunnite people.[20]

Ghazzālī in the Struggle of Intellect and Revelation

As indicated before, Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad Ghazzālī was a disciple of Imam al-Ḥaramayn Juwaynī. The reason for the importance of Ghazzālī in the history of rationalism is that in his mid age he experienced an ideological change as a consequence of which for at least a short period of time a great change was made in the Islamic thought. The academic life of Ghazzālī is comprised two different periods. In the first period he was carrying on the same course as Ashʿarī Theology pursued for two centuries. In that period, by admitting Aristotle's logic in Ashʿarī theology, Ghazzālī pushed that theory one step from there.[21] Before him, no theologian, not even his own teacher, Juwaynī, took any advantage of the logical method used by Aristotle. Very clearly by setting new terms for concepts of logic, he asserted that he had extracted rules of logic from the Qurʾānic verses.[22] He also claimed that Aristotle and the Greeks had adopted logic from previous prophets, signifying that the logic of Aristotle had root in religion.[23] In the same period, he wrote some theological books and treatises in defense of the Sunnite principles and criticizing other schools.

Another important work of this scholar is a criticism of the philosophical thought of that time. First, in his book, *Maqāṣid al-Falāsafah*, he made a description of the problems of peripatetic philosophy, and then by writing *Tahāfut al-Falāsafah*, he clarified, as he thought, contradictions in philosophy and conflicts of philosophy with religious ideology. At the end of the same period, he wrote another book entitled *Al-Iqtiṣād fī al-Iʿtiqād* and introduced Ashʿarī Theology in a new model based on stronger reasons.

It is noteworthy that Ghazzālī was deeply involved in theological thought and rejected the opinions of philosophers and religious schools. To some extent, this can be found in his book *Al-Iqtiṣād*. In this book he remarks that theology is a subject which can lead to knowledge and certainty, but is a defence against

opponents objections. In any case, his investigating mind was not satisfied by philosophical and theological thoughts and eventually doubted everything,[24] and from now on the second period of his life began. So, he finds his missing essence in sūfīsm and his missing knowledge in mystical conduct, which, in his opinion is the beginning of the path of prophethood. When Ash'arī's theology was taken to the highest point by Ghazzālī, he himself prepared the ground for its decline. In fact, Ash'arī's reason had become so perverted that the essence of religion was losing its light and its appearance had become a means for showing the grace and dignity of jurisprudents and theologians. Under such circumstances, it was felt necessary to reconsider religious teachings.

Thus Ghazzālī wrote "*Ihyā' 'Ulūm al Dīn*" in which he seriously criticized religious thoughts of his time and explained in detail the state of religiousness. In his doctrine, reason has a very low position,[25] but mystical conduct and religious devoutness have high marks. Ghazzālī's definition and interpretation of sense and intellect reveals the above conception. He indicates that knowledge leading to the next world is in two things: *'Ilm al-Mukāshafah* (the innate knowledge) which is the object of all knowledge and *'Ilm al-Mu'āmalah*, which is the same as ethics.[26] In this classification "*fiqh*", jurisprudence has been put in the category of historical sciences and theology has been totally ousted from the religious sciences.

The description of theology given by this author in *Ihyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn* is highly important. He believes that theology consists of two parts. The first part contains useful and effective evidence, which exists exactly the same in the Qur'ān and the Sunnah (the Prophet's practice and sayings) and as such makes theology unnecessary. The second part includes either unpleasant arguments or useless and misleading issues.

At the beginning theology was not usual and entering in that subject was regarded as innovation.[27] However, Ghazzālī is of

the idea that in the state of such prevalence of innovation, we would need theology. Yet, a theologian must be aware that his duty is not but to protect the religion. He should know that through this subject he can find no way to knowledge. With regard to faith, he asserts that a theologian knows nothing more than a layman. He has only one weapon in his hand by which to defend the path to the next world, i.e. religion and mysticism.[28] However, later on Ghazzālī accepts in his book *Iljām al-'Awāmm 'an 'Ilm al-Kalām* that sometimes theology leads to fact; but the cases are so few that it is advisable to avoid this subject.[29]

The description of intellect given by Ghazzālī is also interesting. He believes in theoretical reason and regards it as the basis of man's rational thought.[30] But he adds that faith in God and knowledge of the Almighty and even knowledge the essence of things is naturally endowed with the spirit of man whose intelligence achieves it once reminded.[31] It is, therefore, revealed that Ghazzālī does not believe much in philosophical intellect and complicated theological reasons.

Another important step taken by Ghazzālī is that he classified religious facts and knowledge and stated if there are different grades and divisions for facts, and if human beings have various degrees of intelligence, so every body should be taught in accordance with his talent.[32] By this idea Ghazzālī opened a way for mysticism to the realm of religious knowledge, and thus give mysticism a higher rank than jurisprudence and theology.

Taking advantage of Ghazzāli's idea, Ibn Rushd (d. 595 A.H.) tried to bring reason and religion together. The difference between him and Ghazzālī was, however, the fact that the latter attributed several facts and knowledge to mysticism, while Ibn Rushd attributed them to philosophy. Ibn Rushd was of the opinion that the Qur'ān has confirmed philosophical intellect by emphasizing contemplation and the acquisition of knowledge.[33]

In his view, the appearance of religious texts is for laymen.

Philosophers can achieve the meaning of such texts by discovering the logical facts.[34] The ordinary people should not only be kept unaware of the actual facts, but many not even be told that religious texts are interpretable. Religious facts, which are the same as philosophical facts, must be explained in a complicated language and by their own philosophical sources so no access can be made to them by non-qualified people. Both, Ghazzālli and Ibn Rushd believe that interpretation is peculiar only to those deeply rooted in knowledge. The difference however between them is that in the view of Ghazzālli such authorities are mysticists, but in the opinion of Ibn Rushd they are philosophers.[35]

Rationalism and Literalism in recent centuries

As indicated above, by putting more weight on mysticism, Ghazzālli practically humiliated rational thought, expelled philosophy from the sphere of religion and exiled theology to the frontiers of religion in order to guard it. On the contrary, Ibn Rushd defended the sanctity of intellect in his book *Tahāfut al-Tahāfut*, and reconciled reason and religion in his books *Faṣl al-Maqāl wa al-Kashf and Manāhij al-Adillah*. It is interesting to know that Ibn Rushd's influence on future development of the Ash'arī Theology was more than that of Ghazzālli. After Ghazzālli, in spite of his efforts to the contrary, a powerful theological practice was established and in some occasions advanced to the heart of philosophical subjects. 'Abd al-karim Sharistāni (d. 548 A.H.), Fakhr Rāzi, (d. 606 A.H.), Qāḍi 'Aḍud Iji (d. 756 A.H.), Sa'd al-Dīn Taftāzāni (d. 793 A.H.) and Sayyid Sharīf Jurjāni (d. 812 A.H.) are of this group. In the Sunnite theology, not only was the flame of rationalism not extinguished but it became increasingly brighter so that we can still to the present time see its consequences.

Ghazzāli's influence was different. He caused, or at least prepared the way for, two significant movements. On the one hand,

he gave a religious color to mysticism, which was till then regarded as an independent and isolated movement, and took it into the religious society. On the other hand, he paved the way for literalism. Also by weakening philosophy and theology and turning to revelation, he paved the way, indirectly, for the maneuverings of the Salafiyyah. The extreme literalism which almost had disappeared in Spain with the death of Ibn ḥazm, rose again from Damascus. This time Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn 'Abd al-Ḥalīm known as Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728 A.H.) and later his disciple, Ibn Qayyim (d. 751 A.H.) instituted a theory which is still surviving interalia in the Wahhābiyyah sect. The world of Sunnites today has inherited the above mentioned two thoughts: The extreme literalism of the followers of Ibn Taymiyyah and the rationalism of the Ashā'irah.

Rationalism in the Imāmiyyah Shi'ah

In this study we will only discuss the Imāmiyyah school among the three main Shi'ah schools. For the Zaydiyyah have adhered to Mu'tazilah and accepted totally the rationalism of that nomination, Ismā'īliyyah has been influenced by Gnosticism and Manichaeunism and to some extent to Neo platonism, and as such took its course away from religious thinking.

With regard to the Imāmiyyah school, it would have been appropriate to begin with the *Ahl al-Bayt* ('a), but since our object is to study the opinions and thoughts of Muslims, not the original texts, we shall start our discussion with the Shi'ah scholars. The companions of Imams ('a), especially Imam Bāqir ('a) and Imam Ṣādiq ('a) are divided into two groups. The first group is known as "*Mutakallim*" (theologian) and the second as "*Muḥaddith*" or "*Faqīh*".

Of the former group, the following can be mentioned: Hushām ibn Ḥakam, Hushām ibn Sālim, Ḥamrān ibn A'yan, Muḥammad ibn Ṭayyār, and Mu'min Ṭāq; and of the latter

Muḥammad ibn Muslim, Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Khālid and Muḥammad ibn Ḥasan al-Ṣaffār. The difference between these two groups lies in their method and degree of the application of intellect in religious knowledge. Hence they can be regarded as representatives of rationalism and literalim in the Shi'ah world.

'Alī ibn Ismā'īl ibn Maitham Tammār is known as the first Shi'ah Theologian.[36] Some believe that Shi'ah theology began before that and regard Kumayt ibn Zayd, a Shi'ah poet, and 'Isā ibn Rauḍah as the founders of the Shi'ah Theology.[37] Many are of the opinion that Mu'tazilah has its root in the Shi'ah theology. As admitted by the Mu'tazilite people, Wāṣil ibn 'Aṭā' the founder of had learned the knowledge of monotheism and justice from Abū Hāshim 'Abdullāh ibn Muḥammad Ḥanafiyyah, who in turn had learned such knowledge from his great grandfather 'Alī ibn Abīṭālib ('a).[38]

In any case, the first person who made a reputation for Shi'ah theology and defended the Shi'ah principles by Solimoes was Hushām ibn Ḥakam, who was one of the disciples of Imam Ṣādiq ('a). His reputation in theological debates was so high that Yaḥyā ibn Khālid Barmakī, the powerful minister of Harūn al-Rashīd, appointed him as chief theologian presiding over and arbitrating all debates opened by theologians of that time.[39] In the Sunnite sources on nations and denominations (Milal wa Niḥal) and also in their theology, Hushām and some other Shi'ah theologians are accused of "tashbīh" and "tajsīm", while they are praised by the Shi'ah and acquitted of such accusations.[40] It seems that the leaders of the Mu'tazilah and Murji'ah were effective in spreading such accusations. Some indications reveal that for some time Hushām was not practicing the religion of Ahl al-Bayt ('a), but later he realized the fact and devoted himself to defending the Shi'ah principles of thought.[41]

Among the Shi'ah theologians living during the presence of the Imams we should recall Faḍl ibn Shādhān Nishābūrī (d. 260

A.H.), Ibn Qibah is also another famous theologian of this period. We should also refer to numerous "*Muḥaddithīn*", whose mission was mainly recording and keeping the teachings of *Ahl al-Bayt* (*'a*). The biology and works of such eminent people are recorded in "*Rijāl*" books.

An important and interesting thing is that, contrary to differences which existed within the Sunnite school, there existed no difference among theologians and *Muḥaddithīn* of the Shī'ah school until the thing century, there was, though, some discussions and arguments between theologians and companions of the Imams. But during that period, the gap existing between Hanābilah and Mu'tazilah never existed between rationalists and listeralists of the Shī'ah. The reason was the moderation of the Shī'ah scholars in using reason and invoking religious texts. In fact, the *Riwāyāt* of *Ahl al-Bayt* and their presence among the Shī'ah people were important factors which would always reduce differences or excessiveness. The practice of the Imams was that they basically welcomed reason and rational discussions, but put a limit on the circle of insight of the intellect, and cautioned the believers not to go beyond the limit.

From the third century, which coincided with the time of the dissimulation and absence of the Imams, the two movements of theology and *Hadīth* got away from each other and eventually came to two different out looks. In the world of Shī'ah no opposition was ever formed as existed between Hanbali and Mu'tazili. However, in the third and forth centuries rationalism and literalism were facing each other quite distinctly. The most eminent theologians can be founded in the dynasty of Nubakhti and the greatest literalists can be seen in the Muḥaddithin of Qum and Rey. The Nubakhties were of an Iranian astronomer family who converted to Islam when in the Umayyah's court and later adhered to Tashayyu'. In the era of 'Abbāsi, this family acquired high positions, especially in the Mansur's court, and played a significant

role in the culture of the 'Abbāsid era in translating Persian texts into Arabic and in administrating the "*Bait al-Ḥikmah*" of Hārūn al Rashīd. Their outstanding characteristic was their acquaintance with astronomy and philosophy. Some of the Nubakties were so close to *Ahl al-Bayt* ('*a*) that they were considered as their companions. Ḥusayn ibn Rūḥ Nubakhtī, the forth representative of Imam 'Aṣr ('*a*) is of this family. For three centuries, this dynasty offered great scholars to the world of Islam and Tashayyu', and took the Shī'ahs rationalism to the highest point. Some researchers consider them as founders of the shī'ah's rational theology. As a result of their acquaintance with the philosophy of Iran and Greece and also with the Mu'tazilī theology, the Nubakhtī theologians instituted a perfect systematic form incorporating rational issues and rules, which influenced the Shī'ah theology for some centuries.[42]

In order to learn about rationalism and literalism in this period it would be convenient to study the books "*Al-Yāqūt*", the only theological work remained from Nubakhtī dynasty, and compare it with the works and thoughts of Shaykh Ṣadūq, the famous *Muḥaddith* and the outstanding scholar representing literalism. Such a comparison will clarify the characteristics of these two trends of mind, and the endeavors made by Shaykh Mufīd (d. 413 A.H.) and Sayyid Murtaḍā (d. 436 A.H.) to bring the two trends close to each other.

Shaykh Ṣadūq was basically a *Muḥaddith*. So he was bound to stick to the knowledge of Qur'ān and *Riwāyāt*, both in jurisprudence (*fiqh*) and creed ('*aqā'id*). Such restriction is to the extent that even in his jurisprudence and theological books he invokes the some words and expressions as stated in *Riwāyāt*, and tries to avoid, as much as possible, giving any personal opinion. His book *Al-Mughni'*, on jurisprudence and *Al-I'tiqādāt* (the Imāmiyyah beliefs) represent Ṣadūq's thinking and show his method.

It should not be conceived that Ṣadūq was only concerned with relating and recording *Riwāyāt*, but due to his domination of the subject, he has examined and extracted the true *Riwāyāt* by using the criterion he had for distinguishing and preferring such *Riwāyāt*, and has stated his opinions accordingly, and Unfortunately when talking about a *Muḥaddith*, some recall the though of Ahl al-Ḥadīth. This never applies to Shaykh Ṣadūq. In his view discussions and reasoning against unbelievers is not only allowed but essential. The debates reported from him is indicative of this fact.[43]

In Ṣadūq's view, knowledge of God and monotheism is in the nature of all creatures.[44] Man can even see God in his heart by purifying his soul and following his nature.[45] Yet, he thinks that intellect is unable to know God and His attributes. The main part of Ṣadūq's books are devoted to the Imam's reasoning and their arguments with their opponents. Shaykh Ṣadūq believed in restriction of the intellect. So, contrary to theologians, he would not recommend debates and arguments except in necessary cases and within the texts of the Qur'ān and the Sunnah. It is not, therefore, surprising that among hundreds of books remaining from this author we can not see even one theological work. Generally, in his view, the method, sphere and subject of reason in religious teachings are very much restricted and religious knowledge is mainly based on the nature of man and natural intellect.[46]

By way of contrast, *Al-Yāqūt* is entirely a theological book.[47] In the opinion of Ibn Nubakht, knowledge of God is a subjective and acquirable thing, and the only way to achieve such knowledge is rational reasoning.[48] Shaykh Ṣadūq believes that monotheism exists in the nature. But Ibn Nubakht holds that it will have to be acquired.[49] Contrary to Shaykh Ṣadūq, the writer of *Al-Yāqūt* maintains the idea that traditional (*sam'ī*) evidence will not lead to evident knowledge; as religious texts are not free from literal commonness and figurative expressions or such alters and so

with such probabilities we can reach certainty though *Riwāyāt* and the verses of Qur'ān only by attaching circumstantial evidence. Moreover, resorting to traditional (*sam'ī*) evidence might be possible only if the existence of God, prophethood, purity and other rudiments are already proved through rational reasoning. Otherwise, the mind would go to a vicious circle.[50] Briefly, in the rational perspective, *Al-Yāqūt* was so advanced that after two centuries 'Allāmah Ḥilli declared it to be quite consistent with philosophical theological school of Khwajah Ṭūsī, and wrote his description of the book.

The preamble of Ibn Nubakht's book is an introduction to theology and the main subjects of the book include essence, accident, substance, establishment of indivisible elements and vacuum as well as disproving infinite chains and a few other issues. The new idea in this book is that existence is divided into necessary being and possible being and reasoning is formulated by necessary and possible demonstrations.[51] If the presumption of researchers is that *Al-Yāqūt* was written round the year 350 A.H. is correct, it will be concluded that Ibn Nubakht was the first person who introduced, the concept of necessity and possibility and its demonstration in Islamic Theology and philosophy.[52] It is to be noted that such demonstration has not been seen even in the works of Shaykh Mufīd and Sayyid Murtaḍā, However, this conclusion should not be taken so seriously; because, *Al-Yāqūt* goes back to at least the fifth century. In any case, Ibn Nubakht illustrates a kind of rational trend like the Mu'tazilah's rationalism.

What we said above was only about theoretical intellect. Regarding practical intellect, contrary to what we saw in the Sunnite people, the difference between the Shi'ah theologians and Muḥaddithīn is very little. All Shi'ah Imāmiyyah believe in rational good and bad and their existence in the essence of acts. As far as we know the limit put to practical intellect by Ahl al-Ḥadīth and Ashā'irah has not even one example among the Shi'ah

Muḥaddithīn. There are, of course some differences their theologians and Ahl al-Ḥadīth in the examples of rational rules, as theologians themselves are not unanimous in this respect. An example is their difference in the rule of grace (*lutf*) and the question of the "necessity of the preferred".

Rationalism in Shaykh Mufīd

Shaykh Mufīd (336-413 A.H.) is an eminent character who is expert in *Ḥadīth*, theology and jurisprudence, and as such is outstanding among the Shī'ah scholars. He has taken the best advantage of teachings of great *Muḥaddithīn* of his time such as Ja'far ibn Qūlawayh and Shaykh Ṣadūq. In addition he inherits the learned family of Nubakhtiyān[53]. He has also to some extent, taken, advantages of the Mu'tazili theology. Mufīd was living in a time when the rationalist movements of the Nubakhties and the literalist movement of *Muḥaddithīn* were seriously and widely in question. Taking into consideration all aspects of the problem, he made all his efforts to bring the different trends of the Shī'ah school close to each other by joining rational rules and religious texts.[54] It is not convenient to discuss here in detail the theological views of Shaykh Mufīd. Yet, it would seem necessary to give some hints to the issues relating directly to our discussion.

Shaykh Mufīd denies the theory of "inborn quality of monotheism". In this regard, Ṣadūq relies on certain *riwāyāt* indicating that all creatures are born with innate monotheism. But, Mufīd believed that the said *riwāyāt* would signify that God has created human beings in order to adhere to monotheism and worship Him in His unity.[55] He also specifies in his book *Awā'il al-Maqālāt* that knowledge of God and prophet and any thing which is hidden is acquirable and can only he acquired through reasoning,[56] whereas Shaykh Ṣadūq weakens theology and theologians logic by virtue of some *riwāyāt* of *Ahl al-bayt* (*'a*)[57] Shaykh Mufīd divides theology into right and wrong He considers

that the theology which helps to know religion and defend it, is not only right but necessary. To prove his assertion the Shaykh invokes some verses and *riwāyāt* which have honored theology and theologians.[58]

Nevertheless, contrary to Nubakhtiyān and Mu'tazilah, Shaykh Mufīd holds that reason is not independently able to know religious facts, but in achieving knowledge and its outcome it should be helped by revelation and religion. He says, although it is true that intellect may achieve religious facts by reasoning, the way for such reasoning must be learned from the prophet and religious texts. In this regard, Mufīd considers the Imāmiyyah consistent with the people of *Ḥadīth*, but inconsistent with Mu'tazilah.

The above view is not to be considered simply an honor for *Sharī'ah*. It rather means that theological rules and rational issues should be defined only with in the limit of religion and can be accepted only if they are fruitful. This idea influenced, to some extent, the opinions of Shaykh Mufīd and made his theological thought distinct from that of the Nubakhtī's and his own followers.

The definition of intellect from the view point of the above three thinkers, namely Shaykh Ṣadūq, Ibn Nubakht and Mufīd is an indication of the above fact. Shaykh Ṣadūq defines intellect according to the *riwāyāt* which defines it as a power by which God, the Compassionate, is worshipped and paradise is achieved.[59] Although this definition is not peculiar to practical reason, it does, however, limit clearly theoretical reason to the frame work of perception and object of practical reason. Reason has been introduced in the Qur'ān and *riwāyāt* also with such characteristics.[60]

For Nubakhtī, the theoretical and reasoning characteristic of intellect is of special importance. Also, the above two definitions determine the position and domain of intellect. As mentioned, contrary to Ṣadūq, who believed knowledge of God is in the nature of man, Ibn Nabakht maintained the idea that the only power which

enables man to know God and the objective facts is reason. These two definitions of intellect would finally result in two different theological systems.

In his definition of the intellect, Shaykh Mufīd takes a middle course, which is closer to the rationalism of Nubakhtiyān. To him, the knowledge of religion is sought by reason, but, at the same time, he believes that the course of knowledge is short, and anyone at any level without knowing theology or being acquainted with techniques of debates, may achieve the knowledge of God merely by using his intellect.[61] In this statement the Shaykh is undoubtedly hinting to extreme rationalism. His definition of intellect in his treatise, *Al-Nukat fi Muqaddamāt al-Kalām* is also an indication of the middle course as referred to above. We can continue comparing the three scholars but it would suffice to say that their "rule of *lutf*" and "necessity of *aṣlaḥ*" reveals their different trends of mind.[62]

Briefly, in the struggle of rationalism and literalism. Shaykh Mufīd often takes the side of the former trend. Although he is a famous *Muḥaddith*, his tendency to theology has caused him to accept ideological *riwāyāt* only after their interpretation and correctness. Especially, in case of any contradiction between traditional and rational matters, he is often more inclined to reason.[63]

Now, we should know how far the Shaykh's ideology was followed and what was the final fate of rationalism and literalism in the Shī‘ah school.

Rationalism after Shaykh Mufīd

The most outstanding disciple of Shaykh Mufīd was the eminent theologian, Sayyid Murtaḍā, known as ‘Alam al-Hudā. Although he followed the course of his own teacher, he was nonetheless, more inclined to rationalization of theology. As revealed as a result of a comparison between the two books, *Al-*

Yāqūt and *Al-Dhakhīrah*, Shaykh Murtaḍā was very much influenced by Nubakhtiyān. Like Mufīd and Ibn Nubakht, Sayyid Murtaḍā also believed that knowledge of religious facts is acquirable.[64] He did not agree with the Shaykh's idea that in reasoning, intellect would have to be helped by traditional knowledge. Therefore, he criticized the idea. Somewhere else, in reply to the question whether the way to know God is revelation or intellect he explicitly derided the former and stressed on the latter.

Sayyid Murtaḍā's argument was exactly what was stated by ibn Nubakht. He quotes the view of Shaykh Mufīd, which prefers revelation to reason "as from some comparisons" and criticizes it.[65] Sayyid Murtaḍā's criticism is that if we accept this view from Imam (*'a*) for his being Imam, that will be a vicious circle and thus impossible, and if Imam's statement is presumed as notifying and leading to intellect, then, in fact, the criterion is intellect not Imam. The same view is also given in the book called *Al-Dhakīirah*.

Therefore, we can see how Sayyid Murtaḍā moves away from his teacher and gets one step closer to rationalism. Of course, this is not the only difference between Sayyid and Mufīd. An interesting thing is that Sayyid believes that religious knowledge is necessarily acquirable. As noticed before, Ṣadūq held that knowledge of God is a necessary being. Mufīd maintained the idea that such knowledge is acquirable. But Sayyid's idea is that the knowledge is not only acquirable and can be achieved by reasoning, but should necessarily be acquirable, since, otherwise, the innate knowledge is inconsistent with the grace of God and His wisdom. If somebody, for example builds a house for himself with hard labor and efforts, he will definitely appreciate its value and like to stay longer in it. So, a person who acquires knowledge by contemplation will also be more stabilized in keeping the knowledge. Thus, according to the rule of grace (*luṭf*) it is necessary for God not to bestow knowledge in the nature of man, but to create him in such a way to be able to achieve knowledge

only after profound thinking and rational efforts.[66]

Regarding theological issues relating to the domain of reason, there are often differences of opinion between Sayyid Murtaḍā and Shaykh Mufid.

This rational tendency was evolved and perfected by Sayyid Murtaḍā's disciples and followers. In this connection it is worth while to refer to two significant works, namely: *Taqrīb al-Maʿārif*, written by Abū-al-Ṣalāḥ Ḥalabī (d. 447 A.H.) and *Tamhīd al-uṣūl* written by Shaykh Ṭūsī (d. 460 A.H.), which had a great role in establishing and developing this tendency. This rationalism continued in the fifth and sixth centuries, and Shīʿah Theology united with Aristotelian logic and then with philosophy.

It was in the seventh century that by the appearance of a great character, i.e. Khwajah Naṣīr al-Dīn (d. 672 A.H.) the unity of Shīʿah theology with philosophy reached the highest point. Ever since theology form. The most famous Theologians of this period are ʿAllāmah Ḥillī (d. 726 A.H.) and Ibn Maytham Baḥrānī (d. 699 A.H.) This was in fact the last stage of evolution of rationalism movement in the Shīʿah Theology.

So far, we have became acquainted with three stages of the Shīʿah Theology. The first stage belongs to those theologians who enjoyed the presence of Imams. The theologians of the second stage consist of the Nubakhtis, Shaikh Mufid, Sayyid Murtaḍā and his followers. And the third stage begins with Khwajah Ṭūsī. As discussed above, rationalism evolved during these three stages step by step; and in the last stage the Shīʿah theologians came to realize that the peripatetic rational philosophy was a suitable form for introducing religious knowledge. To proceed further, we may come to a forth stage, which is still continuing to this present time. The pioneer of this stage is the Shīʿah philosopher and mystic (*ʿārif*), Ṣadr al-Mutaʾallihin Shīrāzī (d. 1050 A.H.), who was the founder of transcendental wisdom. At this stage, besides philosophical issues basic mysticism and mystical concepts are also employed,

and religion uses the same language as intellect and illumination. If in the third stage theology took a philosophical color, in the forth stage philosophy and mysticism were put in theological clothes.

Literalism the Contemporary

After Shaykh Mufid, simultaneous with rationalism's evolution, literalism also continued its life. The object of Shaykh to bring these two trends together failed and his proposal was apparently not accepted. In reaction to the rationalism dominating among theologians and philosophers another independent wing of literalists was farmed, which embarked upon establishing its stand and making propaganda for its ideas. It is worth giving a brief explanation of the views of two great characters the latter of trend, i.e. Raḍi al-din 'Ali ibn Ṭāwūs (589-664 A.H.) and Zayn al-din 'Ali ibn Aḥmad 'Āmili (911-965 A.H.) known as the second martyr. Sayyid ibn Ṭāwūs has a book called *Kashf al-Maḥajjah li Thamarah al-Muhjah*, which is in fact, a spiritual bequest made at the end of his life to his son and all Shi'ah people. From the fifteenth chapter onward the writer discusses the knowledge of God and the way to know the Almighty. The said chapter starts with the following statement:

> I have seen many scholars of the past and present time who think it is hard to know the real Master and the Owner of the two worlds and make it very difficult for people to know Him; whereas God and the Prophet (ṣ) have shown the matter in a very simple way. So, you can see all divine books, including the Qur'ān, full of reference to proofs and signs as sufficient indications to the knowledge of God, the Master and owner of this world and the next world, who is creating all beings, transmuting all changeable

creatures and changing all eras and times. This is
the same route as followed by Muslim scholars in
the first part of the history of Islam till the end of
the presence of the Imams (‘*a*).[67]

The Shī‘ah literalists can find their best definition in the
words of Sayyid ibn Ṭāwūs. He does not deny reason and in
knowing God does not resort to texts. He considers the truth of the
existence of the creator an inward and undeniable matter, and
believes that all people of intellect are unanimous in the truth of the
Creator; their difference is in the essence and attributes of God.
Hence, the description of intellect as given by Ibn Ṭāwūs is
different from that of the theologians and philosophers.

Sayyid states that difference by giving an example. In his
view, a theologian is like a teacher who takes the candle away from
his student and then demands him to look for it in the distance by
preparing means required.[68] He does not believe in the idea that
thinking in the essence or substances and accidents is prohibited
and does not lead to knowledge. But he thinks that this is a
dangerous and unsecured way.[69]

Sayyid Ibn Ṭāwūs especially criticizes the rational theology
of his time (Mu‘tazilah and following adherents) and sees the
differences among this group as the reason for such danger.[70] As
evidence, he refers to a treatise written by Quṭb al-Dīn Rāvandī, in
which the differences between Shaykh Mufid and Sayyid Murtaḍā
ninety five issues are mentioned.[71] The author recommends all
teachers to:

> Nourish, in the position of education, the
> original nature of their students with rational
> remarks and Qur’ānic signs and divine prophetic
> guidance, and explain to then that acquisition of
> knowledge of attributes of God, the effective, the
> Creator, the Glorious is a necessary duty on them,
> and tell them that such knowledge can be

achieved in the simplest way as guided by his Master, the Glorious.[72]

The reason we quoted here in detail the statement of Sayyid ibn Ṭāwūs is that, in our view, he has had a great influence on Shīʿah scholars including Shahīd Thānī. In his treatise called *Al-Iqtiṣād wa al-Irshād,* Shahīd quotes the same words from sayyid and then analyzes them. It is interesting to know that from the very beginning Shahīd Thani believed that thinking and reasoning are quite consistent with the purport of the verse known as the verse of nature which reads:فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفاً فِطْرَةَ اللّهِ الّتِى فَطَرَ النّاسَ عليها and also with the purport of the airway which says: every lengthen person is born on the *fiṭrah*.[73] This illustrate the general outlook of *Muḥaddithīn* and *Fuqahā'* of the Shīʿah school on the question of intellect known as a kind of in-born intellect.[74]

Shahīd Thani specifies that this in-born position of knowledge would not require learning any sciences, but could be achieved merely through religious signs and warnings.[75] He makes a caustic criticism of theology, in particular, the issues prevailing in his time, and despite theologians belief, he introduces theology as the most remote, the most difficult and the most dangerous way to God.[76]

As we noticed, theologians introduced "rationalistic knowledge" as the foundation of faith, but in this respect Shahīd relies on dogma and confession (*Jazm and Idh'ān*) to be achieved in any possible way.

The literalist movement was later followed by scholars like Shaykh Ḥurr ʿĀmili (d. 1104 A.H.) ʿAllāmah Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī (d. 1110 A.H.) and achieved its perfect position. The history of literalism in Shīʿah was so that its evolution gradually clarified the Shīʿah opinions and positions and reduced the initial ambiguities.

Conclusions

Now that a short report on these two powerful movements in Islamic history has been made, it would be convenient to come out of history for a while and have a look from above at this colorful scene of thoughts.

1) As we noticed both movements often go to either side of the extreme and each got tired out when facing difficulties on its way and observing solutions made by the opposite side. On occasions, theological discussions were so entangled in the struggles for proving or rejecting this and that, that main religious texts were totally forgotten or lost their substance and meanings under the blade of interpretations and justifications. It is undeniable that the extreme tendency towards reason sometimes seated the dust of negligence of the face of the essence of religion and hurt religious people and those versed in *Sharī'ah*. On the other hand, sometimes literalism turned its back on reason so angrily that it left religiousness defenseless, and when it went to the extreme, virtually it isolated religion. It is time that religion is deeply rooted in the heart of man and is founded on faith in God and fondness of the Almighty, but, noticeably, the prophets themselves have, at the same time, proudly and with all powers defended the foundations of religion in the scene of ideas and thoughts. It must, therefore, be concluded that religion should always have a strong rational backing.

2) The historical review of these two movements reveal that there exists an important difference between them. Rationalism has always been in critical changing positions, whereas literalism has usually been more stabilized. Of course, this does not mean that no change has been made in the opinions of *Muḥaddithīn*, or that they have not been influenced by other scholars on thoughts: it is only the matter of relative stability of opinions in literalism. The mind is basically a slippery thing; if uncontrolled, it will lose its way; but it will be stabilized to some extent and directed to a safe way by

religious texts if accepted as a source and a judge. If stability is a characteristic of religion, and if faith is devoid of hesitation and doubt, then the origin of faith should be linked with texts and sources of religion. In divine religions, devotional obedience (*ta'abbud*) of God and submission to Him is a fundamental principle of faith. Frankly, those who take reason as a means for allegorical explanation of religion and revelation for exercising their thoughts, the first thing they should bid farewell to is their faith.

3) By this study we did not intend to review and criticize opinions. It was rather an attempt to give a report on various outlooks on the subject. However, it is significant to say that negligence of either religion or reason or even neglect of either is definitely unacceptable.

Indeed, it is a great duty of theology in our time to associate these two together with due regard to their limits and positions. It is surprising that arguments on reason and religion are often inclined to the two opposite poles, as if there is a force which pulls those who are looking for facts to different sides of the spectrum. What is this force away from the centre, and how can it be overcome?

Notes

1. A. M. 'Aqqād, *Thought from the Islamic Outlook*, tr. by M.R.'Aṭā'ī, Āstān Quds Raḍawī; M.M. Sharīf, *History of Philosophy in Islam*, vol. 1, p. 195.

2. H. Al-Fākhūrī, and Kh. Al-Jurr, *The History of Philosophy in the Islamic History* tr. by A.M. Āyatī, pt. 2, ch. 3. Zamān Publication; Delisi Uliri: *Translation of Greek Sciences into the World of Islam*, tr. by A. Ārām, Jāvīdān publication.

3. We should also name a third personality called Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad Al-Ṭaḥāwī (d. 321 A.H.) who was active in Egypt. See the *History of Philosophy in Islam*, vol. 1, p. 348.

4. Shahristānī, *Al-Milal wa Al-Niḥal*, vol. 1. p. 105, Dār al-

Ma'rifah, Beirut.

5. A. Ash'arī, *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyin*, tr. by M. Mu'ayyidī, Amīr Kabīr, p. 110.

6. Shahristānī, *Al-Milal wa Al-Niḥal*, vol. 1, p. 56.

7.*Ibid.*, p. 72.

8. Ash'arī, *Al-Ibānah 'an Uṣūl al-Diyānah*, p. 9, Egyptian edition.

9.Shahristānī, *Al-Milal wa Al-Niḥal*, vol.1, p.105.

10. *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9. Later on in his book *Al-Luma'* he proceeded further and like Mu'tazilah believed in interpretation of attributes.

11. See Ash'arī, *Al-Luma'* and *Tārīkh al-Madhāhib al-Islāmiyyah*, p. 172.

12. *Al-Ibānah*, p. 20. See also *Al-Luma'* Although Ash'ariī did not specify *Kalām Nafsī* but his words signifies that.

13. See his two famous books: *Al-Tamhid*, ed. M. Al-Khuḍayrī, and M. 'Abd al Hādī, *Al-Inṣāf*, ed. M. Z. Al-Kautharī, Al-Maktabah al-Zāhiriyyah li al-Turāth.

14. *Al-Shāmil fī Uṣūl al-Dīn*, ed. R. M. Faranak, Institute of Islamic Studies, p. 12.

15. Al-*Mughnī*, vol. 14. This volume is all related to the question of reason and replies in details the questions of Ahl al-Ḥadīth and Ashā'irah.

16. *The history of philosophy in the Islamic World*, vol. 1, pp. 155-157.

17.*Al-Milal wa Al-Niḥal*, vol. 1, p. 55.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 54.

19. Abū Zuhrah, *Tārīkh al-Madhāhib al-Islamiyyah*, p. 164, Dār al-Fikr al-Arabī; Shiblī Nu'mānī, vol. 1, p. 70.

20. For a short comparison between Ash'arī's theory, on the one hand and rationalists and tradionalists see: *The History of Philosophy in the Islamic World*, vol. 1, p. 152.

21. Shiblī Nu'mānī: *The history of Theology*, p. 51.

22. Ghazzālī: *Al-Qisṭās al-Mustaqīm*, in Compilation of Articles,

vol. 3 Dār al-Maktab al-'Ilmiyyah, Beirut. See also *Tārīkh al-Madhāhib al-Islāmiyyah*, Abū Zuhrah, *Al-Madhāhib Al-Islāmiyyin*, 'Abd al-Raḥmān Badawī.

23. *Ibid.*, 21.

24. In *al-Munqidh min al-Ḍalāl* he has explained this story. See Ghazzālī Collection of Treatises, Vol. 7, or translation of the same book called *"Shakk wa Shenākht"*, tr. by Ayīneh Vand, Ṣ., Amīr Kabīr publication.

25. See *Qawā'id al-'Aqā'id fī Iḥyā' al-'Ulūm*, vol. 1, and compare it with part 2 of *Kitāb al-'Ilm* of the same book.

26. *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*, vol. 1, pp. 32-33, Dār al-Hādī.

27. *Ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 35-36. See also p. 63 on Dislikeness of arguments.

28. *Ibid.*, p.36.

29. See collection of Ghazzālī's Treatises vol. 4, Treatise *Iljām al-'Awāmm 'an 'Ilm al-Kalām*. In this treatise, by *'Awāmm* Ghazzālī means also the *faqīh* and the theologian. See *Ibid.*, p. 49.

30. *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*, vol. 1, p. 125.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 126.

32. *Ibid.*, p. 127.

33. Ibn Rushd, *Faṣl al-Maqāl* pp. 10-11 published in the Philosophy of Ibn Rushd in Cairo.

34. *Ibid.*, pp. 24-26.

35. *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19 and pp. 30-31. To understand the view of Ibn Rushd in this part see also *Al-Kashf 'an Manāhij al-Addillah*.

36. Ibn Nadīm, *Al-Fihrist*, p. 223.

37. H. Ṣadr, *Ta'sīs al-Shī'ah li 'Ulūm al-Islam* p. 302.

38. Ibn Murtaḍā, *Ṭabaqāt al-Mu'tazilah*; Ibn Nadīm, *Al-Fihrest*, p. 302

39. See an example of his debates in presence of Yaḥyā in *Kamāl al-Dīn* Shaykh Ṣadūq, p. 362, Dār al-Kutub al-Islāmiyyah.

40. See *Rijāl Najāshī*, *Rijāl and Fihrist* Ṭūsī, and *Ikhtiyār Ma'rifah al-Rijāl*, Kashshī.

41. *Ikhtiyār Ma'rifah al-Rijāl*, vol. 2, p. 526 Institute of Āl al-Bayt.

42. For a bibliography of this family see *Ta'sīs al-Shī'ah* and Shahristānī, preamble to *Firaq al-Shī'ah* Nubakhtī.

43. *Ma'ānī al-Akhbār*, preamble, p. 27

44. Ṣadūq, *Al-I'tiqādāt, Compilation of Shaykh Mufīd's Works* s, vol. 5, pp. 36-37.

45. *Al-Tauḥīd*, pp. 119-120.

46. Ṣadūq: *Al-I'tiqādāt*, pp. 42-43. Ṣadūq quote these a debate betweem Hushām ibn Ḥakam and Abū al-Hudhayl which is exactly his own opinion, Abu al-Hudhayl said to Hushām: "debate with you. If I succeeded, you accept my path and if you succeed I will accept yours". Hushām said: "If I succeeded you accept my path and if you succeed I will refer to my Imam".

47. It is not clear to which of the Nubakhtiyān the book belongs. See Preamble of *Al-Yaqūt fī 'Ilm al-Kalām*, Publication of the library of Āyatullāh Mar'ashī Najafī and preamble to *Anwār al-Malakūt fī Sharḥ al-Yāqūt, 'Allāmah Ḥillī*, Radī, Bīdār. See also endnote No. 54.

48. *Anwār al-Malakūt*, p. 3.

49. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

50. *Ibid.*, p. 3,10, 12.

51. *Ibid.* p. 52 , 99.

52. 'Abbās Iqbāl would relate it to the year 340. Madlung says it belonged to the 5th century. See *Theological Thoughts of Shaykh Mufīd*, p. 33. For this reason in our analysis we relied on that part of this book which have been attributed to Nubakhtian in other sources such as *Awā'il al-Maqālāt*, Shaykh Mufīd. Of course some hold *Al-Yāqūt* belongs to the 6th century (preamble to *Al-Yāqūt fī 'Ilm al-Kalām* Research of A. A. Ḍīā'ī) which does not seem correct.

53. *Ta'sīs al-Shī'ah*, p. 367, quoted from Bannāti, *Al-Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaqīm*.

54. See *Theological Thoughts of Shaykh Mufīd*, Preamble.

55. *Taṣḥīḥ al-I'tiqād*, p. 45

56. *Awā'il al-Maqālāt* p. 17, Institute of Islamic Studies

57. *I'tiqādāt Ṣadūq* pp. 42-43 and pp. 34-35; In *al-Tawḥīd*, part on *Al-Nahy 'an al-Kalām*, Shaykh quotes 35 *riwāyah*.

58. *Taṣḥīḥ al-I'tiqād* pp. 42-44 and pp. 53-57.

59. *Ma'ānī al-Akhbār*, p. 239

60. See *Kitāb al-'Aql wa al-Jahl* in *Uṣūl al-Kāfī* and *Biḥār al-Anwār*.

61. *Al-Fuṣūl al-Mukhtārah min al-'Uyūn wa al-Maḥāsin*, compilation of Shaykh Mufid's works, vol. 2.

62. See *Al-Yāqūt*, p. 156; Ṣadūq, *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 398; *Awā'il al-Maqālāt*, p. 16 and also footnote of p. 98. Please be careful about delecate difference of there three views.

63. *Taṣḥīḥ al-I'tiqād*, p. 125.

64. Sayyid Murtaḍā Al-Dhakhīrah, pp. 154-158 and p. 167.

65. *Rasā'il al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā*, vol. 1, pp. 127-128.

66. *Al-Dhakhīrah*, p. 168

67. *Barnāmeh-ye Sa'ādat* (The plan for prosperity), translation of *Kashf al-Maḥajjah*, p. 21.

68. *Ibid.*, p. 22.

69. *Ibid.*, pp. 38-39 and pp. 36-37.

70. *Ibid.*, pp. 27-28

71. *Ibid.*, p. 23

72. *Ibid.* p. 36

73. *Ibid.* p. 39.

74. *Ḥaqā'iq al-Imān*, p. 169 The article *Al-Iqtiṣād* has been published in *Ḥaqā'iq al-Imān* by publication of Āyatullāh Mar'ashī library.

75. *Ḥaqā'iq al-Adyān*, p. 170.

76. *Ibid.*, p. 171.

The Study of the Creed and Sciences of the Shī'ah

Dr. 'Abdul Jawād Falātūrī
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From a scientific point of view, the first conflict of all religions, civil and ethical laws would be against two basic human forces, viz. reason and the will. Reason without any restriction accepts whatever it understands, and, the will without any reservation and obligation can do whatever it wishes. Owing to their specific principles, religion and law restrict reason, and by their commandments and prohibitions obligate the will, no matter if it is in favour of an individual or society. They are, at least to this extent, against individual and collective freedom. Thus, every religion and law, from their beginnings, faces such obstacles. Hence, their success in wooing man's obedience, rests on persuading a person to overlook his absolute freedom and will power and willingly and earnestly surrender to them as having considerable convincing power. Definitely those religions that have succeeded to establish themselves in the past throughout the world enjoy such a convincing power.

Apart from civil codes that have the backing of the executive in the society, religious and moral rules do not, however, enjoy such support. As the human thought develops and social relations become more complicated, the success of the religious and moral rules in controlling man diminish. For, their success rests on proposing more convincing power as compared to other powers that influence man.

The cause of such weakness of religions has nothing to do with the progress of mankind and the emergence of civilizations or the incompatibility of religion with them. Rather, there is another chief cause, particularly in the case of ancient religions, that is the concealment of the original power of religion that in the course of time and in different places certain additions and subsidiaries attached to it, as a result of which they have lost their charm, flexibility and dynamism, have become stagnated, uninteresting, and perhaps for someone, irrational.

It is possible to regain its original power to the extent that it appears as a religion that can respond to the religious feelings of contemporary man, but to do this a distinction must be made between the primary simple principles and those temporal and spatial additions. However, it is not an easy task to make such a distinction, for primary simple principles and the additions have intermingled with each other to the extent that it is not possible to do so in an ordinary manner nor even in a scientific manner. A new scientific inquiry is required to carry out this task. It is not possible to elaborate all aspects of such an inquiry, nor it is possible to explain it roughly in a way to be meaningful. At the same time, its meaning would be clear if we group all of them under the title of 'Scientific Study,' and then proceed to know the meaning of this concept.

What is Scientific Study ?

We can present another definition of the term *scientific study*

parallel with the tradition of religious studies centres. If we ignore the traditional meaning of *Ijtihād* which hitherto has been used in *Uṣūl al-Fiqh,* since the advent of Islam and take it into account as a scientific method (a scientific method which is not seen in scientific books), then we can say in brief that ijtihād , as a scientific method of all sciences, is the scientific reference of the problems to their primary principles and evidences, in other words, to understand the problems from their primary principles and evidences under certain specific conditions on the basis of certain premises and foundations to maintain its scientific characteristics.

Parallel to this scientific method of ijtihād which is based on Aristotelian logic, we may explain scientific study as reference of any thought, belief, and incident, in general, all problems and speculative or practical affairs, both individual or collective, to their existential causes and establishing a scientific order between them on the basis of certain principles and laws, in a way a *muḥaqqiq* (researcher) unlike a *Muballigh* (preacher) tries to understand the wherefore of an issue and has nothing to do with its approval or negation, truth or falsehood of the issues.

But such an inquiry, i.e., trying to construe the existential causes of thought, beliefs, and incidents, in general exploring the existential causes of all problems and affairs, and their references to their causes, should be carried out under certain conditions and laws. After Descartes a new method of inquiry of natural sciences, based on empirical laws, came to light. Through Hegel, *Geistesgewissenschaften* (spiritual sciences) also came to be dealt with by this method. Researchers in the *Geistesgewissenschaften* in the nineteenth century sought to achieve the certainty of natural sciences in their respective fields. In this way a new method of inquiry in social sciences came into existence, keeping in view that the meaning, kind, and condition of experience depend on different sciences. This method, in so far as it concerns the past issues, is

known as historical method, provided that here the term *history* is
not to be construed as historiography in the special sense of history,
but in the sense of a research method based on certain criteria,
principles, and foundations.

Following this introduction , a question may born in mind
about the extent to which inquiry on Islam in general and the Shī'ī
creed in particular benefited from this method.

From the nineteen century onward, this method was used by the
Orientalists in dealing with Islam. Despite their importance, their
works covered only the political, economic, and social aspects of
Islam and failed to touch the inner causes of Islam, that is,
ideological and intellectual factors which were effective in the
spiritual and ideological development of Islam, moreover they
constitute the superstructure of political, economic, and social
matters as well.

Regarding the Shī'ī creed studies also, this problem seems to
be greater than other problems, that is, they not only committed the
above-mentioned error, but they based their research works only on
Sunni sources on the Shī'ah or they studied the Shī'ah in an
atmosphere under the influence of Sunni attitudes to the Shī'ah.

If we view all the books and articles on Islam and Islamic
countries in the West (as I have done with the journal *Abstracta
Islamica* since 1943 onward) we would come to know that out of
one hundred articles on Islam only two articles are related to non-
Sunni Islam, and out of seven articles or books on the Shī'ah , only
one of them is related to the *Ithnā 'Asharī* (twelver) Shī'ah. That
is, out of 350 books and articles on Islam only one book is related
to the *Ithnā 'Asharī* (twelver) Shī'ah which is less than books on
the Isma'lis or Zaydis.

At present, we have nothing to do with the causes. Let us look
at some of the ironical comments in those books about the Shī'ah:
Shī'ah Islam is nothing than a political sect; the Shī'ahs are
followers of the Mutazalites; the Shī'ah revived the ancient Iranian

dynasty system in the life of the Prophet's children lives. Shī'ah believe in the distortion of the Qur'ān . Shī'ah equate their Imams with the Prophet *(ṣ)*. Shī'ah under the influence of Christians believe in the sacrifice of a holy person (the third Imam (*'a*)) to save the ummah from their sins. Finally, Shī'ah is a Sufi sect. Such comments are still common, and permeate the West even through the *Encyclopedias of Islam*. So, only through a proper scientific inquiry it is possible to prove that such allegations are unfounded.

Besides these two reasons, i.e. (1) the need to distinguish the primary principles from the subsidiaries or unreal impressions, and (2) discerning and distinguishing different intellectual and ideological layers, the following reasons also can be cited:

1. Among the Shī'ī sources , there is a great deal of material concerning the ideas of other Shī'ī sects. So, through a scientific inquiry it is possible to analyze their views and trace their historical background. In the light of such analysis the distinct schools of thought will be known and their basic differences with that of the *Ithnā 'Asharī* Shī'ah (twelver) would come to light and indirectly it would help to know their simple and clear principles.

2. Unlike Sunnī Muslims, the *Ithnā 'Asharī* Shī'ah retained the tradition of philosophy in their study centres, particularly after the forth century onward and made great contribution to the development of philosophy without dislocating it from its philosophical path and transforming it into an imaginary form as Ismaʿīlīs did. Along with such development in philosophy, they achieved successes in spiritual sciences in regard to scientific thought and terminology, as well. The verdicts of persons like Ignaz Goldziher and Franz Rosenthal etc. are unfounded by saying that Islamic Sciences in the Shī'ī world are not dynamic. A scientific inquiry about these sciences and the development of Greek philosophy would delineate their mutual effects, a mutual effect other than what is believed in the West.

3. An inquiry into the origin and the development of Shi'i studies and sciences would not only distinguish the scholars of different areas and beliefs but it pave the way for a comparative studies of different schools of thoughts in Islam in general and Sunni Islam in particular. Altogether, many common points and new bases other than the prevalent one would emerge.

4. If in the future, at any place, such wishes come true and the foundation of a kind of critique and scientific inquiry into Islamic sources and schools of thought was laid down, then scientific inquiry into the Shi'ah would bear certain hallmarks owing to their material and formal sources.

5. Although the Shi'i sciences and thoughts developed in a direction different from that of the Western sciences, yet, there are certain achievements in certain branches of science parallel with Western thought. To bring to light such achievements and contrast them with scientific achievements in the West would bring out certain hallmarks of the Western sciences, and at same time it would give a chance to Muslims to be familiar with the Western scientific method and their common points with them.

6. An exploration into these issues in scientific and proper investigative way and finding out certain principles and bases which Shi'ahs consider the rational principles of their thought may result in the emergence of a new movement from within Islam without interference of any external factors which are alien to the spirit of Islamic and scientific thought. As a consequence of which, on the one hand Islamic original forces would find a new life, and on the other hand religious people would get convincing answers proportionate to their time and progress of mankind.

Following such reasons on the importance of setting about an inquiry into Shi'i sources, let us now embark on a problem which is common among the Westerners and the Easterners and discuss their solutions as well. I mean to discuss the mutual incompatibility of duties, it in other words, the incompatibility of

certain cases in which an ethical value stands against other values. Or in the ethical sense of the words, when an ethical value stands incompatible with other values.   To trace the origin of this controversy, it is necessary to distinguish the differences among the three notions of virtue, duty and ethical value.

When an ethical act occurs not accidentally but voluntarily by an agent who is trained to do so, then such a voluntarily state in Islamic ethical language, that state of the soul is called virtue. This is the viewpoint of Greek and Islamic schools of thought. There is no conflict between virtues, so far as they are attributes of the soul, for example, courage and chastity.   There is no incompatibility among these issues.

Ethical duty is the same ethical act in regard to the necessary of its emanation or performance by human beings. In the Western ethical schools, Kant is considered to be the exponent of ethical duty.   Contradiction and conflict between the ethical duties is debatable and conceivable.

Ethical Values

Besides virtue and duty, there is another ethical dimension which is called value. Value is ethical matter *per se*, irrespective of the agent or subjective state of the agent and irrespective of the necessity of doing or leaving it by human beings. For instance, the very good and bad itself, etc., Max Scheler and Nicolai Hartmann are the exponents of this idea. There are also contradictions among values .

After such an introduction, we proceed to propose the problem as such; when in certain cases two duties, ethical values or legal values come to be incompatible, in a way the agent is bound to follow one and leave the other one, now the question is whether the agent is guilty for abandoning his duty or ignoring the other ethical value and should he be blamed and punished or is there an alternative to it.   Greek philosophers and Christian ethical

philosophers ascribe such contradiction to the contradiction of ethical and non-ethical issues, not the contradiction of two ethical issues.

In his book *Metaphysics of Morals,* Kant discusses this issue and denies any conflict between two ethical duties. In his view, a duty is a principle and rational rule. Thus, contradiction of two rational duties at the same time which both are indispensable is inconceivable, for, in this case they would not be called rational rules. Conflict may occur, but between their arguments not the duties. Therefore, such conflict of the duties stems from the conflict of their reasons and after a rational study we would conclude that the reasons of one of the duties versus the other one is poor to create duty, that is, a practical rule. Keeping in view the classification of the duties, Kant proposes the solution of the problem as follows: if two arguments contradict each other, it is not the practical reason that says that the sound one should exist, rather, sound argument itself would exist. It is to be concluded that on Kant's approach the conflict between two opposing reasons has nothing to do with agents.

This solution is in keeping with Kant's philosophy and his way of thought. He refers all duties as rules to practical reason and in his view it is impossible to set up two opposing rules on general systems of duties. This solution is not applicable to those schools of thought that do not believe that duties, like rules, stem from practical reason, or do not believe in any convincing power higher than individual power, like social or divine power.

Nicolai Hartmann, one of the founders of the schools of ethics, says that conflict of ethical values is one of the metaphysical problems of ethics. He believes in gradation of values and is of the view that a person (agent) should act according to the ethical values that he feels stronger and sound and ignore the other one which he considers weaker. At the same time, he confesses that if a person ignores a weak ethical value he would be sinful. In this

case, the human being would be always sinful. Hartmann considers it the destiny of human beings. Indeed, the Christian idea of the innate sin of man underlies such belief, moreover, in this theory also certain principles and assumptions are taken for granted without referring to an agent.

The Shī'ī Approach

Let us now study this problem within the framework of Islamic tradition in general and Shī'ī scientific tradition in particular and assess the solution. In our tradition we did not face this problem in such form, rather it appeared in the form of conflict of proofs (*adillah, amārah,* and *uṣūl*) or *tazāhum* (interference) of rules. And their solutions appeared in the form of *takhṣīṣ* (specification), *taqayyud* (qualification), *takhaṣṣuṣ, wurūd, ḥukūmat, tarjīḥ, takhāyyur,* etc.

It is clear that we have nothing to do with two duties in a general or a particular sense, or it is not the case of absolute and determined concepts. There are other solutions based on the following facts:

1. Acceptance and surrender before divine legislation.

2. Taking for granted the existence of the difference between strong and weak proofs, e.g., *amārah* and *uṣūl.*

3. Admitting that every human being is responsible according to its capacity, therefore, a person may not face two opposing duties, so by obtaining one of them he would be free from any sin.

These statements, however, may not be convincing reasons to a person who does not believe in these principles. Here we can refer to the views of two eminent Shī'ī jurisprudents, namely Shaykh Muhammad Ḥasan the author of *Jawāhir* and Shaykh Murtaḍā Anṣārī. They use the two rules of *wurūd* and *ḥukumat* to clarify their positions. They mean to say that sometimes a proof can nullify the theme of the other proof, that is, repudiate its soundness, or a proof can limit or expand the scope of the subject or even

predicate another proof.

Owing to the forgoing idea and Kant's views we can conclude that Kant's solution was that the contradiction of the two duties should be referred to conflict of their proofs, that is, one proof ultimately would emerge as a plausible proof and the other one would be rejected as a proof for being weak. Following such ideas of Kant and keeping in view those points in the notion of *wurūd* (apart from its application in religious issues), the following solutions could be proposed without impairing the soundness of either proof. Now it should be considered whether in a special case of the opposition of two proofs, one of those proofs can nullify the subject of the other proof in such a way that the second proof maintains its nature and loses its *ḥujjiyat* (its authority as a proof) or not? If it is possible, then we can conclude that only one proof and one moral value is directed towards the agent, and without undermining either of the duties the agent would keep away from the arena of contradiction. Here we may have some name for *wārid* (the dominant proof) or not.

However, this solution may not be useful to the school of values, but this is applicable to the laws rooted in divine rules as well as ethical and civil laws on daily life of human being, which have certain causes and certain advantages. They can be executed easily without constructing it on certain limiting and particular principles.

Similarly, we can use from certain points available in the notion of *ḥukūmat*, that is, we can say that two opposing proofs or duties or values retain their authority as proofs in a real sense of the word, and only in the cases of the contradiction between two proofs one of them would supervise and limit the other's scope.

This approach less than the former approach, i.e., *wurūd* relies on certain axioms which may contradict those of other schools of thought. It can be implemented even in moral values, and civil code and duties.

The aforementioned approach signifies the meticulousness of Shī'i scholars and their way of resolving the problems related to the daily life of mankind, and while supporting the forgoing six proofs it shows how it is possible to carry out a scientific inquiry into creeds and schools of thought as well as how to participate in human civilization and interplay with them and pave the way for further development on the bases of the potentials of the Shī'ah.

To realize such a wish is possible only in an open and fair atmosphere by real and hardworking scholars who are free from any subjective passion and ambition.

In order to attain this goal, the University of Cologne set up a centre for the study of the Shī'i sciences and creed in 1965, and it has thus far collected eight thousand books on the Shī'i school of thought on different branches ranging from *fiqh*, *uṣūl*, *kalām*, *rijāl*, philosophy, and history. It is interesting to note that this centre did not have even a single book on the Shī'ah previously. Since 1967, when I participated in the Congress of Orientalists in Würtsburg, Germany and gave a report on the importance of the study of Shī'i sciences and creed, special attention has been paid to this issue and more than ten articles have been written on this topic by Professor Erwin Graef and myself, and more than ten books are to be written. Such success paved the way for further progress in our work and established our relation with other research centres as well.

Notes:

1. This article addresses those who are specialized in Islamic studies, thus, it refrains from dealing with it in detail.

2. Cf. R. Srothmann, "El Schi'a" in *Encyclopedia of Islam. Handbuch der orientalistik*, 8. Band, Religion, Brill, 1910; I. Goldziher, *Vorlesungen über den Islam*, Heidelberg, 1910; *Die Richtungen der Islamischen Koranauslegung*, Leiden, 1952; Th. Noeldeke, *Geschichte des Korans*, Leipzig 1909.

3. Cf. *The Technique and Approach of Muslim scholarship*, Rome

1947.

    4. Nicolai Hartmann and Max Scheler.

    5. Cf. H. Thielicke, *Theologische Ethik*, Tübingen, 1965.

    6. Kant, *Metaphysik der Sitta*, Philosophische Bibliothek.

    7. Cf. N. Hartmann, *Ethik*, Berlin 1945.

    8. *Ibid.*

    9. *Ibid* .

10. Particularly Professor Dr. Erwin Graef and Dr. Wolfgang Wagner;   the Finance and administrative deputy of the university contributed a lot in establishing the Centre for Studying the Shī'ī Creed and Sciences.

From Revival to Reform

Dr. Murtaḍā Asʿadī
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Innovation (*bidʿah*) is the plague of religion. Amīr al-Muʾminīn, ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib has been quoted as saying: "Nothing destroys religion like innovation." The Prophet (Ṣ) said: "All innovation is deviation."[1] Imam ʿAlī also said: "Certainly, only doubtful innovations cause ruin except those from which Allāh may protect"[2] But what is the definition of innovation? Innovation can be defined as introducing into religion elements alien to it. Now, such innovation may not contradict the Qurʾān, tradition or general opinion, in which case it is called "good, or auspicious, innovation." It is also possible that the innovation in question is in contradiction with the Qurʾān, tradition, or generally held opinion, in which case it is called "deviated, or pernicious, innovation."[3] This definition reveals the central meaning of innovation; introduction into religion of elements which are in contradiction with the Qurʾān and tradition and which endanger the true and original teachings of the faith itself. This definition is valid even if the concept of tradition from the Shiʿa perspective is a different one.

In his *Sharh-e Mishkāt*, Shaykh 'Abdul Ḥaqq Dehlavī makes the following statement concerning the necessity to adhere to the teachings of the Qur'ān and to tradition:

> Be aware of the fact that whatever has appeared since the death of the Prophet (Ṣ) is innovation. And of these, that which is in agreement with the principles of his tradition or has been derived from it by analogy is called a good or auspicious innovation, while that which is in opposition to it is called deviated or pernicious innovation... Some innovations are necessary, such as the learning and teaching of morphology and syntax, through which one can gain knowledge of Qur'anic verses and of *aḥādīth* and is thus empowered to preserve and maintain their principles and teachings, and other things on which the preservation and continued existence of faith and religion may depend. Other innovations, although not absolutely necessary, are admirable, and therefore encouraged... There are others, which though not admired or encouraged, are not forbidden either... And there are still others which are completely forbidden.[4]

A forbidden innovation is, then, the sort that is detrimental to the faith. In other words, from the point of view of the believers, what determines the status of an innovation is the kind of relationship it has with religion, because it is the faith itself which constitutes their main concern. This concern was so great that it was manifested in all ancient Islamic philosophy, literature and scholarship. It was precisely such concern that motivated Imam Muḥammad Ghazzālī (d.505 A. H.) to write his magnificent *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*. In his Introduction, referring to the prophetic narration, نَعُوذُ بِاللَّه مِن علم لاَيْنفَعُ he says that since the path leading to spiritual salvation has remained hidden from men, he has been obliged to guide them back to it by distinguishing useful and helpful knowledge from that which is detrimental and destructive, thus liberating them from fascination with the world of illusion,

satisfaction with superficial knowledge, and consequent loss of its inner and essential meaning and significance.[5] This anxiety concerning the threat of innovation and heresy was not limited to Imam Muḥammad Ghazzālī, but has been widespread among Muslim thinkers belonging to all schools of jurisprudence. For example, this was the main preoccupation of Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad bin Taymiyyah-e Ḥanbalī (d. 728 A. H.). However, like Ghazzālī, he considered philosophers and theologians to be the innovators.[6] In other words, both of these men, and other great Muslim thinkers, such as Ibn Ḥazm, who were anxious to preserve the purity and continued existence of the faith, viewed innovation and heresy, the greatest destroyer and corrupter of the faith, to be something inbred, a result of various actions of the Muslims themselves. This view of innovation and heresy continued until the modern age and the falling of the Muslim world into the clutches of Western colonialism. Although all great revivers of the faith condemned such innovations, these heresies were all based upon "the futile approaches of theologians, philosophers and philologists, who have, impudently, interpreted the Qur'ān in a manner different from the one and only correct interpretation, which is the traditional one handed down from the past."[7] In other words, even the innovators themselves considered the Qur'ān as the source of all religious authority and guidance, the difference being, simply, in the approaches and viewpoints being adopted. The difference between the contending approaches could thus be said to consist of the degree of emphasis each put upon limited human reason, i.e. Greek philosophy, there being no difference of opinion concerning acceptance of the Qur'ān as the main source of all religious decrees and regulations. In the final analysis, then, even the innovators were religiously inclined and motivated. But in spite of this, Ghazzālī states that: فَائًّا علمُ طريقِ الآخرةِ مِمَّا سمَّاه اللَّهُ سبحانَهُ فى كتابِهِ : فقهاً و حكمةً و علماً وضياءً ونوراً وهدايةً ورشداً فقد أَصْبَحَ من بَين الخلق مطوياً وصارنسياً منسياً).[8] The pious literal-mindedness, which was the distinguishing characteristic of all great revivalists, moved them to oppose all rationalistic interpretations of the Qur'ān and the tradition, since, they believed, such approaches "keep the way leading to salvation hidden from, and unknown to,

the people." This is what motivated them to write such books as
Ihyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn. It should be kept in mind, also, that the sort
of effort in defense of religious integrity and purity just referred to
were purely religious in nature and were unaffected by any
particular social view or consideration

"Forbidden innovation," considered to be the corrupter and
destroyer of faith and tradition, took different forms and shapes in
the modern period. Although it is true that the Muslim world had,
particularly through the Ottoman Khalifate, contacts and dealings
with the changing West before Napoleon's attack upon Egypt in
1789 A. D , this invasion marked the beginning of a new period of
far-reaching and ceaseless modern Western influence in the Muslim
world, which is why it is considered to be the beginning of its
"modern age." The Muslim world's sudden confrontation with a
West which, in contrast with its old, medieval form, had attained
astonishing power, caused, in addition to a strong tendency to
imitate this dominant power's viewpoints and methods, adoption of
a critical attitude by Muslims and their thinkers towards themselves
and their beliefs. The sudden dominance of the West over the
Muslim world and the fate of its inhabitants, in short, the rise of
Western imperialism, impelled Muslim thinkers to enter into a
critical re-evaluation of their beliefs in an attempt to discover the
possible causes of the social misfunctioning of these beliefs and of
Islam in general. This critical reexamination was no longer purely
religious in nature, being , in fact, an attempt to discover the
fundamental causes of their social malfunction, a malfunction
which they deemed responsible for the material backwardness of
the Muslim world in comparison with the West. This is why this
latter group of thinkers are referred to as "reformers" and not as
"revivers".

These reformist thinkers who, in the final analysis, were
trying to ensure the continued existence of Islam, had as their
primary preoccupation the social, or in other words, worldly,
efficacy of the faith. They, like the revivers who had preceded
them, believed that Islam had been corrupted in the course of time,
and generally were of the opinion that the teachings of Islam, in

their pristine purity, should not have led Muslims to such material and worldly infirmity. However, their conception of Islamic purity was diametrically opposed to that held by the "revivers." The most important characteristic of most of the modern Muslim reformers, from Sayyid Jamāl al-Dīn Asad Ābādī, who was deeply concerned with preservation of the integrity and unity of Islam, up to the present, is their rationalism, a trait shared in varying degrees by the vast majority of them. In short, then, what had been condemned as reprehensible by past "revivers" was now viewed as permissible, praiseworthy, or even necessary.

The above development is perhaps best illustrated by a cursory comparison of Sayyid Jamāl al-Dīn's over-rationalistic defense of Islam against attacks made by Ernest Renan; a defense meant to prove the "scientific" nature of Islam, with the position taken by Ghazzālī vis-ā-vis secular branches of learning and reason. Even Iqbāl Lāhūrī, despite being deeply and extensively influenced by Ash'arī oriented Maulawī, holds intellectual and rational analysis to be both possible and necessary. This is so because he believes in the need for "action," which in turn necessitates crediting, in some manner, "freedom of will and choice." This is why, in contrast with the traditionalist "revivers" who preceded them, these reformers, especially the founder of their school, Sayyid Jamāl al-Dīn Asad Ābādī, have been categorized, on the whole, as "modernists" by E.I. J. Rosenthal, Ḥamīd Enāyat, Mājid Fakhrī, and many other scholars.

In light of the developments witnessed by the modern age and the fact that for the first time in its history the Muslim world was under the domination of non-Muslims, a fundamental change in the position of these typically "modern" reformers took place regarding the secular sciences and the human intellect; a change that per force revolutionized the definition of "innovation" and "heresy." One of the most significant outcomes of this transformation was that in the process of trying to find a way out of the bondage to which the Muslim world had fallen prey as the result of Western colonial domination, gradually even the Sunni thinkers came to accept the need for some form of *ijtihād* and resort to

reason in grappling with the requirements of the day. In other words, the more or less sudden confrontation of the Muslim world with the colonialism of a secularized West, and the fact that, in a sense, this secularized West had succeeded in attaining *wilāyat* over the Muslim world, taught the Shi'ah and the Sunni thinkers both, but especially the Sunnis, the need to take into consideration "the particular requirements of the times" and the problem of social efficacy in deducing religious decrees. Thus, the first generation of Muslim reformers, direct descendants of the earlier revivalists, made its appearance.

Undoubtedly, ever increasing awareness of the crushing material backwardness of the Muslim world and the inability of the Muslims to satisfy their worldly needs sometimes led to such an overemphasis and exaggeration of the social and worldly efficacy and utility of religion that it was conceived of as a mere tool in betterment of men's material existence. This worldly interpretation of religion, held by some of the more modern reformers, in turn paved the way for the notion that this utilitarian faith could, when necessary, be replaced by tools more efficient in improving the worldly lives of the "Muslims." These overly modern Muslim reformers were, in fact, progeny of a group of secular, or even anti-religious, reformers who considered religious faith itself as the main cause of the backwardness of the Muslims. To be sure, the world had undergone such fundamental transformation since the 18th century that even Ghazzāli himself, had he been alive, may not have been able to refrain from contemplating ways and means of improving the material condition of the Muslims so as to liberate them from the clutches of Western colonialism. It would be almost impossible to imagine, however, that he would have adopted an utilitarian conception of faith.

Many Muslim thinkers and reformers, unwilling to take the easy way out by adopting a materialistic and utilitarian conception of religion, instead of taking into consideration only one requirement, namely raising the material existence of the Muslims to a level comparable to that enjoyed by the West, set themselves the task of satisfying another, but equally important need as well: that of

preserving the integrity of the fundamental teachings and principles of Islam. It may perhaps be asserted that the attempt to find ways to meet both of these requirements simultaneously has constituted the most fundamental preoccupation of the greatest Muslim reformers since the onset of the Muslim world's confrontation with the West. A preoccupation which, in its most intense forms, has led to a new form of revivalist religious thought which, during the last few decades has been called by the West, in what is perhaps a pejorative reference to an early twentieth century American Protestant movement, "Fundamentalism."

The most important characteristic of this new form of religious reformism or revivalism is its attempt to effect a reconciliation between religion and the world, so that while attaining ever greater material and worldly comfort and progress, the basic principles and teachings of Islam are safeguarded as well. Perhaps one of the most important consequences of the Islamic Revolution in Iran and the formation of the Islamic Republic, which are themselves the most prominent fruits of this type of reformist thought in the contemporary world, has been to provide the most suitable circumstances in which the intellectual challenge of trying to find the best methods to harmonize and satisfy the two vital necessities referred to above could be met. It would be regrettable indeed if the opportunity thus provided is missed. For if Muslim thinkers make appropriate use of these suitable conditions they will have created the intellectual bulwarks that shall ensure the victory of the most difficult revivalist and reformist religious effort made in recent centuries. On the other hand, if these opportunities are either missed or misused, the stage shall in all likelihood be set for a gradual and downward movement which began with Ghazzāli's revivalism and has continued until the present time and the reformism of Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khan and others like him.

Notes

1. Abī Dāwūd, *Sunan*, Book 39, Chapter 5.
2. *Nahj al-Balāghah*, ed. Ṣubḥī al-Ṣāliḥ, *Khutbah* 169., p. 244.

3. Tahānawi, *Kashshāf-e Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Funūn,* ed. Eshpring (Istanbul, Dār
lil-Nashr wa al-Tuzī', 1404/ 1984), Vol., p.133. The quotation is from
Imam Shāfi'i (d.204 H.Q.).

4. *Ibid.,* pp.133-134.

5. Imam Muḥmmad Ghazzālī, *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn* (Beirut, Dār al-
Nadwah al-Jadīdah), Part 1., p.2.

6. 'Abbās Zaryāb, "Ibn Taymiyyah," *The Great Islamic Encyclopedia,*
Vol.3, p.178. See also: Mājid Fakhrī, *Sayr-e Falsafah dar Jahān-e
Islam,* (Tehran, Markaz-e Nashr-e Dāneshgāhī, 1993), pp.337-338.

7. *Ibid.,* p. 338.

8. *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn,* p. 2.

Human Rights in the West and Islam

Dr. Sayyid Muṣṭafā Muḥaqqiq Dāmād

I would like to provide you with a linguistic and philosophical analysis from the perspectives of, Islam and Christianity and offer a legal and political analysis.

The term "human rights" as it is used today, does not have a long history in the literature and law tradition of the West. Reviewing the work of the greatest philosopher of the era of the enlightenment, namely Kant, who more than any other philosopher, took man and his grandeur as the origin and criterion of practical philosophy, we will be surprised to find no trace of the term "human rights" in his works.

Actually, this term was created in the context of a socio-political movement in France, thereby preserving its original meaning and political content up to now, without which it does not make sense. In practice, human rights is manipulated in the domain of certain states, and is used as a means to impose their opinions and authority. On this basis, the legal concepts compiled under the umbrella term, human rights, include these rights: right of living, right of freedom, right of equity, right of pleading for justice, right

of security against abusing authority, right of security against torture, right of dignity and reputation, right of asylum, right of minorities, right of social life, right of thinking, faith and speech, right of religion, right of participating in public gatherings, economic rights, right of ownership, right of working, right of sharing the material and spiritual affairs, right of having a family, right of women, right of education, individual's right of living, right of abode.

Obviously, the main principle of enjoying these rights requires that they should not contradict with other human rights.

These rights may be logically classified into the following:

Individual's rights

These include the right to security and defense against other human beings and the state, the right of living and having physical health, the right of having faith, morals as well as the right of ownership.

Political rights

They comprise participation in political and social affairs including freedom of press, freedom of sciences, freedom of education and research, freedom of gathering and forming societies.

Primary social rights

These comprise the right to work, social security, cultural and social development, etc.

This is a brief list of the terms that are popular as human rights. With respect to the Islamic World, in "the International Conference of Islamic Scholars" held in September 1991, it was concluded that from the outset, Islam has mentioned clearly twenty

human rights, some of which are the right of living, right of security against invasion and persecution, right of asylum, right of minorities, right faith, right of social security, right of working, right of education and right of spiritual enrichment. Yet, practically these values are inferred as rights but in Islamic jurisprudential terms, they are regarded as jurisprudential and moral obligations.

In other words, a Muslim is obliged to do these duties, some of which are obligatory (*wājib*) or preferable (*mustaḥab*). That is to say that, in Islam, instead of the question of 'right', the question of obligation is set forth. It is from these obligations that we derive these rights.

In this way, Christian scholars also have been able to infer the rights for those who benefit from moral behaviour through their traditional ethics. The same is true with the Jewish tradition whose Bible is claimed to contain the origin of human rights.

In relation to human rights, the followers of these three religions namely, Judaism, Christianity and Islam, give priority to the equity of all human beings before God. But in fact, what the followers of these faiths regard as "human rights" are the values that are mostly known as moral values. This means that such rights do not have civil sanction or any rewards or punishments unless they endanger human lives and properties.

In contrast, the human rights as interpreted and formalized in 1789 in France were intended to be turned into laws, and to be a means to political power, and a guarantee their universal civil sanction.

Here, we going to express the principal difference between human rights as the product of the historical, political and intellectual tradition of the West from the beginning (the age of Greek philosophers) up to the present day, and the views of Islam in this respect.

Some points about the term "human rights"

The term "human rights" poses the question, why and in what sense human is the focal point of this term. It is not possible to mention the historical and social reasons to answer the question just raised. But it should be noted that in the eighteenth century the Western World, or rather the Western nations came to the conclusion that peaceful life is possible only when man is devoid of features such as: religion, policy, relation, race, skin color, sex, position, wealth and without any identity except his/her humanity or as we term it, humanity for humanity's sake, not as a Muslim, a Christian, a Jew, a secular, a black, a white, a rich, a poor, a sage, an ignorant, the ruler and subordinates. As soon as man was defined in this way in the phenomenon of human rights, his rights were defined differently. Here, the 'right' is his most natural and primary claim, present spontaneously in the existence and nature of each individual, which has been given to him by no one and which cannot be taken from him by anyone. This right does not refer to any person but things like life, freedom, equity, etc. There are, in contrast, rights of children, parents, wife, husband and vice versa.

The question that is raised now is that of the legitimacy of religious duties and the rights derived from them, and whether all were provided from the origin of revelation or a particular source of law-making. Where is the legitimacy of human rights, Islamic laws, Christian laws or...? These have a spiritual origin, Therefore, where is its legitimacy? The legitimacy that would have civil sanction and the rewards and punishment resulted from it. This legitimacy should conform with these limitations. Where is the source and reference of this legitimacy? To prove this case, the founders of human rights neither wanted nor were able to refer to any religions or sources. Otherwise, the question of man would not have become humanity for humanity's sake. They had to find the legitimacy and civil sanction of these rights in man and his substantial necessities, as it was created in the philosophy of the

Enlightenment.

They took the dignity of man as the most important and clearest phenomenon of a typical human being, which could function as a major principle and be accepted unanimously by all humans anywhere and at any time. As all religions confirm, dignity is a characteristic that can be found in all human beings. This means that human dignity is a primary principle, not a right, which is a part of man's nature.

The next step that would give general credit to this individual aspect was necessity. The phenomenon of equity fulfilled this duty. The equity accepted by all humans was a dignity that was able to persuade all people of the necessity of preserving their substantial needs, and prove the right of questioning those who deprive the people from their rights.

It is not only the question of accepting this general principle but its civil sanction, which secures the active aspect of dignity and equity. That is to say, dignity and equity is something within humans. The physical aspect is the implementing aspect that should be directed from the top and another aspect. Only the phenomenon of justice has been shared by all humans. It addresses in general the owners of authority as well as all humans who somehow, even at a small scale, have the status of superiority over others.

This was a brief account of the philosophy of human rights evolution, its content and its civil sanction. Now, let's see why there exists a difference between what the West understands about man and eventually his rights and what religions, particularly Islam, pose as human rights. The root of such difference appears to be in the perception or rather in the method of applying the two distinctive pictures of man in the Western World on the one hand and Semitic religions on the other.

In the Semitic religions, as the Noble Qur'ān states, God is at the center of the world view. Man, in the true sense, is the one who bases and realizes his existence, intellect and acts on sincerity

and devotion to the unique God. On this basis, the source of man's dignity is his sincere attention to God and the pure virtue of this human being before God.

As it is stated, the most dignified man for God is the one with the greatest virtue. The Western world view of man is in contrast with this one. The thought and intellect of the West gives centrality to man; the notion that man is the criterion for the measurement of everything is a philosophical principle dating back to the era before Socrates. The Greek mythology and then all their philosophical schools had this principle as the origin of their movement. The Greek gods, universe and incidents, either positive or negative, revolve around the pivot of man and his demands. Gradually, this notion stemmed from those who were not Jew and followed other religions and the tradition of European Christianity. Nevertheless, the Theo.-centralism was replaced by human-centralism, and thus in this sense, God was the source of addressing man and his demands.

The notion of sin as a substantial aspect of man, and the belief in the necessity of avoiding sin culminates in a theological mechanism that necessitates the sacrifice of man's God within Jesus Christ. The crucifixion of Jesus Christ to save man from sin is actually something at the service of man or human-centralism, without any advantages for God or Jesus Christ. As a consequence, the Theo.-centralism of Semitic religions is replaced by human - centralism of the West.

However, man is depicted differently in Islam. That is, man has been created with a nature moving towards uniqueness, (religion-nature), and Theo.-centralism is the principal element of his existence. In other words, in contrast to the human-centralism in the West, Theo.-centralism is dominant in Islam. Obviously, throughout history, the church has repeatedly strive to limit human centralism by imposing the Church's principles and commands. Ultimately, however, the power of human-centralism succeeded in

freeing Western man from these obligations and limitations.

The impact of the Theo.-centralism in the Semitic religions, particularly Islam, and human-centralism in Western culture with respect to human rights are as follows:

The human rights derived from the religions consider these rights in the framework of the divine will and command, and thus cannot ignore all credits and aspects. When one talks about human rights in Islam, man is not absolute. It is man who is related to God. The same applies to Christianity whereas human rights fail to give way to any limitations whatsoever.

This distinction has brought about debates between the advocates of human rights in its Western sense, and the followers of the schools such as the Catholic Church and Islam.

The boundary line existing between absolute human rights and human rights limited by religious obligations has been discussed formally between Muslims and Christians in different times and places.

The philosophical and linguistic aspects of human rights have just been briefly stated. Now, let us have a look at the historical trend of codes and laws related to human rights in the West, and then touch on the current status of human rights in the West.

Philosophical and mystical principles of human rights in Islam

The origin of the principal difference between the Islam's and the West's views of human rights in this connection is in their sources. In Islam, human rights are founded on philosophical and mystical principles, which are necessarily in accordance and coordinated with religious laws. The following is a brief account of these principles:

1. The principle of man's dignity: In the Noble Qur'ān man

is regarded as a creature to whom God has disposed dignity (I have given dignity to Adam's children, (17:70). Such dignity is a theoretical value that can have practical implications. Man's dignity from the perspective of the Qur'ān is not a credential but a real affairs, indicting that in existential dimension, man is prominent and credited. That is to say that man is the supreme creature of the universe. That is the reason why God, after the creation of man, demands of Satan, "Why did you not prostrate yourself to what I created with my own two hands?"

This theoretical dignity can carry along with it valuable and practical generosities. For the sake of this dignity, all the ethical and legal education should be in full conformity with it. As soon as one accepts that man is a dignified and precious gem, one automatically believes that no only freedom and security are his rights, but also they should be so arranged and interpreted as to conform with one's dignity.

2. The principle of man's demand for God: In principle, man demands for God. Man feels God at the bottom of his heart though he does not se His face. Man's need for God is not unconscious, nor is it compulsory. One should not think of God as an unknown thing whom one cannot find. Man looks for God who is familiar and by Whom he is fascinated. According to a law of theosophy, man's existence is not separate and independent, but it is thoroughly dependent and linked. Yet this linked existence is not connected to another being with a linked existence; it is linked to an independent creature. Man is nothing more than this very dependency and linkage. It should not be deemed that man is a creature capable of praising God, but that man's relation with God is rooted in man's intrinsic flaws and his mere need of God:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ أَنتُمُ الْفُقَرَاءُ إِلَى اللَّهِ

"O men, you are the ones that have need of God;"(35:15)

In this verse, both truths are included: firstly, man's existence is not independent; and secondly, man's connection is only to God, not to any other creature.

As a result, any legal order or arrangement for man should conform to his spirit of God-demanding. Those legal teachings presupposing independent existence for man, or relating him to someone other than God, do not stem from the source are often prone to error in adaptation otherwise they know that man is a dependent creature. Pagans too are fond of something or someone and trust in it or in him. Here, the difference is that they have chosen something other than God as an independent creature, and have slipped into wrong ways at the adaptation stage.

3. The principle of man's immortality: One of the other advantages of Islamic human rights is that man never vanishes. This claim may be realized through reasoning or citation. The Noble Qur'ān regard man as a creature possessing a soul, who is believed to enter another world after leaving this world, and who will enjoy eternal life there. Theosophy too considers man as having abstract soul, and states that this soul is immortal. From the theosophical perspective, only man's body dies, and death is simply the separation of body from soul. And when following the God's will, this separation ends, the soul will be united with the body appropriate for the next world.

This principle has been adopted by all humans, and the existing differences are the outcome of mal adaptation. All human beings demand longer life, and make every effort to live a little bit longer. This reveals that man looks for immortality by nature. However, in the course of adaptation, some believe that eternity belongs to this world, whereas both man and the present world are sojourners. Of course, man reaches his mid-abode after death and then moves on to the great resurrection. In contrast, the world goes straight ahead to the great resurrection. The Qur'ān regards the whole universal system as moving like man, towards God. The

universe also goes towards doomsday to testify in favor of or against the deeds of its passengers, or to complain about their deeds, or to intercede for them. It is cited in our traditions that the present world and its elements witness our deeds or complain or intercede for us.[1] Therefore, all humans seek immortality, but some think of the present world as being eternal, and do not know that eternity belongs to the soul, not matter, and that whatever remains eternal from them, do not include the material things of this world or wealth.

This foolish idea has been urging the material and layman to become rich so that he can have access to eternal life by his fortune, and to destroy or control death. The Noble Qur'ān considers this idea false and unripe, and reveals the pure eternity:

$$\text{مَا عِندَكم يَنْفَدُ و مَا عِندَ اللَّهِ بَاقٍ}$$

"Whatever is at your disposal is doomed to die, and whatever is at God's disposal lasts for ever."(16:96)

4. The principle of eventual peace for man: It might be assumed that eternity means reaching the peaceful abode, however, these two are different. One may think of an eternal creature which never reaches its abode, and is always astonished and wandering. The Noble Qur'ān uses a delicate metaphor to indicate that there is an aim in the universal system:

$$\text{يَسئَلُونَكَ عن السَّاعَةِ أَيَّانَ مُرْسَيها}$$

"They will question thee concerning the Hour, when it [universe] shall berth."(7:187)

According to this interpretation, the whole universe resembles a ship moving in the ocean of nature. This ship is not likely to move for ever; sooner or later it should drop anchor. In other words, it may be inferred that the universe will stop moving

one day, and will reach its destiny, which is the doomsday of the universe and man, when man meets God. Accordingly, one of the terms used instead of paradise is Eden, which means the peaceful abode.

5. The principle of the world of being and man's genesis relation: Man, the unique eternal gem, has an everlasting connection with all elements of existence. That explains the impact of his deeds on his life and soul. Man's speech, writing and behavior affects his temperament: these are either enlightening or darkening. For the same reason, one can find no legal rule that is not somehow related to man's temper and destiny. With the acceptance of this principle, one can no longer claim that man is free to do anything he wishes on his own.

The effect of different foods are different. The true words differ from the false ones. Each of these have different outcomes. Sin, for instance, takes the brightness of the heart's mirror and replaces it with darkness:

كَلَّا بَلْ رَانَ عَلَىٰ قلوبهم ماكَانُواْ يَكْسبونَ

"No indeed; but what they were earning has
rusted upon their hearts."(83:14)

When the heart's pores are covered with specks of dust representing sins, and the dust is not removed, the heart gets dark gradually, and one loses his senses of sight and hearing. Even good and bad memories affect man's soul. An indecent and sinful look at someone covers the heart with dust. At the time, man's eyes, ears and tongue are apparently active, but in reality, they are not. The Qur'ān refers to the eyes but clearly that it is only an instance, not the only one; the same is true with ears, the tongue as well as other organs:

فَاِنَّهَا لَاتَعْمَى الأَبصارُ ولٰكن تَعْمَى القلوبُ الَّتِي فِي الصُّدورِ

"It is not the eyes that are blind, but blind are
the hearts within the breasts." (22:46)

On the same basis, God sends his message and true words t people, yet there are some groups who do not hear and comprehend them. This verse from Sūrah al-Ḥajj represents many other verses which call sinners blind, deaf and dumb. Thus, in the divine view, man's actions have a profound impact on his soul, so much so that in some cases these actions do not conform to or resemble his appearance.

The history of human rights in Islam

To identify the history of human rights in Islam, one should divide it into the following parts, and study them independently.

1) The history of the creation of human rights in Islam, and 2) the history of compilation of human rights in Islam.

In relation to the first part, it should be noted that the collection of Islamic laws comprises the verses of the Noble Qur'ān the Prophet's statements, his deeds and advice. Consequently, the citation of typical verses and traditions would suffice in this part.

1. In one of the traditions, it is stated that,

مَثَلُ المؤمنينَ فى توادِّهم و تَراحُمِهم و تَعاطُفِهم مَثَلُ الجسدِ الواحدِ

اذا اشْتَكىٰ منه عضوٌ تَداعىٰ لَه سائرُ الجسدِ بالسَّهرةِ والحمىٰ

"believers' friendship, kindness and empathy resembles a unique body in which the pain and injury of one organ causes pain and fever in other organs signifying their sympathy and empathy".[1]

This tradition makes the point that the members of the religious look like a body whose organs have kindness, sympathy and sentiment. The balance of values of the individual and society is emphasized. In Islam's view, values and roles and social creativity are rooted in individuals, and therefore, individual development is a major aim of life. Yet the value and nobility of the society is never ignored. To sacrifice society for the individual is illogical and in the direction of destroying values. The sacrifice

of the individual for society is equally destructive and damages values and stops the development of man.

2. There is another tradition saying that:اِنَّما يَجْمَعُ النَّاسُ الرِّضا والسَّخَط community satisfaction reflects the firm foundation of unity and integrity;[2] it is the basis of democracy in Islamic political thought. Without the community's satisfaction, the political system loses its legitimacy.

3. اِنَّ هُذِه اُمَّتُكُمْ اُمَّةً واحِدَةً و أنا رَبُّكم فَآعْبُدونِ

"Surely this community of yours is one community, and I am your Lord; so serve Me." (21:92)

It is implied in one of the verses that in the Islamic theory of community, the individual, in terms of perception, will, freedom and belief in high values, accepts the totality of society, nation and community, and the individual devotes or sometimes sacrifices himself to save them. This is the highest stage of man's freedom.

4. In Islam's world view, the right to freedom and will is man's undeniable right under every condition, and man cannot be deprived of it. The Qur'ān's verses clearly point to these views:

اِنَّا هَدَيناهُ السَّبيلَ اِمَّا شاكِراً و اِمَّا كَفُوراً

"Surely we guided him upon the way whether be thankful or unthankful." (76:3)

فَمَن شَآءَ فَلْيُؤْمِن و مَن شَآءَ فَلْيَكْفُر

"So let whosoever will believe, and let whosoever will disbelieve" (18:29)

5. In Islam's political thinking, it is not only the matter of automatic reaction of individual or society to turmoil or the phenomenon of tyranny that necessitates respect of human rights. It is so analyzed because man believes in his need for development.

Man's high destiny and dignity is termed as having God's soul in the Noble Qur'ān:

و نَفَخْتُ فيه من روحى

"And I breathed My Spirit into him." (15:29)

6. In the Islamic perspective, ignorance of man's position and status and of his high value is the source of all injustice, tyrannies and lack of proper cognition of the self, without which man will remain ignorant about his responsibilities:

كَفَى بِالْمَرءِ جَهْلًا انْ لا يَعْرِفَ قَدْرَه

"The worst ignorance for man is his inability to recognize the value of the self."[3]

7. In Islamic texts, despite the worldly charms and conventional classifications, a great emphasis has been put on man's value and dignity: Imam 'Ali ('a) addressed his governor in Egypt, be respectful and kind to everybody:

فَاِنَّهم صِنفانِ اِمَّا اَخٌ لَكَ فى الدّين او نَظيرٌ لَكَ فى الخَلْقِ

"since they are of two kinds, either your brother in religion or are like you in creation."[4]

8. Human's creation and nature are identical:

اَلَّذى خَلَقَكُم من نَفْس واحِدَة و جَعَلَ مِنْها زَوْجَها و بَثَّ مِنهُما رجالاً كَثيراً و نِسآءً

"Who created you of single soul, and from it created its mate, and from the pair of them scattered a broad many men and women" (4:1)

9. The verse ماكانَ النّاسُ اِلّا أُمَّةً واحِدَةً فَاخْتَلَفُوا denies difference and unjust discrimination

"Mankind was but one nation, but differed (later)" (10:19)

10. In the perspective, of the Noble Qur'ān differences are not based on values but merely related to the complexities of the system of creation and are agents of knowledge and man's intellectual development:

يا ايُّها النَّاسُ انَّا خَلَقْناكُمْ منْ ذَكَر و اُنْثىٰ و جَعَلْناكُمْ شُعُوباً و قَبائل لتَعارَفُوا

"O mankind, We have created you male and female, and appointed you races and tribes, that you may know one another."(12:49)

11. To condemn every type of unjust discrimination among humans, the honorable Prophet stated that,

اَيُّها النَّاسُ انَّ رَبَّكُم واحدٌ و انَّ اَباكُم واحدٌ كُلُّكم لآدمَ و آدَمُ من تُرابٍ

"surely, you have only one God and one father. You are all the ancestors of Adam and he was created of earth."[5]

12. The value and place of any person in society is ultimately related to his deeds.

كُلُّ نَفْس بمَاكَسَبَتْ رَهينَةٌ

Every soul is held in pledge for what it earns (74:38)

13. Islam denies ambition based on wealth and force and condemns it. The Noble Qur'ān refers this indecent feature to snobs and states:

و قالوا نحنُ اَكثَرُ اَموالاً و اَولاداً و ما نحنُ بمُعَذبين

And they say:We have more wealth and children, and we shall not be punished. (34:35)

14. In proper Islamic judgment, equity should even cover looking at people. Imam 'Alī once told the judges:

و آسَ بَيْنَهُم فى اللَّحظَة و النَّظْرَة

To regard justice even when they look at the prosecutor and

the defendant."[6]

15. In Islam, the criterion of equity is justice and truth. Imam 'Alī has said:

$$\text{فَالْيَكُنْ امرُ الناس عنَدك فى الحقَّ سَواءٌ}$$

"All the people should be equal in right.before you."[7]

16. The Noble Qur'ān regards security as the outcome of man's growth and development:

$$\text{و ليبدلنهم من بَعدِ خَوفهمْ امناً}$$

"and will give them in exchange, after their fear, security."

$$\text{ضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلاً قَرْيَةً كانَتْ ٰامِنَةً}$$

"God has struck a similitude:a city that was secure at rest."

17. In Islamic thinking, political power is merely a means to pave the way for man's growth, not an aim or a means for suppression.

$$\text{اَللَّهمَ انَكَ تَعلمُ انَّه لم يَكُنْ الذى كان مِنّا منافسةً فى سلطانٍ}$$

O' my Allāh! Thou knowest that what we did was not to seek power nor to acquir anything from the vanities of the world. [8]

18. The honorable Prophet specified a great part of individual rights in one of his historical lectures:

$$\text{مَنْ اهانَ مؤمناً فقد بارزنى بالحرب و سبابُ المومنِ فسوقٌ و قتالُه كفرٌ}$$
$$\text{واكلُ لحمِه معصيةٌ و حرمةُ مالِه كحرمةِ دمِه}$$

"One who offends a believer has in fact fought me, and cursing a believer is a sin, and killing him is a *kufr*, and backbiting him a sin, and the respect for his property's as that for his blood."[9]

19. In Islamic political philosophy, the aim of prophetic missions is to return freedom to humans.

فإنَّ اللَّهَ بعثَ محمداً بالحقِّ لِيَخرجَ عباده من عبادةٍ إلى عبادتِه

"Indeed, Allah has rightly dispatched Muḥammad (Ṣ) on a mission to save His slaves from a mode of worship to His worship."[10]

The humans who lose their dignity, because of their needs, are warned not to be other's slaves because they have been created by the God.

لا تَكُنْ عبدَ غيرِك و قد جَعَلَكَ اللَّهُ حرّاً

Do not be the slave of others for Allāh had made you free.[11]

20. The term, لاَ تَظْلِمُونَ وَلاَ تُظْلَمُونَ "do not oppress and do not let others oppress you"(2:279) is one of the major humanitarian slogans that has been presented by the Qur'ān for eradicating the traces of aggression.

21. The denial of obligation is one of the clear legal notions that not only sanctions freedom, but is now being practiced as a legal principle in trials: لاَ إِكْرَاهَ فى الدِّين "There is no obligation in accepting a religion."

The history of human rights compilation in Islam

At the initial years of the descending of the Holy Qur'ān verses, the compilation of human rights in Islam began. The depiction of issues bearing on human rights was compiled in divine verses prepared by the Ḥakīm. Hence we may relate the compilation of human rights in Islam to the second decade of the 1st century A.H. or the second half of the 7th century A.D. In contrast to the literature of human rights in the West, the Qur'ān is one of the oldest documents on human rights.

The compilation of the preaching, views and traditions of Islam's prophet was another landmark in the history of human rights in Islam; and the basic and stems of human rights were set forth in tradition books, and like other fields of Islamic sciences, a firm foundation was provided for Islamic scholars to conduct researchers and analysis in this area. The 3rd century A.H. witnessed the advent of hundreds of books on various subjects of faith under different titles, elaborating on the principles of comprehensive Islamic thinking, regarding man's culture and civilization including human rights.

Fortunately most of these books containing the deeds and speeches and views of the prophet on Islamic affairs have been preserved. Now, we have access to a great portion of this cultural heritage of the dawn of Islam.

The next step was the purgation of existing literature on narrations by Islamic scholars, which was another cornerstone in the trend of human rights development. At this juncture, the narrations were specified and classified in order and thus the issues of contradiction were clarified.

The beginning of the compilation of religious Jurisprudence and Ethics (two major fields in the Islamic sciences) and their development in the third century A.H. resulted in the presentation of Shaykh Ṭūsī, in which issues were discussed on the basis of reasoning.

The following stages of development may be traced in the works of Muḥaqqiq and ʿAllāmah Ḥillī in the 7th and 8th centuries A.H. This was continued throughout the 13th and 14th A.H., when Islamic jurisprudence flourished, and human rights in Islam were discussed more deeply and comprehensively in various classifications and traditional categories of jurisprudence.

It should be emphasized here again that Islam consists of religious rules and ethics, mysticism and philosophy, which constitute a great part of our faith. In Islamic mysticism, man has a

high position, a view which has jurisprudential implications. And philosophical and mystic principles govern man's and society's existence.

In our era, the great jurisprudents like the late Imam Khomeini opened new ways in jurisprudence which not only adds mystic aspects to man's value and personality, but also includes the elements of time and place in jurisprudential leadership which allows experts to interpret religious texts according to the demands of contemporary man.

The historical trend of the human rights compilation in the west.

It is now necessary to mention briefly the declarations so far issued on human rights.

- Declaration of Human Rights, France

The first declaration of human rights was issued after the French Revolution in August 1789. This declaration consisted of an introduction and 17 articles, and was reflected in France's Constitution which was ratified later, and also had its impact on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

This declaration was approved in the General Assembly of the United Nations as the Resolution No 217. In this declaration, human rights were no longer limited but took a legal status and universal aspect. Every state has been obliged to respect these rights. The declaration comprises an introduction, a pact and 30 articles.

European pact of supporting human rights and political freedom

This pact was sanctioned in Rome on November 4, 1950, and the protocols attached to it continued until 1966. The pacts consists of 66 articles, and is one of the most comprehensive texts relating to human rights. In this pact, which has been endorsed by the Council of Europe Members, human rights have civil sanction, and the European member states have guaranteed their implementation. In this pact, the establishment of a court-house has been predicted to consider the complaints of the violation of human rights regulations

European Social Charter

This charter was approved in Torn on October 18, 1961, and its objective has been to let the nationals of European countries enjoy equal social life regardless of their race, color, sex, religion, and political views. The charter has more economical bias in that it promotes the standard of living and improvement of both urban and rural life in European nations.

Pact of supporting human rights in America

The American countries have sanctioned several declarations and pacts. The following are cited as examples.

- Human Rights Commission that began its operation in 1960

- The American Pact of Human Rights sanctioned on November 22, 1969.

- American Declaration of Man's Rights and Duties sanctioned in Bogota in 1948.

International Pacts of Human Rights

The two pacts sanctioned on December 16, 1960 by General Assembly of the United Nations are complementary to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights from legal and political points of view. One of these is about urban and political rights composed of an introduction and 53 articles; and the other relates to economic, social and cultural rights, comprising an introduction and 31 articles.

Human Rights: A Political Lever in the Contemporary West

It appears as if the West considers human rights just for itself, not for the manipulated and oppressed nationals of other countries. Even if the West states something about human rights in the Third World, That is not devoid of political bias. The presence of the West's political objectives behind the disguise of human rights in Iran is quite tangible. This has created a lack of trust for the Third World nations.

Despite the sanction of rules and the dissemination of the above mentioned declarations, and after the passage of so many years, it has been repeatedly noticed that the superpowers in the Wet justify their most disgusting deeds in African, Asian and Latin American nations by the excuse of the dissemination of the principles of humanity and civilization. The dark fate of the old and new colonialism have not been forgotten by the states of these regions, including my country, Iran, that have suffered for more than a century. Islamic countries are still being plundered by colonists; and everyday, their material and spiritual resources are being ravaged with some excuse; while the West does not stop using its human rights slogan, merely because the West assumes that human rights belongs only to the West. The silence of the Western communities with respect to the crimes against and

violations of Palestinian rights by the Zionists, as well as their supports, justify our claims. The West is also the pioneering supporter of the establishment of this focal point of corruption and riot. The West ignores with satisfaction the napalm bombs that are dropped on the women and wandering children of Palestine. And when it offers a peace plan, it is not a just and reasonable one to secure the rights of the oppressed Palestinians; instead it is only concerned about the racist Zionists. In other words, the West is intrinsically on the side of race discrimination: this mentality does not conform to the world view about human rights.

Conclusions

The concept of human rights has taken an individual form. In contrast, Islam considers man as a social being who is strongly associated with his society. Human rights in the West is a commercial-political lever.

Prior to anything else, man must look for freedom within himself and avoid immoral ways of life. This has been emphasized in the schools of religion, particularly in Islam.

Islam regards man as responsible for his deeds, and Islamic mentality takes social aspects of life such as encouragement of good deeds and avoidance of bad deeds; at the same time it takes the inner aspects of man very seriously, and aims at the creation of stable man.

Notes

1. Muḥammad Bāqir Al-Majlisī, lxi. p. 150, *ḥadīth* 29, *bāb* 43.
2. *Ibid.*, lxiii. p. 213, *ḥadīth* 48.
3. Imam ‘Alī (‘a), *Nahj al-Balāghah, Khuṭbah* 103.
4 *Ibid.* , Letter 53 (to Mālik Ashtar)
5. *Op. cit.*, note 1, lxxvi. p. 350, *ḥadīth* 13, *bāb* 67.
6. *Op. cit.*, note 3, Letter 27.

7. *Ibid.* , Letter 59.

8. *Ibid. ,Khuṭbah* 131.

9. *Op. cit.,* lxxv. p. 150, *ḥadith* 16.

10. *Ibid.,* lxxvii. p. 367, *ḥadith* 34, *bāb* 14.

11. *Op. cit.,* note 3, Letter 31.

The New Civilization Based on Islamic Rationality *

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In the second half of the twentieth century, mankind was granted two precious gifts by the grace of the blessed existence of Imam Khomeini (may his soul be sanctified): one is the system of the Islamic Republic of Iran as an example of Islamic government, and the other is the great movement for the revival of Islam among the Muslims of the world. These two great blessings cannot be fathomed unless we look at them in a broader light, and in this area undoubtedly the most excellent place to begin is with the expression "new civilization", introduced with pedagogical astuteness by the Office of Leadership of the Revolution, [Āyatullāh Khāmene'ī]. Today we sense an urgent need in the intellectual world: on the one hand this need is for the clarification to the world of the rational basis of our statements, and on the other hand, it is a need for the advancement and development of the substance of the Islamic system in Iran.

The essay which is presented to you here is really an expository essay, and every section and conclusion of it has detailed proofs which are provided in various works pertaining to them. Here they are summarized in order to attract the attention of political thinkers and to be placed at the service of the society, God willing.

1. What things build civilizations and distinguish them from one another? Without a doubt, this is the most important question researchers in the field of the study of civilizations must endeavor to answer throughout their investigations. Some satisfy themselves with a simple (or even simplistic) answer. Among these is the claim that civilization is the collection of the common beliefs and behaviors along with manners and customs! This answer does not clear up anything. The correct answer is that civilizations come into existence with the popularization of rationality; with changes in rationality, civilizations change, and with the degeneration of rationality, civilizations decline. We will call the popular rationality the "rational atmosphere". Therefore, we are faced with two important questions: prior to its popularization, what is the structure of rationality, and second, under what conditions is it possible for a rationality to be popularized?

2. Now we must ask, what is the substance of rationality? Rationality is the basis for action and its evaluation. Man is an existent that acts, and agency, that is, that which produces voluntary action in man, and among the voluntary activities of man the basis for the entire art of being human becomes manifest! Rationality provides the answer to the exceptionally important question, "What is to be done?", whether at a general level or in particular situations in which actions are produced. The voluntary action has three important pillars:

The first pillar. The first pillar is the image the agent has of his situation. This situation is the part of the external world related to the agent and the action he is on the threshold of performing. Obviously, this pillar approaches perfection to the extent that the

image comes close to reality, and this is to be achieved by rationality.

The second pillar. The second pillar is the formation of an image of the intended situation, that is, from an ocean of possibilities, the agent selects one as the "object of desire". Rationality justifies this choice.

The third pillar. This is the program of execution, that is, in order to realize the desired situation in view of the available possibilities, conditions and standards, the agent selects a "way". Rationality provides a degree of guidance toward the goal as an instrument for finding the best possibility and keeping within the limits of legitimate action.

Note that rationality is thoroughly involved in action and is not merely something extra appended to action.

3. Profound and rare thoughts. Inquiries into the roots of the problem of rationality have been made, and its foundations have been constructed, however, when rationality is popularized, this does not mean that all the details about its roots are repeated. Popularization means that the people of a society (or community) gradually come to accept a rationality and their practice settles on that foundation. In that case, that rationality becomes the foundation of "action", and it will be used for the evaluation of relevant social structures. Most important of all, "civilization" is obtained through social practice, and therefore, the manifestations of civilization are based on (popularized) rationality through and through, and are justified by it. It is noteworthy that commerce among civilizations—influences exerted and received, coexisting or in conflict—is also based on their accepted rationality. Commerce among the nations and governments of civilizations must never be misconstrued as the substance of the dealings among civilizations. Nations or governments can have various sorts of commerce with one another, but it is only when this commerce can be related to their civilizations that relations to the relevant rationality can be justified. Of course, the distance from the ideal type (paradigm of

rationality) itself is an influential element on practice which must be taken into consideration in its own right.

On the other hand, the popular acceptance of a rationality is also related to social conditions, psychological factors and, of course, (actual) philosophical perceptions. For example, it is natural that people will be driven by the bullying of the officials of the Church to a point of crisis against the bullying and against the acceptance of the teachings of the Church, that is, if you accuse these Church officials of incorrect views and in addition accuse them of adultery, wine drinking and worldliness, and the Church officials are said to be even worse than they are, the people will accept the entire "package". The reverse of this situation is also possible: if in a liberal and democratic society there is an increase in rioting and disorder, and corruption and lack of all restraint become extreme, the disillusioned people will be ready to accept a dictator who aside from creating order imposes dozens of other measures!

4. The Age of Modernity, in which the current civilization in Europe and America is garbed. A certain kind of "rationality" can be defined which may be called "liberal rationality" or "technical rationality". The answer of this rationality to the question, "What is to be done?", may be summarized in terms of the following main points:

(A.) The question, "What is to be done?", must be separated from the problem of the roots and meaning of Being. The lack of agreement resulting from metaphysical inquiries shows that finding the roots of existence is a problem destined to lead nowhere, and it would be better for us to assume that man is just another species of living thing having special abilities, just as every species has its own special abilities.

(B.) It would be best if everyone could do whatever one wanted! Perfect freedom of action! For under these conditions it is more likely that every alleged good and perfection will become

manifest. However, it is not possible for there to be such freedom, because people will immediately violate each other's interests, and thus, governments have been devised so that the limits on the freedom of individuals will allow for the widest possible range of freedom, guaranteed, of course, to be without prejudice or distinction. Hence, the responsibility of government is merely "security", that is, the protection of safety in all its dimensions. Laws are to be understood as defining the limits of individual freedom. Government has no responsibility to admonish or advise, and no responsibility for guidance.

(C.) Within the scope of legal freedom, an individual, or any sort of agent, must act so as to "maximize benefits", and this is the only rationally defensible standard for the basis of action. But what is "benefit"? This is determined by the kind of action in question.

In economic activities, "benefit" is profit obtained through the investment of capital, and this profit is created through exchange and is the product of a sustained rational planned effort whose strength derives from hard work, and is basically measured by "capital", (Max Weber).

In political activities, "benefit" is an expression for the acquisition of political power primarily through democratic means and without resort to force.

In individual activities, "benefit" is an expression for the acquisition of the most "pleasure" and the least "pain", (Bentham). Hence what one does to obtain pleasure through the satisfaction of one's own lusts is just as rational as what one does to obtain pleasure through the worship of one's Creator! Of course, the activities of these individuals may at the same time be non-economic and non-political (as regards to "benefit")!

5. Liberal rationality has some necessary results that, if not obvious at the beginning of its vogue, today, at the end of the twentieth century, they have become "transparent" for us.

First, the appearance of capitalism and the progress and development created by it in the economic realm is the first important result of liberal rationality. Take for example "trade". Trade took place for thousands of years, but liberal rationality completely changed the ancient customs which were current.

• "Continuity" became the reason why modern business turned from taking account of the benefits of the transportation of a single consignment of goods to obtaining permanent and reliable markets.

• "Exchange" came to mean the prevention capital stagnation and the necessity for continuous stimulation of capital.

• Rational planning brought about the employment of the most advanced and efficient methods for information acquisition and transfer, and for financial prediction. Progress in the founding of institutions of science and technology, instead of the pursuit of mystic love or amateur science, all were creations of this very system, for science and technology play a definite role in determining the efficiency of the capitalistic system. Scholars are naturally drawn to areas of research in fields which have "validity" and for which facilities are provided.

Second, in the political realm, the system of liberal democracy appeared in which "representation" plays a major role, constitutionals based on the social contract became established, and "freedom of speech" and "tolerance" became required dogmas. The only limits on these will be "security". Even heeding public morals is to be understood in these terms, for heedlessness of them sows discord, and discord brings insecurity.

Freedom of the activities of political parties, parliament and the like are all results of liberal rationality in the field of politics. The ability to climb the ladder of power without the use of force and to pull others down by non-violent means, all are necessary products of the liberal intellect.

Third, in individual life the lack of constraint of carnal desires, the loss of importance of the family, all different sorts of adornment and clothing and the like are all results of the liberal intellect

according to whose rationality "hedonism" has a kind of official acceptance.

The civilization today of the West which is mainly established in Europe and America, is a civilization which is the product of liberal rationality, and all its characteristics may be explained in relation to this source. On the other hand, liberal rationality was not officially announced and put into practice by a mere handful of individuals; rather, the sources of its viewpoint were the subject of investigation and propagation over the course of at least four centuries by philosophers, scholars and writers, and it is in this gradual way that it has been propagated among the people until it came to take the form of a generally acceptable intellectual atmosphere, and by the second half of the twentieth century it came into dominance throughout Europe, America, Canada and a few other countries. Nevertheless, we have also witnessed manifestations of another rationality in the twentieth century, the rationality of dialectical materialism or the rationality of communism, which appeared very rapidly, became official, was imposed, and by the end of the century, was abolished. What I mean is that it has lost general acceptance, and that its political, economic and cultural institutions have also disintegrated. However, liberal rationality is deeply rooted in the thinking of Western people and has developed with a more natural graduals. Of course, this does not mean that it is not capable of dissolution or overthrow.

Another point is that the transformation to "Post modernism" can also be better understood with the help of the concept of rationality. It has now been about two decades that progressive thinkers in the West have come to consider the sources of modern rationality to be a matter of doubt, and they have begun to move in the direction of a new rationality. It is natural for us to predict that if this new rationality takes hold everywhere, then in those countries we will witness the emergence of a new civilization. This postmodern civilization can be constructed upon the ruins of modern civilization, or it may emerge from the very heart of modern civilization, without following any process of destruction. My prediction is the second alternative. Of course, postmodern

rationality is still at a very rudimentary stage, but the period of its own gestation it taking place at present, both with respect to theory and public acceptance.

6. In the second half of the twentieth century we are also witnessing the appearance of another new rationality in the Islamic world. The primary stages of this rationality have received public acceptance in Iran, and it has thrown forth a wave of such great magnitude that it has led to the birth of a special system of government (Islamic government), and its waves are moving forward powerfully through other Islamic countries. Of course, we are still in the initial stages of its theoretical generation, and simultaneously, in the initial stages of the spread of the public acceptance of this rationality in the Islamic world. If this rationality continues to perfect itself, without any doubt, a "new civilization" will offer itself to the world. We may say that this civilization, with regard to its affinity to Islam, will reach levels of strength greater than that reached by anything remembered in history that has gone by the name of Islamic civilization. For that civilization, after its beginning in the time of the life of the Noble Prophet (S) quickly went in another direction. The important question is whether or not that which appeared in the Abbasid period and that of the sultans of Iran, for example, in government, philosophy and other areas of learning, were products of the atmosphere of Islamic rationality presented by the Noble Prophet (S). If we believe that there was a discrepancy between this and the atmosphere of rationality of Islam, we can expect the blossoming of a new civilization, a purer civilization! This is a great challenge! The way is not easy! Hereafter a view is needed that will offer the necessary theoretical constructions for the profound thoughts of the Islamic *ummah,* their gradual correction and reform, and eventual popular acceptance. Hereafter we have an even more important challenge in history (social achievement): we are living in an incipient era following the triumph of liberal rationality and its complete conquest of the world. Hence, all the facilities in the hands of the West and these facilities are very broad ranging, powerful and in-

fluential are overwhelming the thoughts of humanity. Children are not only subject to the overwhelming waves of liberal rationality from birth, for now genetic adjustments to the embryo and fetus are preparing the ground for influences prior to birth! The important question is whether man is at all able to listen to anything else! Does he have the opportunity to come face to face with any other rationality? In the present generation Islamic rationality must be on guard under these conditions to insure the public acceptability of its goods. If the last decade was unsuccessful, we certainly believed that what is done is done. But in Bahman 1357 (January 1979) a great miracle occurred. It became obvious that the dreadful waves of Western darkness were ripped apart and cast behind by the alchemy of truth and the light of its influence. It must not be imagined that Islamic civilization is limited to the Islamic world, for in the West, too, for it also will be a gift for the post-modern age.

7. Now we expound upon the sources of Islamic rationality, explaining in summary the principles stated below:

(A.) All existents are creatures of Almighty God, and were created for a specific purpose; this includes man, although man is more noble than the other creatures. During the life of this world, man must do his "duty" in order to become felicitous. Doing one's duty pleases God and wins nearness to Him, and this is felicity.

In order to aquatint His servants with their duties and the way, God, the Exalted, has sent the prophets to teach the signs of the way.

(B.) Under all circumstances, man has duties; and the further the distance between his works and his true duties, the further back he falls.

The first product of Islamic rationality is a recognition of duty in all circumstances. *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence), *hadith* (narrations attributed to the Prophet (S)), *sunnah* (the customs of

the Prophet (Ṣ)), *tafsīr* (the exegesis of the Glorious Qur'ān), etc.,
are all streams pouring into the sea of rationality.

(C.) After determining duties, the best course of action to
carry them out must be discovered in the atmosphere of Islamic
rationality. "The best" means "the most efficient" course having
Islamic legitimacy! At this level the latest scientific findings and
technology are to be employed, although the legitimacy of each
course must also be made clear. Of course, in order to be success-
ful, the utmost effort is required, but action in accordance with
duty is primary. We are not responsible for results; we have to
know what our duty is and make our best effort to follow the best
course in order to perform our duties. The rest is in the hands of
God, the Glorious.

(D.) Just as has been indicated, "duty" is a key concept of
Islamic rationality, and is not confined to individual life. Among
the most important duties of Muslims is the establishment of relig-
ion, and this cannot be completed except by establishing a gov-
ernment based on Islamic rationality. That is, if an Islamically
legitimate government has not been set up, an important duty is the
attempt to establish one; and if one has been set up, effort to assist
it (assumption of responsibility) is the most important duty. In
Islamic rationality the legitimacy of government itself is built on
the foundations of *wilāyat-e faqīh* (guardianship of the jurist), and
efficiency is according to the best existing method.

(E.) In individual life, too, individual action must be based on
the performance of duty. On the one hand, Islamic law provides
clear limits; on the other hand, the effort to perform one's duty is
a constant effort, and is stimulated to excellence as a sort of race.

(F.) The determination of "duty" must have rational sources;
hence, "refer to the religious scholar (*'ālim*)", which is the most
rational method, becomes fundamental. This "referring" has
specific branches in various areas, and only some cases require that
one exercise *ijtihād* (personal effort to determine a religious rul-

ing) and only in those cases is *taqlīd* (the duty to imitate a religious authority) dormant. The role of the religious scholar in raising the consciousness of the people about their duties goes beyond the mere explanation of precepts. Likewise, from this it may be concluded that the role and importance of the *'ulamā'* in human life (in the atmosphere of Islamic rationality) is not the purpose for the authority of one specific institution (as the Church is one institution), rather, it is a completely rational channel, and that is for the people to "refer to the *'ālim*".

8. In order to show the extent to which the subjects explained regarding Islamic rationality are effective in practice (individual/social), we review their effects regarding various pillars of voluntary action.

(A.) The first pillar of voluntary action is the real situation which is the cradle of action. What kind of image can man have of the real situation? The most natural and primary level is the material/social environment, which may be called the "ecology of action". For liberal rationality, this amount is sufficient, and going beyond this has no justification. However, the situation is entirely different with Islamic rationality: the agent looks at himself and sees himself as a servant of God, the Almighty, Omnipotent and Sovereign, Who has perfect sovereignty over him and over the whole world and is also caring and the most compassionate and most merciful refuge, and he sees that God bolsters him and is his best helping friend. Then there are possibilities which are only a part of divine blessings which God, the Exalted, places in the hands of the agent. Hence, the individual in the atmosphere of Islamic rationality knows no end to the possibilities in his ecology of action, rather the ramifications of the situation are expanded according to the will of God, the Supreme. On the other hand, in addition to the need to know the conditions of his situation, the agent must also understand his situation in terms of his specific duties, for he holds the belief that in all situations he is with in the

Divine purview and that he is being examined and that the performance of duty is the only way to succeed in this examination.

(B.) The effects of Islamic rationality on the second and third pillars of voluntary action are obvious. First, the ultimate aim is determined: obtaining the pleasure of God! And this is unfeasible except through the performance of duty. Second, the most effective way to reach one's goals must be chosen. At this point the role of the sciences and technology is perfectly clear: it is with the help of the latest scientific and technical progress that one may find the closest and most appropriate way to reach a goal. Third, in the course of attaining an aim, we cannot simply take the shortest route, for the route must also be in accord with Islamic law! Islamic rationality determines practical limits for reaching the aim. Fourth, the agent always must understand himself to be in a race, so a lack of self-motivation is itself contrary to duty!

9. The Islamic Community and Government. Really, this is the most important conclusion obtained by Islamic rationality at the social level. The Islamic community is a community ruled by Islamic rationality in individual and social movement. Regarding this topic, some important results have been obtained:

(A.) The establishment of the community, that is, the institutionalization of interdependent human association, even if not natural or a matter of expedience, is certainly a duty! Islamic rationality takes us from an individual life and authorizes civil association.

(B.) The exalted government is one which associates agents in community. Islamic rationality speaks about the basis of the legitimacy of government and also about its efficiency. The criterion for the basis of legitimacy is "the proper conditions for the performance of duty", hence, *wilāyat-e faqīh* is precisely the expression of this issue, and in the designs of a the institutional agent of a nation (government) duty demands the course of greatest efficiency. One of the products of this requirement is that the

people should actively participate in politics. Hence, functional democracy is one of the obvious conclusions of Islamic rationality.

(C.) What are the limits of the government's jurisdiction and the scope of its activities? In Islamic rationality government, like individuals, has duties. The way to determine its duties and actions is explained in terms of the scale of efficiency of the system. What has been discovered toward the end of the twentieth century in this area is that the smaller a government is and the more the people are in charge of its affairs, the better. Therefore, on the basis of this scientific discovery (in political science) government should stand aside from major activities and merely offer guidance and advice. In my opinion, this is the most modern sort of thinking about government! For there should be a constant readiness to employ the scientific conclusions of man.

(D.) The Islamic Intellect and Tolerance. Absolute tolerance is a conclusion of liberal rationality created by heretical thought and responsibility. Of course, due to exigencies, liberal governments have placed numerous restrictions on tolerance, the most important of which are "security" and "public mores". In Islamic rationality, whether with regard to the behavior of an individual toward others or with regard to the behavior of the government, absolute tolerance is rejected. We comment in summary form on this topic as it pertains to government.

• The tolerance of government is relative to public sensibilities; just as the government has responsibility for security and the bodily health of the people, with regard to the prevention of the growth of thoughts opposed to Islam it is also responsible. If the people themselves are sufficiently sensitive toward behavior and speech against the Truth, then in that case there will be no need for the government to get involved. However, anywhere this sensitivity is deficient, the government will become involved. This is based on increasing sensitivity to the extent necessary, and it is self-evident that until that point is reached, there will be interdiction.

• Tolerance is also in a certain way necessary, and in this category there are three important areas to be mentioned:

First Area: Tolerance in the evaluation and criticism of the work of those responsible and officials at every level;

Second Area: Tolerance in the pattern of the various understandings of religion, for at first this must be undertaken by specialized assemblies, and if the understandings are equivalent to one another with respect to the strength of their proofs, there will be room for expansion among the common people.

Third Area: Tolerance for themes taken from non-Islamic rationality, but which, at least, do not appear to be anti-Islamic. This aspect is extremely necessary for dealings among civilizations.

(E.) Freedom of speech is another subject which must be made clear in Islamic rationality. In the liberal mind, theoretically there must be absolute tolerance, and hence, just as is stated in the Declaration of Human Rights, every person is free to change his or her religion, to propagate a new religion, etc.. In practice, liberal governments have limited these affairs to cases in which there is no conflict with the security of the system and public mores. For example, in France, Muslim girls are prohibited from wearing scarves in school. In order to justify this opinion, Mr. Pasqua, the Minister of the Interior during the time of Mitterrand, announced that this is a movement which propagates ideas that if allowed to continue to grow would threaten the essence of the secular government, and the government of France senses that there are grounds for this growth! In Islamic rationality, the "expression of beliefs", like every other action, may be correct or incorrect. The expression of beliefs, if favorable to the establishment of Islam, is good, and if opposed to it, is bad.

Hence, if the sensitivity of the people is at a level such that the people easily recognize the invalidity of incorrect beliefs, in that case there is no need for government interference; however, in other cases the government has the duty to prevent the expression

of incorrect beliefs. Likewise, the facilities of the *bayt al-māl* (Islamic treasury), such as radio, government television, government newspapers, and even the facilities of government universities cannot be placed at the service of the propagation of views opposed to Islam.

(F.) The role of the religious *'ulamā'* in Islamic rationality is also a matter that must be determined on the basis of rationality: in order to determine their duties, the people and the government must resort to the *'ulamā'*! Of course, for the sake of efficiency it is necessary for there to be some mechanism to prevent misunderstandings. The role of the *'ulamā'* is not that of one foundation placed on top of another, but rather it must be included in a natural manner in the Islamic community.

Conclusion:

Islamic civilization will not come into existence without the popularization of Islamic rationality. Hence, today it is the duty of the Muslim intelligentsia, on the one hand, to do research on Islamic rationality relying on the teachings of Islamic jurisprudence and its principles (*fiqh* and *uṣūl*), and likewise to employ the findings of our *'ulamā* in philosophy, *'irfān* (gnosis), *ḥadīth*, etc., and the learning in various fields achieved by man today to discover the essence of Islamic rationality, its divisions and principles, and on the other hand, to explain this knowledge to such an extent that its sources and principles can be applied in practice by the public.

The Names and Attributes of God in the view of Ṣadr al-Muta'allihīn on the basis of the Univocality of Existence

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The univocal meaning of and the degrees of existence is an important topic on the basis of which ways can be found to solve many philosophical and theological difficulties. Ṣadr al-Muta'allihīn was well aware of this topic, although he considered it to be close to self-evident that existence is common among diverse instances and their essences, because human reason easily understands that between one existent and an existent of any other sort there is some sort of appropriate association or correspondence which does not obtain between an existent and a non-existent. From this it can be concluded that if there were no common general concept applicable to all the various existents of different types, then unavoidably there would have to be some relation between some of these existents and others which would have to be considered to be of the same sort of that holding between existents and non-existents, while it is self-evident to reason that the relations among existents are not of the same sort as those that hold between existents and non-existents.

Here it is possible that someone like Ghazzālī, or any other Ash'arī thinker, may claim that the relation between one existent and others can only be taken to hold if it is considered to be no more than a name fixed for this purpose, and that there is no general aspect which obtains among all of them, that is, what Ṣadr al-Muta'allihīn called the univocal meaning of existence is nothing but a common word, and that in reality, no sort of shared aspect obtains among existents. How can one hold that there is some appropriate relation and correspondence between the pure essence and radiant being of the blessed and exalted God (*Ḥaqq*) and some bit of dirt? "Where is the dust and where the Lord of Lords?"

In response to this difficulty it may be said that there is nothing to prevent a group of lexicographers from coining a common term for a number of existents and a number of non-existent things so that thereafter they would all be called by this name. It is also possible for the lexicographers to do something else: they could arrange that no common term be coined for all existents, and that no name should be used for all of them. But despite all this, any rational human being will still be able to discover that there does obtain an appropriate relation and correspondence between one existent and another which does not hold between an existent and a non-existent.

Numerous diverse proofs have been mentioned for establishing the univocality of existence, which shall not be considered here.

Ṣadr al-Muta'allihīn holds that which has been mentioned about the univocality of existence. Although those who enjoy controversy may not be content with this, one who is fair will agree that this is better than many of the other proofs.[1] In any case, this great philosopher indicates a very important point about proving that existence is univocal. He says: "One who denies that existence is univocal is unconsciously making a pronouncement that proves that existence is univocal, because if existence in every existent is other than the existence of every other existent in all respects, nothing will remain by means of which it could be said that this existent has nothing in common with that existent. Just as the judgment of univocality has to accept something upon which to

perform the judgment, the judgment of equivocality must also accept something as occurring. In this way, when there is no common aspect between two existents, unavoidably it must be said that man will be placed before an unending regress of concepts. The problem also arises that when a person encounters an endless series of concepts, in order to make a judgment as to whether they have anything in common or not, he must unavoidably direct his attention to and evaluate all of them, and there can be no doubt but that neither does man have the ability to direct his attention to an infinity of concepts nor does he have any need to do this which is self-evident, and if so, it can be discovered that existence is, in reality, common among existents, and the person's judgments will be made on the basis of this much commonality.[2]

In order to prove the univocality of existence, Ṣadr al-Muta'allihīn also has made use of the relation between judgments and propositions. He holds that while one may observe numerous differences between the subjects and predicates of propositions, despite all these types of differences, there occurs a kind of relationship between subject and predicate which is undoubtedly of a single kind and unique. In the view of this great philosopher, the relation between subject and predicate must be considered to be a kind of being. It must be observed that some of the arguments given by Ṣadr al-Muta'allihīn may be subject to criticism by the proponents of the equivocality of existence, for in their view the relation between subject and predicate is related to a logic and cannot be considered a philosophical issue. With regard to inquiry as to whether or not the relation between the subject and predicate of a proposition may be considered a kind of existence, much has been spoken, the writer of these lines also has written a book whose title is, *Relative and Independent Existence in Islamic Philosophy*,[3] in which there is a discussion and review of this problem. In this regard we must restrain ourselves from entering into this discussion here, and return to the main topic, that is, the position of Ṣadr al-Muta'allihīn on the Names and attributes of God, the Blessed and Exalted.

As we have mentioned, this great philosopher rejected the

equivocality of existence. It is also certain that if one denies the equivocality of existence, one cannot accept the view of Ghazzāli on the Names and attributes of God, the Blessed and Exalted, for according to the view of Ghazzāli the application of a word such as "knower", for example, with regard to man expresses a meaning which is completely different from and opposed to that expressed with the application of this word to God. The view of Ṣadr al-Muta'allihin is the opposite of Ghazzāli's, and he holds that the term "knower", for example, has the same meaning in the case application to man as it has in the case of application to God, the Blessed and Exalted, the only difference between these two cases is in intensity and weakness which is made clear by gradation among levels.

In many of his works this great philosopher turns to the problem of the Names and attributes of God, about which he speaks in various terms. The most important statement of Ṣadr al-Muta'allihin about the Names and attributes of God is presented in such a way that it diverges widely from that which the theologians (*Mutakallimīn*) and other thinkers have expressed in this regard. He holds that the true attributes of God, the Blessed and Exalted, are to be considered as belonging to the class of universal meanings for perfection, that they reduce to accidents of an existent *qua* existent, and that since the existent is the subject of attribution of a universal meaning of perfection it does not require a determinate matter, specific capacity or embodiment and change. In this regard it may be said that this sort of attribute is by no means the attribute of a quiddity and is equivalent to existence. On the basis of what has been mentioned it may be said that all of the attributes of God, the Blessed and Exalted, are all His own perfection's which He has necessarily and actually, and nothing remains of them by way of contingency or potentiality, because in the case of God and the attributes of God nothing occurs except actuality. That is, just as the being of God is the reality of being, without any taint of nothingness or contingency, so too, each of His attributes of perfection is the very same as His essence, free and pure of any sort of flaw or imperfection. In this way, the very existence of God, the

Blessed and Exalted, is both all existence and all of this existence. The knowledge of God, the Exalted, given that it is all knowledge, all of it is also knowledge. The power of God is also both all powers and all of it is power. This is true of all the attributes of perfection, and for everything which is this way there can be no sort of multiplicity or duality, because the assumption of multiplicity in this sort of case amounts to a deficiency in an attribute of perfection and a failure to possess its own reality. The conclusion obtained from this discussion is that it was said that the knowledge of God, the Blessed and Exalted, in its very unity and uniqueness, is knowledge of everything, and nothing, whether universal or particular, which lies outside its comprehension, because it something were to remain left out of the perfect knowledge of God, this would imply that for that case a perfect knowledge was unactualized, while the actuality of the perfect knowledge of God is necessary. The argument for this necessity is that the knowledge of God is the very reality of knowledge, and if the very reality of knowledge were unrealized with respect to some case, it would not be the very reality of knowledge, rather, under those circumstances it would have to be considered knowledge in some respects, but in others, ignorance. It is also quite certain that if something is knowledge in one respect and ignorance in another, it will have to be considered to be a compound, and unavoidably, whatever is a member of the class of compounds will not be the very reality of a single thing. What has been said here about knowledge also hold true for power, will and the other attributes of perfection.

After his exposition of a version of this subject, Ṣadr al-Muta'allihīn observes a further development of it, and says that what he has mentioned here is a benefit the knowledge of which was granted to him by God, and that in it there are many other hidden benefits and fruits.

It is not inappropriate to quote the words of Ṣadr al-Muta'allihīn here, for that which has been achieved by this great philosopher in this regard, in addition to being extremely precise and subtle, must also be reckoned as without rival and innovative. In this regard his own words are as follows:

> Know that the attributes of Allah are abstract, that is, without ever being accidents of a quiddity at all, and every one of these attributes, such as *true, self-subsistent*, individually requires that there should emerge from it all the perfections in actuality without there remaining in them any potentiality or contingency, so that as is the case with His Exalted existence, the reality of existence is without taint of nothingness or contingency, so that it is all existence and all of it is existence, likewise for all the attributes of perfection, which are His very essence. . .

As may be seen from these words, Ṣadr al-Muta'allihin considers the attributes of God to be His very essence, and he affirms the principles of existence with regard to them, that is, just as pure being is both all beings and all of it is being, pure knowledge is also both all knowledge and all of it is knowledge. The treatment of power, will and the other attributes of perfection is also by this same method.[4] Accordingly, it may be said that Ṣadr al-Muta'allihin is not only severely opposed to the Ash'arites in holding that existence is univocal, but also he opposes this group by claiming that the attributes of God are identical to His essence.

It must be remembered that with respect to the attributes and their relation to the essence of God much had been spoken, but the main positions of this issue are three.

The first position is that attributed to the Ash'arites. This group considered the attributes of God to be additional to His essence, and they believed that God, the Blessed and Exalted, by knowledge is a knower, by power is powerful, and by will is willing.

The second position is that of the Mu'tazilites, who said that God is not a knower by knowledge, powerful by power nor willing by will, but rather that God, the Blessed and Exalted is a pure simple essence whose very unity and simplicity may be considered to take the place of knowledge, power and will. In other words, this group held a sort of deputation theory, and they believed that the essence of God in its very unity and simplicity could stand as deputy for knowledge and do the work of knowledge. Their

treatment of the other attributes of perfection was in the same fashion, that is, the holy essence of God stands in as deputy for power and will and performs their functions.

As has been observed, in the theory of the Mu'tazilites, the attributes of God are really denied, and His holy essence stands in place of them as a sort of deputy.

The third position is that of those thinkers who are verifiers,[5] and who by verification have come to believe in the attributes of perfection and that they are the same as the essence. What is meant by these people is that God is a knower by knowledge and powerful by power and willing by will, but knowledge and power and will and the other attributes of perfection are the very essence of God, and that they are different from one another only in concept.

Sadr al-Muta'allihīn is one of those who accepts the third position, and in order to demonstrate it, he sets out a proof. One who considers real attributes and the source of relational attributes to be the same as the essence will reason in this way, if these attributes are not the same as God's essence, it will become necessary that the holy essence of God, the Blessed and Exalted, with regard to His unity, will be both agent and object [of agency]. The problem also arises that with regard to its unity something cannot be both agent and object. The implication is obvious, for if the attributes are not the same as the essence, unavoidably the essence must accept them. On the other hand, since the essence of God is the Necessary Existent, it is not possible for it to accept the effect of something else. In this way it becomes necessary for God's essence, with respect to its unity, to be both that which effects and that which is effected. Those who considers the attributes of God to be the same as His essence have also offered another argument which is extremely important. These people held that if we did not believe in the identity of the attributes with the essence, we would inevitably have to accept that the real attributes and titles of perfection were not predicated essentially and necessarily to the essence of God, the Blessed and Exalted, while in the view of those who follow the school of transcendent wisdom,[6] claim that

every sort of proposition about God, the Blessed and Exalted, must be necessary from pre-eternity. It must be noted that every sort of proposition which is claimed to be necessary from pre-eternity will be among the most exalted of propositions constructed, and it is precisely this sort of proposition which are about the existence of God, the Blessed and Exalted and His attributes of perfection.

The difference between pre-eternal necessity and essential necessity is that essential necessity is always understood as having the qualification, "as long as the essence of the subject is an existent", while for pre-eternal necessity there is no regard for any sort of qualification at all, whether causal or restrictive. Essentially necessary propositions may be formulated in three cases.

The first case is that in which an essence is predicated of itself, as when it is said that man is man. What is meant by this sort of proposition is that a thing never lacks itself.

The second case is when one of the essential properties of a thing is predicated of the thing itself, as when it is said, "Man is animal".

Finally, the third case is when something implied by a quiddity is predicated of the quiddity, as, for example, when it is said, "The number four is even".

In each of the three sorts of cases mentioned, the propositions are essentially necessary, and in all of these cases the qualification, "as long as the essence of the subject exists", is assumed.

As for propositions which are pre-eternally necessary, these are held to pertain exclusively to the existence of God, the Blessed and Exalted, and His attributes of perfection, as when it is said, "Allah is a pre-eternally necessary existent", "It is pre-eternally necessary that Allah is Living, Powerful and Knowing". It is indubitable that in this sort of proposition there is no assumption of any sort of qualification or restriction, and each of them is necessarily true from pre-eternity, that is, just as being is pre-eternal for God, the Blessed and Exalted, and in judgments about the being of God, there is no assumption made of any sort of qualification. Life, power and knowledge are also pre-eternal for God, the Exalted, and no sort of restriction or qualification is assumed with respect

to them. In other words, it may be said that the necessity of exis-
tence means the necessity of all perfections, and this is exactly
what the Muslim philosophers have said: "The essentially neces-
sary existent necessarily exists in all aspects". What is meant by
this deep pithy sentence is that whatever is such that its being is
necessary and pre-eternal will be such that all of the excellencies
and perfections related to it are also necessary and pre-eternal. If
one realizes this sublime truth, that propositions held about the
essence and attributes of God, the Blessed and Exalted, are pre-
eternally necessary, correctly understanding the difference between
pre-eternal necessity and essential necessity, he will have no
doubts about the invalidity of many of the claims of the Ash'arites
about the essence and attributes of God.   When the Ash'arite
thinkers considered the attributes of God to be supplementary to
His holy essence, what they meant was that the propositions they
believed about the attributes of God were not to be accepted as
pre-eternally true, for if they had accepted these sorts of proposi-
tions as necessarily true from pre-eternity, they well would have
known that the judgment was not to be obtained that the attributes
where added to the essence of the Necessary Existent.

The great verifiers found difficulties with the Ash'arite posi-
tion that the attributes of God were supplementary to His essence,
and they said that the claim that the attributes are additional to the
essence of the Necessary Existent would imply the claim that
sempiternal entities would become eight fold, and they considered
the claim that the sempiternal entities are multiple to be tanta-
mount to polytheism.   This problem certainly does arise for
Ash'arite thought, and the inability of the Ash'arites to defend
themselves on this count is undeniable. But the main point is that
with regard to some propositions about the essence and attributes
of God, the Ash'arites did not accept that they were pre-eternally
necessary. For if they had accepted that these propositions were
pre-eternally necessary, they would have easily discovered that
what they were saying about the attributes being supplementary to
the essence was absurd. Accordingly, the roots of the thinking of
the Ash'arites in this regard are out of place, and the invalidity of

their thinking there is also evident. It must be noted that what is considered here to be the roots of Ash'arite thought is itself a problem whose roots lie elsewhere. That which has been recognized here as Ash'arite thought is that member of this group did not accept propositions about the attributes and essence of God to be pre-eternally necessary, but that which required members of this group to reject the pre-eternal necessity of such propositions about God is that many of the members of this group believed God, the Blessed and Exalted, to have a quiddity and they considered the being of God to be the being of a quiddity.

It is obvious that when one believes that the essence of God, the Blessed and Exalted, is a quiddity, one will not accept that propositions about His attributes to be pre-eternally necessary, and it will be inevitable that they will be taken to be supplementary.

It seems that the Mu'tazilites faced up to this same difficulty in their position denying the attributes, for this group was rationally opposed to the claim that the attributes were supplementary. On the other hand, they did not understand the issue of the grades of existence, and they were not familiar with the important basic principle, "The essentially necessary existent necessarily exists in all aspects". For this reason they had no other choice but to consider the essence and quiddity of God, the Blessed and Exalted, to be void of attributes, while at the same time it would be a deputy for the attributes making their effects appear.

Considering what has been mentioned up to this point, it may be said that the great philosopher of the eleventh century *hijri*, Ṣadr al-Muta'allihīn Shirāzī, on the basis of the fundamentally of existence and the grades of levels of being, from which the univocality of existence also follows, was able to put to rest the hazardous discussion of the attributes had proceeded from one extreme to the other between the Ash'arites and Mu'tazilites over the course of history, and he did so in a way considered rational and well reasoned by those who seek the Truth. Just as this great philosopher considered it irrational to hold that the attributes of God are additional to His essence, he also reckoned the view that denied the divine attributes and held that God's essence is void of all perfec-

tions to be invalid. For this reason, it may be said that the way taken by this philosopher with respect to God's attributes, should be considered a rational and moderate way, for according to his view, neither are the attributes to be denied, nor does the difficulty of the attributes being supplemental to the essence arise. In the sagacious unifying vision of Ṣadr al-Muta'allihīn, the relation between God's essence and attributes is seen in such a way that all duality in reality is removed. Of course, differences among concepts, such as that of power, remain, for just as it is with respect to concepts that the essence differs from the attributes, likewise the differences among the concepts are conceptual.

It is possible that someone will ask from where this conceptual difference arises, and how can different concepts be abstracted from a simple thing, given its simplicity.

In response it may be said that there is no inconsistency in supposing that a multiplicity of different concepts can be abstracted from a single simple entity.

By providing examples, some of the sages have made it clear how one may abstract numerous different concepts from a single thing. Along these lines they said that the concept of thingness, the concept of being an entity, and such concepts as being known, being determined, being willed, etc., can each be abstracted from any creature, and in a single aspect. One cannot say that the abstraction of these concepts is accomplished by considering different aspects of a single thing, for in that case it would be necessary that a created thing, for example, in the aspect of being determined is not as such an object of knowledge, and this thing is something which is not compatible with being comprehended and included in the knowledge of God, the Blessed and Exalted. In this way, it may be said that just as a single thing, in its very oneness, may be considered under numerous different titles, such as existent, known, determined, and willed, a single simple thing can be one who knows, determines and wills, in a single aspect.

Regarding the permissibility of the abstraction of numerous concepts from a single thing, Ḥājj Mullā Hādī has alluded to an important point. He says that every sort of multiplicity which

occurs in the world, ultimately leads to a single thing. This is also true of compound entities, that is, every sort of compound entity which occurs in the world, ultimately leads to a single simple thing, for if a single multiplicity did not return to a pure unity, it would be necessary for the multiplicity to occur without unity, and the occurrence of a multiplicity without unity is considered to be impossible, just as the occurrence of a compound without the occurrence of simple elements is impossible. Given this premise, it is said without any doubt, that there are compounds in the universe, so, unavoidably, there must also be simple elements. There are multiplicity's in the world, so units must also occur. It is after these premises that it may be claimed that every simple which is the source of the occurrence of a multiplicity, at the same time these very concepts may be abstracted from it, other concepts may also be abstracted. In the words of Ḥājī this discussion is as follows:

> ...that every multiplicity ultimately leads to a unit and every compound leads to the simple, and if there were a multiplicity that did not lead to a pure unit, this would imply the occurrence of a multiplicity without a unit, and this is absurd. Thus, when a compound occurs in the world, the simple also occurs.... So, everything is composed of these simples and units into compounds and multiplicity's, and into the concepts mentioned, and a great many other concepts.[7]

As is to be observed in this passage, Ḥājī Sabzevārī holds that each of the simples which is the source for the occurrence of a compound, at the same time that it may be the source from which this very concept is abstracted, other concepts can also be abstracted from it. Of course, here Sabzevārī does not make it clear that what he intends by other concepts nor how one may abstract from a single thing many concepts other than the concept of being the source of the compound. In order to discover what was meant by Sabzevārī we turn to what was known among the ancients as the simple elements. There is no doubt but that fire, for example,

was considered by the ancients to be a simple element and that it had its own role to play in the composition of things. Although today we do not consider fire to be a simple element, probably what Sabzevārīk meant was that while this simple element may be the source of a compound thing, other concepts can also be abstracted from it, such as the concepts of rising, illuminating and burning. The concept of radiating heat and other concepts of this sort are also to be included among these concepts.

In any case, Ḥāji Sabzevāri was one of those who tried to justify the permissibility of abstracting numerous different concepts from a single simple thing. Of course, these efforts are only accepted in the sense that what he held regarding the attributes of God, the Blessed and Exalted, can be defended in terms of his own thought and philosophy, although in harmony with what the other great sages of Islam have held about the attributes of God, this sage also held that the attributes of God are united with His essence in reality considering their existence, and that the differences among them are to be reckoned as mere conceptual differences.

Sabzevārī's Unprecedented Proof

With regard to the claim that the attributes of God, the Blessed and Exalted, are not additional to His essence, Ḥājj Mullā Hādī Sabzevāri has indicated a proof which is quite unprecedented and unrivaled and the like of which one will never come across in the works of other Muslim sages. He states that if we were to suppose that the attributes of God, the Blessed and Exalted, were additional to His essence, this would imply that the essence of God at the level of essence was void of any sort of perfection, and this would imply that these perfections could be proven of a contingent thing. One who is familiar with Islamic philosophy is well aware of the fact that possibility has been subdivided in different ways, and that each of these subdivisions is subject to particular principles. One of the most important distinctions among types of possibility is between essential possibility and dispositional·possibility. In the appropriate place it is also proved that possibility always has a subject, and that without a subject nothing valid can be said about

it. Now, it the subject of possibility is something analytic and dependent upon the action of the mind, this will be an essential possibility, such as quiddity, which is the subject of possibility, and any possibility derived from this will also be an essential possibility, but in all cases in which the subject of possibility is something real in the external world, it will be called a dispositional possibility, such as matter or *hyle* which is considered to be the subject of dispositional possibility. This problem is surveyed in its own place, and researchers have discussed it at length. But that which is the topic of conversation regarding the attributes of God as the subject of contingency is pure existence itself, and the very reality of God, for there is nothing more deserving of the name *real* and *true* than pure being or sheer existence. In this way, when scholars indicate that the attributes of God are additional to His essence, and that the essence itself at its own proper level is void of any sort of imaginable perfection, this cannot be considered to be a purely mental analysis. As the sages have explained with regard to the difference between existence and quiddity, an essence void of attributes would have to be considered a reality in the external world. Now, if we accept that proof of attributes for an essence void of any sort of perfection will be unacceptable unless by formal possibility, then we will unavoidably have to accept that this possibility is a dispositional possibility, and nothing can support dispositional possibility but matter. On the other hand, it is also certain that matter always requires some form, and without form, it will not occur; so, without a doubt, there will be a body. Anyway, the ability of an essence to accept attributes is not essential possibility for the quiddity, for the subject of this possibility is not something analytic and dependent on the mind but is something real, rather it is the context of being and the truth of reality that is under consideration. Again, we well know that when the subject of possibility is something real in the external world, that possibility can be no other than dispositional possibility, and that the basis of dispositional possibility is matter or *hyle*. In this case as well, there can be no doubt but that matter does not occur without form, and that matter with form is body.[8]

Given what has been mentioned up to now, it can be stated that that which has been said by the Ash'arites about the attributes being supplemental to the essence of God ultimately leads to the attribution of corporeality to God, and to assert corporeality in this case is heresy (*kufr*). Perhaps it will be said that what the Ash'arites said about the attributes of God is true of at least some of His attributes, such as willing, and this has also been confirmed by the great Shi'i scholars. The chief of the experts of narrations, Abū Ja'far Muḥammad ibn Ya'qūb Kulaynī considered the will of God, the Blessed and Exalted to be additional to His essence, and he presented arguments to prove his point. He not only considered the will not to be the same as the essence, but he also emphasized that the will and the knowledge of God are not united. Kulaynī's reasoning is that God, the Blessed and Exalted, knows everything, but at the same time, not everything is as He wills, for He does not will injustice, disbelief, and other evils and sins. It is completely clear that when the scope of God's knowledge is assumed to exceed that of His will, we must accept that His knowledge and His will are not united. Everything is an object of the knowledge of God, but not all things are things willed by God. So, if we consider God's knowledge to be the same as His essence, we cannot do so for His will. Kulaynī's argument here is similar to that given by the scholastic theologians regarding the knowledge and power of God. Most of the theologians considered what was known by God to exceed that subject to His power, for God has knowledge of impossibilities, while He has no power to actualize these impossibilities. The answer to the claims of the theologians and to the problem of the chief of the experts of narration, Kulaynī, was given by Mīr Dāmād.

He said that while it is true that the will of God, the Blessed and Exalted, cannot be essentially applied to evil, this does not prevent the divine will from being the same as His knowledge in cases of good, and knowledge is also united with the sacred essence. According to the view of Mīr Dāmād, the relation of His knowing to His willing is like that to His seeing and hearing. That is, while His hearing and seeing are united with His knowing,

God's knowledge also includes all things, while His hearing is not knowledge of all things, but of all audible things, and His seeing, likewise, is not of all things, but only of all visible things. In the same way, therefore, while His will is united with the knowledge of God, it is only applied to things within His power, not to impossible things. The conclusion to be obtained from this discussion is that it may be said that the sacred essence of God, the Blessed and Exalted, has knowledge of all things, and in relation to all good things possible, He wills them, as He is hearing in relation to all audible things. Likewise, in relation to all visible things, He is seeing. Of course, according to this view, evil does not apply essentially to the things of the real world, and since they are considered to be necessitated for the greater good, they become accidental objects of the divine decree.[9] Here it must be remembered that knowledge of the Names of God, the Blessed and Exalted, is among the most subtle and at the same time most noble sorts of knowledge, because by means of this very knowledge, Adam is distinguished and his superiority over the angels and other existents came to be proclaimed. This is the purport of several verses of the Qur'ān. In the Qur'ān, God says, "And He taught Adam the Names, all of them, and then set them unto the angels and said, 'Declare to Me the names of these if you are truthful.'" (2:31) Ṣadr al-Muta'allihīn is among those who have reflected deeply about the verses pertaining to the Names of God, the Blessed and Exalted, and he has made some important points about them. In the opinion of this great philosopher, what is meant by Name in the above verse, which is mentioned there in the plural, is not that which has been said by many of the theologians. The theologians, along with the other exoteric scholars believe that a Name is linguistic, and that a word is coined for a meaning it encounters in the world. Ṣadr al-Muta'allihīn considered this to be incompatible with the noble verses of the Qur'ān, and for the defense of his position, he called on several witnesses. His first witness is the noble verse, "And Allah's are the most beautiful Names" (7:180). He says that from the fact that the attribute of *most beautiful* is attributed to the Names with regard to God, we

come to realize that the names are not of the category of words which are composed of figures or shapes associated with sounds, because in the linguistic realm there is no distinction or nobility, and it cannot be considered that some words *qua* words have a priority over other words or are more noble than others. The reason for this is that all words are of a single kind, composed of figures associated with sounds.

Ṣadr al-Muta'allihin holds that with regard to their being words composed of phonemes, there is no difference in nobility between the words *unbelief* and *faith*, or between the word *light* and the word *darkness*, or *good* and *evil*. The difference between these words must be sought in their meanings and the things to which they refer.

Ṣadr al-Muta'allihin's second witness is the noble verse, "Glorify the Name of your Lord, the Most Exalted." (87:1) He says that according to this verse the Name of the Lord, the Exalted, is to be glorified. In this matter there is no doubt about the fact that a name, in the normal exoteric sense of a word, is not something to be glorified. The only thing that should be expected of a word in this regard is that it could be the means by which glorification is performed. It is obvious that what serves as the means for the performance of glorification is not itself to be glorified. Therefore, what is to be glorified cannot be the word or that which is composed of figures associated with sounds.

For his third witness, Ṣadr al-Muta'allihin presents the problem that what necessitates the distinction and superiority of Adam over the angels is not the mere memorization or learning of words or linguistic terms, because a word *qua* word does not necessitate perfection, and the memorization of a word, also, is no reason for superiority and distinction. In the view of this philosopher, the name of a thing is a term for something that shows the reality and definition of that thing. For example, the concept of rational animal, judging that it shows the definition and quiddity of man, may be considered a name for man.

Of course, it is possible that something should have many concepts for its own being and identity, all of which exist in one

existence. By way of example, consider the following concepts: substance, body, famous, sentient, rational, existent, contingent, astonished, determined, affluent. Although these concepts are different from one another, they may all be true of a single person, and all may exist by a single existence. This is also true with respect to God, the Blessed and Exalted, because the attributes and Names of God are united with respect to their occurrence and being and are true about the Creator, the Exalted, while at the same time being conceptually different. It is in this way that a single named object in its very oneness and uniqueness may have many names, where these names are composed of intelligible predicates, and where each of these intelligible predicates is a sign making known an essence which is named by it.

When the topic of intelligible predicates is raised, what is meant is not the words and linguistic expressions which are termed *names*, because words and expressions cannot be predicated by a unifying predication. The only thing that may be said of the words and linguistic expressions in this regard is that they are the names of the Names of God. It is completely obvious that there exists a difference between the Names and the names of the Names.

On the basis of what has been mentioned here, it may be said that in the view of the gnostics, *Name* is a term for a meaning which is predicated of the essence, and that *qua* Name, there is a difference between a Name and an attribute. A Name is predicated of the essence as something unqualified (*lā bi sharṭ*). In other words, it may be said that the difference between Name and attribute is of the same sort as the difference between an accident and an accidental. In the opinion of the sufis of the school of Ibn al-ʿArabī (*ahl-e taḥqīq*), the difference between an accident and an accidental is of the same kind as the difference between the negatively qualified and the unqualified, that is, that which is obtained by negative qualification cannot be predicated and is considered an accident, although when the same thing is obtained without qualification, it can be predicated, and is considered an accidental.

In order to explain this subject, the two terms *whiteness* and *white* may be employed. Because it is obtained by negative quali-

fication, *whiteness* cannot be predicated of a body, while *white*, which is obtained without qualification, easily may be predicated of a body. If one considers the difference between Name and attribute to be of the sort of difference between the compound and the simple, this also would not be unreasonable. Ṣadr al-Muta'allihīn indicates an extremely important point in this regard. He holds that if one were deprived of knowledge of the Names of God, one would be unable to prove that God's being the Knower of all existents, because contingent existents, according to their own particular existential rank, come into existence and are temporally ordered, and they are outside the eternal level of the essence of God. Now, if knowledge is considered to be a reality additional to essence, it will have to be admitted that the occurrence of knowledge without the existence of what is known will be meaningless. And here the question arises as to how God's prior knowledge of temporal existents is to be justified. The sages and theologians have given answers to this question and have spoken much about this topic.

Ṣadr al-Muta'allihīn considered much of what had been said about this topic to be dubious, and he held that the answer to this question is to be sought in knowledge of the Names of God. One who has encountered knowledge of the Names of God, the Blessed and Exalted, is well aware that the world of Lordship is great and infinitely wide. All that exists in the contingent world occurs more exaltedly and more nobly in the world of Lordship, and all these existents in their very multiplicity and distinctness from one another, according to the precept that they compose loci of the manifestation of the Names and attributes of God, at the level of the essence are unified by the single existence by which they exist, just as the knowledge of God, the Blessed and Exalted, comprehends all the particularities and quiddities of things, and before they occur in the objective world, they are known to God.[10]

On the basis of this theory, the problem of God's knowledge of particulars is solved, and the mediation of knowledge by universals as expounded by Ibn Sīnā will not be necessary.

Notes

1. *Asfār Arba'ah,* Vol. 1, p. 35f.

2. *Asfār Arba'ah,* Vol. 1, p. 36.

3 .*Vujūd Rābiṭ va Mustaqil dar Falsafah Islāmī.*

4. See Mullā Ṣadrā, *Asrār al-Àyāt,* ed., Muḥammad Khwājavī (Tehran: *Anjoman-e Falsafah*), p. 38.

5. This term is often used to refer to those of the school of thought of Ibn al-'Arabī. [tr.]

6. Transcendent Wisdom is *Ḥikmat Muta'āliyah,* the name for the school of thought of Mullā Ṣadrā. [tr.]

7. Ḥājj Mullā Hādī Sabzevārī, *Sharḥ al-Asmā',* Dr. Najafqu'lī Ḥabībī, ed., (Tehran: University of Tehran), p. 140.

8. *Ibid.,* p. 140.

9. *Ibid.,* pp. 144-145.

10. See Mulla Ṣadrā, *Asrār al-Àyāt,* ed., Muḥammad Khwājavī (Tehran: *Anjoman-e Falsafah*), pp. 41-43.

A Glance at
the Center for Strategic Research

Determination of a comprehensive strategy which is inherently cohesive and at the same time committed to ideals and yet is realistic about the national, regional, and international capabilities and position of a country hinges on the establishment of an institution that would mobilize the country's academics and experts to determine an official approach for reaching the objectives set.

The existing gap in designing and formulating the national strategy (namely, the absence of general policies which mobilize all resources to articulate the path toward the realization of national goals) in the Islamic Republic of Iran was recognized by former President Akbar Hāshimī Rafsanjānī who in 1368/1989 issued a decree for the establishment of the *Centre for Strategic Research* (C. S. R.).

Aims and Objectives

The C. S. R. mainly pursues the objective of carrying out the studies and research needed to propose a national strategy for the Islamic Republic of Iran.

This aim can be fulfilled by specifying subjects related to different areas of foreign and domestic policy, as well as economic, cultural, and social issues, and conducting the needed studies on them. In addition, efforts should be made to foster and promote Islamic thought and to remove barriers and threats along its way.

To reach the objectives set, the C. S. R. carries out its activities through several departments, as outlined below:

A. Department of Islamic Thought

This department pursues two major objectives:

1.   The formulation and presentation of rudimentary principles to preserve and promote Islamic thought to uplift the culture of Iran and the world on the basis of the noble foundations of Islam.

2.   The etiological examination of Islamic thought and the Islamic system with regard to both foreign and domestic threats of infection.

To reach the aforementioned objectives, the Islamic Thought Department carries out studies and research on basic issues related to Islam's social, legal, political, economic, and cultural thought.

B. Department of Foreign Policy and International Relations

This department was set up with the aim of formulating the national security strategy, foreign policy, and international relations of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

C. Political Department

Determination of a paradigm for the country's political development is the main task of this department.

D. Department of Economy and Technology

This department shoulders the duty of drawing up the strategy for the country's academic, technological, and economic development as a part of the overall national strategy.

E. Cultural and Social Department

Pursuing the aim of devising, formulating and assessing cultural and social affairs, the Cultural and Social Department has two branches:

1. The social branch deals with the overall social system, poverty and inequality, education, health and treatment, population and fertility, welfare and social services.

2. The cultural branch studies issues such as national culture and indigenous cultures, cultural development and the culture of development, cultural crises and problems, the clash of cultures at the international leveland the existing subcultures.

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Research Studies Undertaken by the Islamic Thought Department of the C. S. R.

The C. S. R. is in charge of studying and surveying issues which have long term global effects on the government system. To familiarize our readers with the activities of the Islamic Thought Department, abstracts of some of the research reports compiled at this Department are presented below.

1. *Islam and Population Control*, (Esfand 1370/February-March 1992), 133 pages.

This research study attempts to provide an answer to the following questions: Which one does the Creator envisage: development of the population or its quantitative control and qualitative advancement? Under what conditions does Islam permit recourse to population control? Which means and methods of population control are religiously permissible? What is the optimal population control policy to be pursued by the Islamic Republic of Iran?

2. *Survey and Criticism of the Theory of Perfection of Religious Knowledge*, (1371/1992), 230 pages.

What is the difference between religion and religious knowledge? Are religious knowledge and other types of human knowledge interdependent to each other? What factors spark a change in religious knowledge? If religious knowledge is affected by other human knowledge, how can religious sanctity remain intact? If any type of knowledge, including the religious, can undergo change, how can faith and religious certitude be retained? Responses to questions of a similar type were provided through eleven sessions of discussions of the Islamic Thought Core Group with Āyatullāh Jawādī Āmulī.

3. *Statistics Pertaining to the Qum Theological Seminary in 1370-1371/1991-1992*, (1371/1992), 95 pages.

What subjects are taught at the Qum Theological Seminary? Who are the instructors and what are the educational levels? To what extent do the seminary students participate in the discussions? What is the dominant academic tendency in the advanced stages of the study of Islamic jurisprudence and its principles (*fiqh* and *uṣūl*)? Given the existing educational programme of the Theological Seminary, what can be reasonably expected from its graduates? As any change or development in the Qum Theological Seminary entails awareness of its different dimensions and as the sound relationship between the Islamic government system and the Theological Seminary hinges on this awareness, the first phase of the present research started by collecting statistics on the Theological Seminary courses in 1370-1371/1991-1992 and ended with the advanced courses.

4. *Historical Development of the Idea of Wilāyat-e Faqīh (the guardianship of the jurisprudent)*, (Esfand 1372/February-March 1993), 307 pages.

Was the idea of *wilāyat-e faqīh* fixed from the beginning of the Islamic era or has it undergone developments? What impacts have the political and social phenomena of the last two centuries had on the development of the idea of *wilāyat-e faqīh*? Apart from matters related to worship, to what extent have the specialists of

wilayah faqih understood the problems of their age? To what extent has the idea of *wilayah faqih* been influenced by the two variables of demands for modernization and policies of separation from religion made by governments?

This research has been compiled in seven chapters bearing the titles that are enumerated below:

1. Iran and Islam in the Early Days of the Qājār Dynasty

2. The Establishment and Independent Proposal of the Idea of *Wilāyat-e Faqīh* in Jurisprudential Texts

3. The Jurisprudential Outlook and Political Thought of Fāḍil Narāqī

4. The Development of the Idea of *Wilayah Faqih* from the Time of Fāḍil Narāqī to Shaykh Anṣārī

5. The Development of the Idea of *Wilāyat-e Faqīh* from the Time of Mīrzā Shīrāzī to Muḥaqqiq

6. The Idea of *Wilāyat-e Faqih* from the Constitutional Movement to the Era of Imam Khomeini

7. Survey and Conclusions

5. The Reflection of Islamic Thought in Iranian Magazines (from 1358/1979 to 1371/1992), 103 pages, (1371/1992)

This collection is actually the product of the first stage of the research project entitled Understanding Religious Skepticism which pursues the following two major objectives:

One. Identifying cases of religious skepticism and complaints and criticism related to the large-scale theoretical foundations of Islam.

Two. Striving to find the most adequate responses to the cases of religious skepticism which are—or could be—perilous at the macro level for the Islamic system.

The first stage of this research project was completed through selection of those materials which were published in Persian magazines printed in Iran between the years 1358/1979 to

1371/1992 and which included a novel point related to Islamic thought and worthy of consideration.

This collection is actually a compendium of 103 important articles in eleven chapters as enumerated below:

- The Study of Religion
- Religious Knowledge
- Revivalism and the Issue of the Seal Of Prophethood
- Religion and Culture
- Religion and Development
- The Pillars of *Fiqh* and *Ijtihād*
- Religion and Economy
- Religion and Politics
- *Wilāyat-e Faqīh* and the Peoples' Sovereignty as Specified by the Constitution
- Theological Issues
- Religion and Legal Issues

6. *Islamic Government in the Course of History*, (Tir 1372/June-July 1993), 268 pages.

The present research attempts to trace the following points in twenty-two (sample) governments which ruled in the name of Islam:

One. the place and position of religion and religious scholars in government;

Two. political structure, including the votes of the people, the Constitution, legitimate freedom, forms of power, sources of authority;

Three. features of foreign policy.

The salient parts of this research include the general specifications and historical and geographical features of Islamic governments, study of the criteria of relative grandeur, geographical domain, duration of rule and authority, and points of special religious or political importance.

7. *The Place and Position of Islamic Sciences in the Country's Academic System*, (1372/1993), 116 pages.

What is the main concern of the Islamic sciences? Which sciences are categorized as Islamic? Which sciences serve as preliminaries for Islamic sciences and what religious values does each have?

To find answers to the aforementioned questions, the present study considers the statements of religious scholars, coming up with seven different views on Islamic sciences and analyzing and criticizing each to determine the proposed place and position of the Islamic sciences in the country's academic system.

8. *Western Thinkers' Expectations of Religion*, (Bahar 1373/Spring 1994), 93 pages.

At some juncture in Western history, certain scientific ideas appeared to be incompatible with the Bible. Faced with this conflict and incompatibility between science and religion (or between scientific knowledge and religious knowledge), Church authorities, scientists, and scholars have presented different reactions.

One of the sound and logical reactions was to specify the boundaries of religion and science. The Renaissance, Humanism, and the idea of man's natural rights and the extent of religion's interference in these rights have placed greater emphasis on the importance of boundaries and expectations.

The daily increasing growth of the humanities has faced the West with a serious question: Have the sciences left any place for religion to intervene in affairs or not? Are there any needs or questions left whose materialization or response would require man's reference to religion? Is religion the product of man's imagination to justify some spiritual inadequacies? Is religion needed nowadays or not?

The present study is an attempt to respond to the above questions by reflecting the ideas of Western thinkers.

9. *Introduction to Religious Faith*, (Aban 1373/1994), 205 pages.

One of the major duties of the Islamic government is to safeguard and qualitatively promote the peoples' belief and quantitatively increase the number of the believers. To reach this end, a sound recognition of faith and barriers along its way is essential.

This study has endeavored to scrutinize Islamic faith, comparatively to analyze Christian and Islamic faith, to consider the views of contemporary Western and Islamic thinkers, and to survey the Islamic faith according to the views of Mu'tazilite, Ash'arite, and Shi'ite theologians, as well as the views of philosophers and mystics.

It ultimately strives to present faith in a systematic and rule-governed framework.

10. *Expectations from the Religion Perspectives of Muslim Thinkers of the Past Two Centuries* (Two Volumes), (1374/1995), respectively 200 and 397 pages.

This study is the first of its kind conducted by the Islamic Thought Department presenting forty questions and attempting to find their answers by referring to the views of forty Muslim thinkers of the past two centuries. A separate article has been compiled using the views of each thinker.

Some of the questions are as follows:

- What is religion?
- What is the essence of religion?
- What is the criterion of the religiosity of a case?
- Is it correct to divide religious texts into "divinely ordained", "rational", and "bound by time and place"?
- What objectives are pursued by religion?
- What needs does religion meet?
- What is the border between religion and human knowledge?
- Has religion offered a special approach and logic for the human sciences?
- What should one do faced with the contradiction between science and religion?

- What are the criteria for the perfection and imperfection of religion?
- Should a complete religion offer the maximum or the minimum information in each area?
- What approach does a stable and fixed religion adopt to tackle issues which change in the course of time?

So far, six books of this collection have been prepared in two volumes as indicated below:

Volume I: The views of 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī, Martyr Muṭahharī, Martyr Ṣadr, Imam Khomeinī (*R.A.*), and Engineer Bāzargān.

Volume II: The views of Sayyid Jamāl al-Dīn, 'Abduh, Rashīd Riḍā, etc.

11. *Political Power in the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran*, (Fall 1373/1994), 432 pages.

Being open to criticism and examination, the jurisdictions of the authorities, limitations, and political power in a system governed by *wilāyat-e faqīh* are issues which require a due response.

The central question taken up by this research investigation is, "What is the solution offered by Islam and Shi'ism to bridle power at the level of *wilāyat-e faqīh?*" The most important secondary question considered in this research pertains to the crystallization of *wilāyat-e muṭlaqah-ye faqīh* (absolute authority for *faqīh*)

In this study, the hypothesis is that to control the power of the *waliyy-e faqīh*, the holy religion of Islam has not sufficed with merely an inherent approach (namely having sublime ethical traits such as piety and justice) and has made recourse also to external and supervisory approaches.

This research is divided into the following parts:

Introduction: Vices Ensuing from Unbridled Power and the Need to Curb Power from the Perspective of Islam

Absolute *Wilāyat-e Faqīh*:
One. crystallization of absolute *wilāyat-e faqīh*;
Two. jurisprudential foundations of absolute wilāyat-e *faqīh*;
Three. power and prerogatives of the *waliyy-e faqīh*;
Four. power and expediency.

Ways to Curb Power According to the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran
I.   Intrinsic Power Containment
       A.   justice and piety and other conditions
       B.   good precedence
II.   Extrinsic Power Containment
       A.   supervision of the Experts Council over the Performance of the Leader
       B.   supervision over the wealth and property of the Leader
       C.   supervision of the *marāji' taqlīd*
       D.   public supervision or enjoining good and forbidding evil
       E.   the Constitution's determination of the authorities
       F.   consultations with the experts

Recommendations on Containment of Political Power in Accordance with Absolute Wilāyat-e Faqīh
      1st. The need to refer to the Experts Assembly;
      2nd. The need for consultations and adherence to the views of the majority;
      3rd. Tenure as leader.

This research study allows for dialogue on the most fundamental issues of the Islamic system and attempts to consolidate the pillars of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

12. *State Decrees and Expediency*, (1373) 407 pages.

Public expediency and well-being enjoy a special place and position in the Constitution and political philosophy of each and every country.

From the year 1366/1987, this discussion has been set forth in a novel way in Iran, leading to questions such as "What are the criteria for determination of expediency?", "What are the state decrees and what relations do they have with primary and secondary decrees?", "Who is the authority to determine such decrees?", "What is the difference between expediency as perceived by the Shi'ites and the Sunnis?", "How is expediency assessed?", "Wouldn't a heap of state decrees practically close the door to religion in regard to social issues?"

Other questions include the following:

What is the scope of the state decrees?

Could every *ḥalāl* (religiously lawful) affair be regarded as *ḥarām* (religiously unlawful) or vice versa with the alibi of the government's expediency?

What guarantee scan be given to insure that religion will not be made governmental in the daily needs of the society?

On the basis of what assumptions should expediency be determined?

Still other questions are as below:

Are the governmental decrees which are issued based on social expediencies part of the shari'ah?

If a person disobeys governmental decrees, will he be a sinner or just be accused of violating the law?

Can those who are not involved in determining expediency and issuing governmental decrees have the right to study and criticize the decrees and those who issue them?

The present research study attempts to answer the aforementioned questions.

Using governmental decrees and expediency, how could Islam be regarded fit for the needs of the time as related to running the affairs of the country, especially engaging in legislation? This is the major question which the present research study takes up.

Hypothesis: Laying the foundations of governmental decrees and rule-governed determination of expediency on the basis of Islamic precepts and a consultative system having specific and legal duties is a logical, solid, and legitimate tool for Islam to meet the demands of the day.

This research study falls into seven chapters respectively entitled:

A. Position of Governmental Decrees and Expediency as Perceived by Shi'ite Jurisprudence

B. Governmental Decrees and Expediency as Perceived by the Sunnis

C. Governmental Decrees and Expediency in the Light of the Lives of the Infallible Imams (Peace be upon them all)

D. Sources and Conditions of Expediency in Issuing Governmental Decrees

E. Authority for the Determination of Expediency in Issuing Governmental Decrees

F. People and the Governmental Decrees

G. Comparison of the Research Findings with the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

13. *The Outlines of the Political Thought of Imam Khomeini (R.A)*, Two volumes, (Fall 1373/1994), 503 pages and 450 pages.

The name of Imam Khomeini (*R.A*) is ever living in the contemporary history of Iran.   Even in the history of the recent century his name will remain eternal as a leader who for a decade drew the attention of the world toward Islam, Iran, and his own unique personality.

Imam Khomeini (*R.A*) was a nonpareil jurisprudent who set up the first Islamic government on the basis of jurisprudential theory.   More importantly, Imam Khomeini (*R.A*) was a great Islamic revivalist.

Even though many works deal with Imam Khomeini's personality, not much has been presented about his political thought.

The major question which this study undertakes to answer is this: According to the views of Imam Khomeini (*R.A*) what are Islam's plans for political issues in the society? What are the qualities of these plans? In other words, which areas of Islam's political thought did Imam consider as an Islamic thinker?

With a view to the wide range of Imam Khomeini's political views, this question has been followed up from different perspectives and in terms of the late leader's general views, theory of government, domestic and foreign policy.

The Imam's views on religion, politics, the shape of the Islamic government, peoples' rights and public freedom, ideals which transcend the borders, tactics, and strategies are among the important topics of the present research study.

In the final chapter of this research, which looks at the Imam's entire political thought and measures, reference has been made to his special features and political innovations.

The generalities of Imam Khomeini's political thought have been compared with those of other Shi'ite thinkers of the present century.

This research opens with a brief introduction sketching Imam Khomeini's political life, followed by twelve chapters bearing the following titles:

A. Blending Religion and Politics
B. Divine Legitimacy and Popular Acceptability
C. Theory of Absolute *Wilāyat-e Faqīh*
D. Tendency for Duties
E. People and the Government
F. Social Justice and Spiritual Perfection
G. Unity
H. Political Independence
I. Foreign Relations
J. Nationalism, Scholasticism and Export of the Islamic Revolution
K. Combat with Arrogance
L. Conclusion and Analysis.

14. *Supranational Responsibilities in the Foreign Policy of the Islamic Government*, (Winter 1374/1995),.514 pages.

The hypothesis which the present research attempts to prove is this: According to Shi'ite jurisprudence, the supranational responsibilities in the foreign policy of the Islamic government are limited by the two variables of *wilāyah* and defense.

This research is an attempt to respond to the following questions:

- What are the supranational responsibilities of the Islamic government from the perspective of Shi'ite jurisprudence?
- In the nation-state theory, to what extent are supranational responsibilities rooted in religion and to what extent are they a departure from religion?
- What theoretical relationship does the theory of research bear with the Constitution as the crystallization of the ideological and political idea of the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran?
- What are the other major theories?
- How could the different supranational responsibilities (such as cultural, economic, military, political or those related to the Muslims' lives and reputation) be differentiated?
- What are the applied results of this project in regard to the supranational responsibilities of the Islamic government's foreign policy?

This study is divided into six chapters:
A. National Interests and Supranational Responsibilities
B. Theories of the Supranational Responsibilities in the Foreign Policy of the Islamic Government
C. The Principle of Abiding by Commitments
D. *Wilāyat* and Supranational Responsibilities
E. Defense and Supranational Responsibilities
F. Islam and Recognition of the Governments.

15. *Political Freedom in Islam*, (Winter 1374/1995), 306 pages.

This research takes a jurisprudential approach toward the issue of political freedoms in Islamic thought. The research hypothesis of this study is that the peoples' political freedom is a jurisprudential principle, the only exception being the violation of the rights of others.

The main questions which this research addresses are these:

- What are the boundaries of the scope of freedom according to Shi'ite jurisprudence?
- How have religious scholars understood "the limits of political freedom" and "Islamic reasons"?

This research study also endeavors to answer the following subsidiary questions:

- What is the source of freedom?
- Is political freedom one of the principles of Islamic jurisprudence?
- If so, what are the exceptions to it?
- What are the rights of the individual, society, the government and God?
- Which rights have priority to the others?
- What kind of political freedom did the people have during the periods of the rule of the Prophet (S) in Medina, the rule of Imam Ali ('a), and the reigns of the first three caliphs?
- What are the limits of freedom of opinion in Islam?
- What guarantee does Islam offer for the preservation of the peoples' legitimate political freedom *vis-a-vis* aggression by government?

The present research study is divided into three chapters:

I.   Individual Freedoms
    A.   Right to Life
    B.   Principle of Freedom of Expression
        1.   freedom of opinion,
        2.   freedom of the individual to verbally defend oneself,

3.   freedom of the individual to admonish others,
4.   freedom of the individual to protest,
5.   freedom of the individual to verbally enjoin or forbid others

II.   Three Types of Limitations
   A.   violations of personal rights
   B.   violations of the rights of the public
   C.   weakening religion.
III.   Freedom of Action
   A.   Personal Freedom
   B.   Political Freedom (especially freedom of political participation and the freedom of political opposition).

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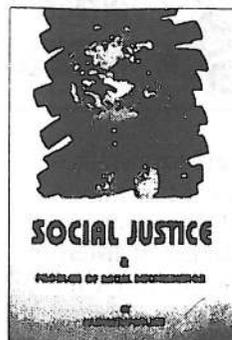
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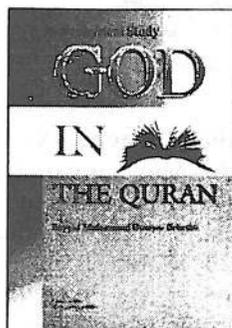
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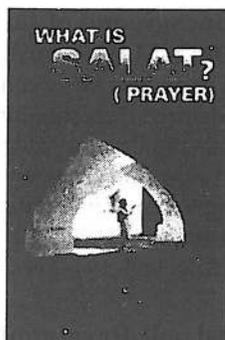
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