

AL-TAWHĪD

A Quarterly Journal of Islamic Thought and Culture

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Vol. III, No. 4, Shawwāl--Dhū al-Hijjah 1406

(July -- September 1986)

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the Merciful and the Compassionate*

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Editorial

The struggle of the 'blacks' of South Africa against apartheid and the proverbially unjust 'white' minority rule seems to be heading towards a decisive victory. There are all the signs that the new challenge to apartheid is the most serious that it has faced hitherto, represented as it is by an angry 'black' youth determined to put an end to the 'white' man's injustices.

A Muslim, by training, feels uneasy about having to refer to people by the colour of their skin; to him such epithets as 'black', 'yellow', or 'white' do not carry any human significance whatsoever. Yet these have become inescapable in a century which prides itself on possessing more knowledge about man and the universe and on being freer of the prejudices of the past generations. These absurd epithets are inescapable not only because they are kept in circulation by the Western press, but also because of the many crucial problems which surround racial discrimination. The adjectives referring to race and colour will be yet around for a while and remain inescapable as long as the myopia of human prejudice induced by pride and greed continues to differentiate between human beings not on the basis of moral and spiritual merits but on grounds of colour and race.

Racism is not confined to South Africa or Israel, nor was it in the past to Hitler's Germany. It did not affect only the Nazis, the Fascists, the Zionists, and the Afrikaners. Its victims were not only Jews, Europeans, Palestinians, or blacks. The disease is one which in various forms has continued to plague the entire Western culture and its victims include non-Europeans as well as the Europeans. It is a spiritual derangement which afflicted the Western culture since the industrial revolution, and which was enhanced by the technological power put in the hands of the West by the scientific revolution. A weak spirit becomes susceptible to pride and self-aggrandizement when it acquires something which is beyond its moral and spiritual capacities. It may be wealth, talent, knowledge, intellectual merit, physical beauty, expertise, or something else. Pride and greed do not affect merely individuals; they are greater evils when they afflict societies and cultures, because they tend to become invisible when they are collectively shared. These vices became the dominant characteristics of the Western culture at the end of the nineteenth century when Europe wielded global power and enjoyed unchallenged superiority. However, it was European greed—or, to use a politer term, colonial rivalries—which led to the First World War. Again, it was European pride and greed which in the form of Adolf Hitler and the Third Reich had boomeranged against Europe itself

throwing Europe into the blood and fire of the Second World War. Pride and greed when unresisted become uncontrollable, turning in any direction no matter how flimsy the causes for their selecting a certain target. The pride and greed that had earned great colonial empires for Britain, France, Holland, and Belgium proved to be self-defeating in the end. For when the same traits assumed the form of Hitler's Germany, they turned against the rest of Europe and, what is more significant, ultimately led to the loss of its colonial acquisitions. The same tradition of pride, greed and fear is kept alive by the two superpowers of the present day, and there is no doubt that it will wipe out the Western culture itself if there is not any great spiritual, moral upheaval that can change the fundamental attitudes of the Western public and subsequently that of the Western governments.

South Africa portrays in miniature the colonial ethos, about which a contemporary historian writes: "The political, economic and cultural dominance of Europe at the turn of the century naturally led Europeans to assume that their primacy arose from the superiority of their civilization and that this in turn reflected the superiority of themselves as a race. It was confidently believed that God created man unequal. He made the Whites more intelligent so that they could direct the labour and guide the development of the inferior races with broad backs and weak minds. Hence the concept of the White Man's Burden, to use the well-known phrase of Rudyard Kipling."

The First World War weakened the West's grip over the rest of the world and the Second finally shattered its imperialism. On the surface, the social philosophy of Darwinism does not find any vocal support today, and hardly anybody seems to talk out loudly about the White Man's Burden. Yet, to assume that Western racism is dead would be an unwarranted conclusion. Under the ashes of a smouldering pride and greed the coals of racism are as alive as ever. The experience of the blacks in the U.S., the Asians in Britain, the Arabs in France, the Turks in Germany, the Palestinians in the Zionist State, to give a few examples, is sufficient to prove the truth of this claim. The attitudes of most Western governments regarding effective sanctions against South Africa and their unrelenting support for Israel bear louder testimony to this truth.

Moral plagues do not disappear by themselves. If left unresisted they would not disappear without wiping out the entire hordes of the afflicted. If one looks at recent history from a moral standpoint, one cannot but regret the untold suffering brought about by these vicious qualities of the West, causing a multitude of calamities which would have been avoided if the West had given as much attention to its spiritual and moral condition as it gives to its political, economic, and technological affairs and the related progress, which only seem to fuel

further its pride and greed. Alas, had it given sufficient attention to its spiritual condition, the Indians of the Americas would still have been a thriving civilization, the blacks brought to the American continent would not have been torn from their roots by the slave trade, the Third World nations would have neither known the misery of the colonial era nor the insurmountable difficulties of the present neo-colonial period; Hiroshima and Nagasaki would have been normal towns known only to good students of geography.... Had greed and racist pride departed from the Western spirit, there would not have been so many dictators in the Third World countries, whose existence serves no other purpose than to safeguard post-colonial Western political and economic interests. Had it not been for the white man's racist pride and insatiable greed the world would have been spared the agonies of the two world wars and the torment of the Third breathing down its neck.

True, apartheid as the most overt form of racial discrimination is particular to South Africa, but it is not basically a South African product. If we hear about few loud displays of overt discrimination and only muffled vocal support for racism in Western countries, it is not because the evil has been wiped out and the West has renounced its pride and greed. It is rather because the West has become more adept at concealing its inner convictions for the purpose of public relations, and also because the expression of its convictions contradicts its self-esteem and conceit. Nevertheless, Western politicians do count upon the racist inclinations of their public. Had racist preferences been altogether absent in the attitudes of the Western public, the U.S. would not have found it so easy to terrorize Nicaragua, nor would it have dared to bombard the residence of the president of Libya in a broad daylight assassination attempt, nor would the Soviet Union have invaded Afghanistan so easily, nor would Israel have made its unchecked murderous entry into Lebanon, to give only a few examples.

Western racism takes many forms which may seem to be paradoxical. When fed by racial and religious prejudice, it victimizes the Jew and fans anti-Semitism or resolves to eradicate European Jewry in the form of Nazism. Or when fed by cultural pride it backs the Zionists and creates a Western colony in the heart of the Middle East. It was probably the Christian 'chosen people' fantasy which first caused the European to consider himself superior to the other peoples. With the gradual fall of Christianity following Enlightenment, new grounds were required to feed European prejudice. These became available with the political, military and economic rise of Europe during the nineteenth century. With the biological theories of the nineteenth century and Europe's successful colonial exploits, race took the place of religion as the feeding reservoir of European pride. However, later advancements in biology proved the baselessness of racial theories. With

the European's humiliation at the hand of the ultra-racist Nazis and the non-European Japanese, new grounds had to be found for maintaining Western pride. In fact, the Allies found it soon in the course of their fight against Germany. This, the present feeding reservoir of Western pride, is signified by one of the highly ambiguous terms in the dictionary: 'culture' or 'civilization'. Like other ambiguous terms, the term civilization is susceptible to a great amount of equivocation. It is applied to a bundle of various conflicting ideas and currents. For instance, on the one hand we have such men like Newton, Lincoln, Voltaire, Pascal, Pasteur, Dickens, Albert Schweitzer and others and the spirit that they stand for. If Western civilization had predominantly represented the spirit of such men, it would be something enduring, indestructible and irresistible. Had it been so, Western dominance would have hardly ever suffered the reversal that it did after the World War II. On the other hand men like King Leopold of Belgium, Churchill, Hitler, Stalin, Begin and Reagan, for instance, and the CIA, the KGB, the multinationals, the psychedelics, the rotten pubs and the casinos, the nuclear warheads, legalized homosexuality and the Veto—these more truly and much more prolifically represent the West than the former ones. More than science and technology *per se*, it is science and technology in the service of the White House and the Kremlin, the multinationals, the big banks and the financial cyclops, the arms manufacturers, and the dictators and the army generals that is typically representative of the West. It is not the culture of Newton and Lincoln but that of Hitler and Reagan which makes the whites of South Africa the hostages of their own injustice. It is not the culture of Galileo but that of a Cecil Rhodes whose pride and greed reach out to the stars: "The world is nearly parcelled out, and what there is left of it is being divided up, conquered, and colonized. To think of these stars that you see overhead at night, these vast worlds which we can never reach. I would annex the planets if I could; I often think of that. It makes me sad to see them so clear and yet so far." It is not the U.N. *per se* but the Veto which more truly represents the spirit of the post-World War II or the pre-Third-World-War West, a true heir to the colonial West of the early twentieth century, only much more sophisticated and wisely far less outspoken. If the slave trade was abandoned because it did not suit the conceit of a civilization, the modern arms trade, a far more deadlier and much more profitable business, fails to awaken the Western conscience or compel its self-esteem because of the good money that lies in it for the merchants of death and the jobs for the equally conscience-free public. It is not the spirit of a Newton but the blood-soaked morsel for the scientist and the technocrat which compels a lot of Western scientific research. And as before whenever a people rise to protest against injustice and the

plunder of their vital resources, the murderous hands of pride and greed are ready to throttle to silence the voice of a Lumumba or an Allende. Whenever a nation resolves to take its destiny into its own hands, the arrays of masks and bayonets and behind them the congresses and parliaments are ready to evoke sanctions and blockades or to extend financial and military aid to the enemies of that people and the West's mercenaries. Even if an organ of the U.N. like the UNESCO defies the will of the oppressors, the pens of the infamous hordes of Western journalism are poised for a slanderous campaign. And if the people succeed in bringing to knees an aggressor, a Western proxy, like the Ba'athist Iraq, the same merchants of death become the most vociferous advocates of peace. Indeed the Afrikaner and his parliament and laws are true representatives of this 'civilization.' His pharaonic laws, his deadly weapons and prisons, his self-serving philosophy and institutions are as much a genuine product of the civilization to which he belongs as that of his brother, the Zionist.

On this basis, it is perfectly in order for the whites of South Africa to justify their denial of justice and equal rights to their black countrymen as 'a matter of civilization.' Pride does create a feeling of superiority, and prejudice infused with greed makes it delightfully easy for one to appropriate to oneself what belongs rightfully to others. Whatever the moral worth of a culture based on pride and greed, its political and economic value, at least in a short run, is undeniable. The Afrikaner is convinced that 'it is not right to mix two different civilizations and two different levels.' It is not only not right but impossible to mix the cultures of the bandit and his victim, the oppressor and the oppressed. Pride and equality are incapable of mixing; so are greed and justice, ruthlessness and sympathy, and the select of the Devil and the chosen of God. Whatever difference there is between the black and the white cultures of South Africa, besides these moral qualities, it is directly derived from the long history of injustice and discrimination against the blacks in the economic, political, social and educational spheres—differences blame for which squarely lies on the neck of the whites. Yet racial prejudice blinded by infernal greed sees the effects of its crime as its justification!

From a moral standpoint, the culture of those who demand justice and human dignity cannot be inferior to that of those whose pride and greed make them detest justice and equality. The culture of those who heroically suffer death, torture and imprisonment for the sake of justice and human dignity cannot be inferior to that of those who kill, torture and imprison for the sake of diamonds and gold and to preserve an unjust political, economic, and social order which guarantees their undeserved privileges and standards of living.

In yet another way also the course of events in South Africa

reflects in miniature the struggle of the Third World nations against colonialism. Whenever in a Third World country the Western powers have been compelled to relax their deadly grip, the relief was not on account of any change of heart or enlightenment of mind on the part of the Western powers. These countries earned their partial independence not because the Western powers had become convinced of the right of the nations to self-determination but because they were forced to withdraw against their inner inclinations and convictions. They had to withdraw because they were forced to do so by the struggling masses and had lost the vigour to assert their dominance as a result of the post-war exhaustion of the West. The same is true of the concessions granted by Pretoria regime. If the regime of South Africa withdrew some petty rules which segregated the blacks from whites in hotels, theatres, and most public places (though not schools) and extended property rights to blacks living in townships (while the entire country is theirs), all such 'reforms', which look silly and ridiculous to the outsiders, were made because the apartheid regime was forced into them against its convictions.

The West, as the history of the post-World-War II years shows, has also been incapable of any real change of heart. Its neo-colonial dominance over the Third World shows that without really changing its basic convictions it has tried to preserve its vested interests through political, diplomatic, and economic means, as well as through its subversive intelligence organizations. Has it ever really questioned its 'right' to interfere in the affairs of other nations? The answer obviously is 'No'. Respect for the world opinion has only resulted in the concealment of its aggressive and destructive nature by developing sophisticated diplomatic, journalistic and public relations techniques of hypocrisy. Hypocrisy has been developed into a cabalistic discipline as sophisticated as ancient magic. The costs and hazards of military intervention have forced the development of a new technology of non-military intervention, manipulation and control. Another new tactic that was perfected was the use of proxies for military aggression. Today, such is the role of the Afrikaners, the Zionists, the Contras, and the Iraqi Ba'athists, who represent Western aggression in different quarters of the globe. The conception of the White Man's Burden finds expression in such phrases as the 'global responsibility' of the U.S. or some other superpower.

That the policies of covert intervention and control could not be applied to the situation in South Africa is due to the great economic resources of that land which benefit the white minority and Western vested interests, a prize too dear to be subjected to the uncertainties of a neo-colonial situation. The greed of the Afrikaner hence assumes suicidal proportions. His greed which formerly forced him to develop

an insane system of injustice seems now bent on drowning a revolution in innocent blood, knowing well that his stubborn resistance against justice may finally get swamped in his own blood. But before that may happen, the Afrikaner will have to add another bloody chapter to his ignominious history. The Afrikaner has before him the job not only of undoing the corruption of his history but also that of his own soul. But will the whites of South Africa be able to bring about a spiritual change in themselves and forswear their pride and greed? Can the 15% minority which owns 80% of the land and all of its resources and enjoys high standards of living at the cost of the black majority muster enough moral courage to renounce its unjust privileges? Assuming that they are not irreversibly corrupted by pride and greed, they would need a spiritual 'technology' which lies beyond the ken of Christianity and the Western culture.

Those who are too deeply swamped in injustice are incapable of any change of heart. No human power is capable of changing a human heart. Only God changes the hearts which deserve such a change. Will God have mercy on the white minority and deliver it out of its hopeless moral bankruptcy? That will depend on the willingness of the whites to forgo material wealth for the sake of spiritual plentitude, a value which has hardly, if ever, been honoured or even understood by the Western civilization.

Further, for a change of heart the Afrikaner must realize his moral inferiority before those whom he and his ancestors have treated unjustly for generations. He must renounce his false pride and embrace genuine humility, renounce his greed and accept his legitimate share in the political, economic, and social life of his country. Will the South African white man be able to do that? If he does that, he would thereby deliver not only himself but his black brethren who are also in danger of becoming afflicted by the same disease that has inflicted him.

In order to save himself, the Afrikaner should be able to renounce his spurious identity as a White Westerner and be able to rediscover his real identity as a human being and a creature of God like his black brother. If he refuses to do that and rejects the path of genuine humanity, which is also the path of God, he must prepare himself to choose the fate of certain destruction and leave behind an ignominious legacy to serve as a lesson for all mankind. For he does not face merely a risen black South Africa, an angry Africa and an indignant world but the wrath of God Almighty Himself.

Dhū al-Hijjah, 1406
Tehran.

Forty Ḥadīth: An Exposition *Part 6*

by *Imām Rūḥullāh al-Mūsawī al-Khumaynī*

translated from the Persian by *Mahliqā Qarā'ī*

SIXTH ḤADĪTH: Love of the World

بِالسَّنَدِ الْمُتَّصِلِ إِلَى مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ يَعْقُوبَ عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ يَحْيَى، عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ، عَنْ
ابْنِ مَحْبُوبٍ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ سِنَانَ وَعَبْدِ الْعَزِيزِ الْعَبْدِيِّ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ أَبِي يَعْقُورٍ، عَنْ أَبِي
عَبْدِ اللَّهِ (ع) قَالَ: مَنْ أَصْبَحَ وَأَمْسَى وَالْدُنْيَا أَكْبَرُ هَمِّهِ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى الْفَقْرَ بَيْنَ عَيْنَيْهِ وَشَتَّتْ
أَمْرَهُ وَلَمْ يَنْلُ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَا قَسَمَ اللَّهُ لَهُ، وَمَنْ أَصْبَحَ وَأَمْسَى وَالْآخِرَةُ أَكْبَرُ هَمِّهِ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ
الْغِنَى فِي قَلْبِهِ وَجَمَعَ لَهُ أَمْرَهُ.

... Muḥammad ibn Ya'qūb (al-Kulaynī) from Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā, from Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad, from Ibn Maḥbūb, from 'Abd Allāh ibn Sinān, and 'Abd al-'Azīz al-'Abdī from 'Abd Allāh ibn Abī Ya'fūr, who report Abū Abd Allāh (al-'Imām al-Ṣādiq) (A) to have said: "One who passes his evenings and mornings in such a way that the world be his biggest concern, God ordains poverty between his two eyes and causes his affairs to become disjointed and dissipated, while he does not attain anything except what has been apportioned for him. And as for one who passes his evenings and mornings while his biggest concern and goal be the Hereafter, God puts contentment in his heart and gives a wholeness and unity to his affairs."¹

Exposition of the Tradition:

There are various interpretations of the terms 'the world' and 'the Hereafter' according to different views offered by mystics and scholars. Here, our objective is not to plunge into any involved discussion about hair-splitting definitions, an absorption which keeps the wayfarer from proceeding towards his goal. What is essential here is to understand the meaning of 'the disapproved world' (i.e. 'the world' in the sense in which it is necessary for the person seeking the Hereafter to shun it) and the factors that assist man and guide him on the path of

salvation. These we shall discuss, God willing, in a few sections, and implore His help and guidance in this regard.

Mawlānā Majlisī on the Reality of the World:

The great researcher and peerless traditionist Mawlānā Majlisī, upon whom be God's mercy, states: "Let it be known to you that that which can be deduced from all the verses of the Quran and the traditions in this regard, according to our understanding of them, is that 'the accursed world' is the sum total of all those things that prevent man from obeying God and keep him from His love and from seeking the Hereafter. Therefore 'the world' and 'the Hereafter' are antithetical to each other: whatever causes His good pleasure and one's nearness to Him belongs to 'the Hereafter,' even though apparently it should seem to be a matter of the world—such as the trade, the agriculture, the industry and the crafts whose purpose is to provide subsistence for one's family for the sake of obedience to God's command, for spending one's income for charitable purposes and the welfare of the poor and needy, and to avoid dependence on others and beseeching their help. All these activities are meant for the Hereafter, though people should consider them to be for the sake of the world. On the other hand, heretical exercises in spiritual self-discipline, sanctimonious deeds and the like, though they might be performed with great devotion and care, are meant for the world, as they cause alienation from God and do not bring man near to Him. Such are the deeds and the practices of the infidels and those who oppose the right path".²

Another researcher remarks: "Your 'world' and 'Hereafter' are two inner states of your heart: that which is nearer and is concerned with the life before death is 'the world', and whatever that follows it and is concerned with the life after death is 'the Hereafter'. Therefore, everything that earns you pleasure and joy and provokes your lust before death, it is 'the world' for you."

The Author's View:

This pauper says: 'the world' may sometimes be regarded as meaning the lowest level of existence and the abode of change, transition, and annihilation. 'The Hereafter' signifies return from this lower mode of existence to the higher, celestial plane, one's inner world, which is the abode of permanence, stability, and eternity. These two worlds exist for every individual. The first one is the terrestrial realm of development and emergence, which is the lower plane of observable worldly existence. The other is the hidden, inward, and celestial level of existence, which is the higher plane of being of the

Hereafter. Although worldly existence is a lower and defective realm of being, but since it is a nursery for the training of lofty souls and a school for acquiring higher spiritual stations, it is a field for cultivating the Hereafter. In this sense it is the most sublime of the realms of being and the most profitable of worlds for the lovers of God and the wayfarers of the path of the Hereafter. And were it not for this terrestrial realm of matter, the domain of physical and spiritual substantial transformation and change, and if God Almighty had not made it a realm of transition and annihilation, not a single imperfect soul would have attained its promised state of perfection nor would it have been able to reach the realm of permanence and stability, nor the embodiments of imperfection would have been able to enter the Kingdom of God.

Accordingly, that which is mentioned in the Quran and tradition regarding the disapproval of 'the world' does not actually apply to the world itself, but is meant to refer to absorption in it and love and attachment for it. This shows that man has two 'worlds': one of them is condemned, while the other is extolled and praised.

The world which is approved is that which one acquires in this earthly abode, this school, and this marketplace, where higher stations and lasting spiritual merits are exchanged for transitory goods and where arrangements are made for the abiding abode. These cannot be possibly acquired without entering this world, as has been stated by the Mawlā of the Muwaḥḥidūn, Amīr al-Mu'minīn al-'Imām 'Alī (A), in one of his sermons delivered on hearing a person abuse 'the world':

إِنَّ الدُّنْيَا دَارُ صِدْقٍ لِمَنْ صَدَقَهَا وَدَارُ عَافِيَةٍ لِمَنْ فَهِمَ عَنْهَا وَدَارُ غِنَى لِمَنْ تَرَوَدَّ مِنْهَا
وَدَارُ مَوْعِظَةٍ لِمَنْ اتَّعَظَ بِهَا، مَسْجِدُ أَحِبَّاءِ اللَّهِ وَمُصَلَّى مَلَائِكَةِ اللَّهِ وَمَهْبِطُ وَحْيِ اللَّهِ وَمَتَجَرُّ
أَوْلِيَاءِ اللَّهِ إِكْتَسَبُوا فِيهَا الرَّحْمَةَ وَرَبِحُوا فِيهَا الْجَنَّةَ.

Indeed this world is the abode of truth for him who appreciates its truthfulness, a place of safety for him who understands it, a mine of treasures for him who collects provisions from it [for the next world], and a house of instructions for him who draws lessons from it. It is the shrine of worship for those who love Allah, the house of prayer for His angels, the place where the revelations of Allah descend, and the marketplace for those devoted to Him. Herein they earn His mercy and herein they acquire Paradise by way of profit.³

God Almighty's words, *وَنِعَمَ دَارَ الْمُتَّقِينَ* (What a good abode is the house of the pious) relate to the world, according to the interpretation of al-'Imām al-Bāqir (A) reported in a tradition by al-'Ayyāshī. Therefore, this world, being as it is the manifestation of and witness to His Beauty and Majesty, is not at all condemnable in this sense. That which is condemnable is the world of man himself in the sense of his

absorption in the world of carnal nature and his attachment and love for it. That world is the source of all vices and all inward and outward sins, as reported in *al-Kāfi* from al-'Imām al-Ṣādiq (A):

قَالَ الْأَمَامُ الصَّادِقُ (ع): رَأْسُ كُلِّ خَطِيئَةٍ حُبُّ الدُّنْيَا.

Al-'Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) said: "The love of the world is the source of all transgressions."⁴

And it has been reported from al-'Imām al-Bāqir (A) that he said:

عَنْ أَبِي جَعْفَرٍ (ع) قَالَ: مَا ذُنُوبَانِ ضَارِيَانِ فِي غَنَمٍ لَيْسَ لَهَا رَاعٍ، هَذَا فِي أَوَّلِهَا وَهَذَا فِي آخِرِهَا بِأَسْرَعٍ فِيهَا مِنْ حُبِّ الْمَالِ وَالشَّرَفِ فِي دِينِ الْمُؤْمِنِ.

"The harm done by two ferocious wolves, one attacking from the front and the other from the rear, to a herd without a shepherd, is less rapid than the one done by the love of the world to the faith of the faithful."⁵

Therefore, the attachment of the heart and the love of the world is synonymous with the accursed world, and the greater the attachment, the thicker the veils between man and the realms of sublimity, and denser the curtain between the heart of the human being and its Creator. It occurs in some aḥādith that there are seventy thousand veils of light and darkness between God and His creatures. The veils of darkness may be no other than the attachments of the heart to this world, and the deeper they are, the greater the number of the veils and greater the difficulty of their removal.

The Factors that Promote Worldliness:

Man is the child of this physical world, nature being his mother, and he the offspring of water and dust. The love for this world is implanted in his heart since the early time of his development and growth. As he grows, this love also increases. On account of the faculties of desire and the organs of deriving pleasure that have been granted to him by God Almighty for the sake of the preservation of individual and species, this love grows day by day. Since he considers this world as a place of pleasure and luxury, and death as the end of these activities, even if he is led to believe in the Hereafter, its states, conditions, and rewards by the arguments of the ḥukamā' or the traditions of the prophets (A), yet his heart remains unfamiliar with them and does not accept them, let alone obtaining certainty of their reality. Due to these reasons, his love for this world and his attachment to it increase considerably. Since man naturally loves immortality,

detests and evades decline and annihilation, and mistakes death for annihilation, even if his reason were to confirm this world as the house of transition and annihilation and that world as eternal and everlasting, his heart does not accept the findings of his reason if they have not entered the heart itself. The main thing is that the belief should have entered the heart and the best state is that of complete certainty. It is for this reason that Ibrāhīm Khalīl Allāh (A) asked God to bestow upon him certainty, and that was granted to him. Therefore, as the hearts do not have faith in the Hereafter—like those of ours—though rationally we may posit its existence, they desire to remain in this world and are averse to the thought of dying and quitting this lower mode of existence. But if our hearts become aware of the fact that this world is the lowest of the worlds and the house of decline and change and the realm of imperfection and destruction, and that there are other realms beyond death each of which is eternal and stable, perfect and permanent, where life is bliss and beatitude, our hearts would naturally acquire the love of that world and would abhor this world. And if one were to rise above this world and awake to the realities of that world, and observe the real inward form of this world and the attachment to it, this world will become unbearable for him. He will detest it, desire to leave this abode of darkness and to get rid of the shackles of time and transition, an attitude which is apparent in the words of the *awliyā*'.

Imam 'Alī (A), the *Mawlā* of the *awliyā*', said:

وَاللَّهِ لَا بَنُ أَبِي طَالِبٍ أَنَسُ بِالْمَوْتِ مِنَ الْوَلَدِ بِشَدِيِّ أُمِّهِ.

By God, the son of Abū Ṭālib is more intimate with death than an infant with its mother's bosom.⁶

That great soul had considered the reality of this world from the viewpoint of *Wilāyah*, and had chosen the blessed vicinity of the Most High. And were it not for the sake of the higher goals, those pure and chaste souls would not have tarried in this murky and gloomy gathering even for a single moment. To inhabit this phenomenal world of plurality, to meditate upon the worldly affairs, even with the spiritual favours, is a matter of great pain and sorrow for those absorbed in the love of God, a sorrow which we cannot even imagine. Their lamentations, as reflected in their prayers and supplications, were on account of the pain of separation from the Beloved and His magnanimous vicinity, although there were no mundane or spiritual veils for them, and they had left behind them the subdued hell of nature and its attachments, their hearts being free of the defilements of physical nature. Nevertheless, the very presence in the confines of physical nature and the

inevitable pleasures associated with it, even if they be very few, acts like a veil. It is on this account that the Holy Prophet (S) is quoted to have said:

لِيُغَانُ عَلَيَّ قَلْبِي وَإِنِّي لَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ فِي كُلِّ يَوْمٍ سَبْعِينَ مَرَّةً.

Lest my heart should be covered by [the veils of] lust, I ask God's forgiveness seventy times a day.

Perhaps the fault of Adam (A), the father of mankind, was the result of this innate attraction towards physical nature, symbolized by the wheat, and his attention to the mundane aspect of life — something which is considered wrong by the *awliyā'* and the lovers of God. If Adam (A) had remained faithful to the divine passion and had not set foot into the domain of the mundane, this entire toilsome tale, winding through the world to the Hereafter, would not have assumed such proportions.

Let it be known to you that each and every pleasure that man derives from this world leaves its trace on his heart that is indicative of its susceptibility to the physical world and a cause of its further attachment to the world. The more the enjoyments and the pleasures, the greater their impression upon the heart and the more intense its attachment to the world and love for it. This process continues until the heart completely yields to the world and its allurements. Such a condition is the source of a great many evils. All the human transgressions, sins, and moral vices are on account of this love and attachment, as mentioned in the ḥadīth quoted from *al-Kāfi*. One of the greatest evils of this love, according to our Shaykh — my soul be sacrificed for him — is that if the love of the world captures the human heart and the attachments become strong, at the time of death man finds that God Almighty is separating him from his beloved and causing separation between him and the darling of his desire. As a result, he leaves the world in a state of indignation and rancour against Him. This greatly shocking warning is enough to awaken man, that he should be extremely cautious in guarding his heart. God forbid, lest one should be indignant with the real King of kings, the Bestower of favours and the Nourisher, for none except God knows the ugly form of such a rancour and resentment.

Our honoured Shaykh also related of his father that he was extremely disturbed during the last years of his life regarding his love for one of his sons. But after doing exercises in spiritual self-discipline for some time he was relieved of this attachment. He was greatly satisfied on this account before he retired to the abode of eternal bliss. May God be pleased with him.

There is a tradition in *al-Kāfi*, reported on the authority of Ṭalḥah ibn Zayd, from Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-’Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) that he said:

مَثَلُ الدُّنْيَا كَمَثَلِ مَاءِ الْبَحْرِ كُلَّمَا شَرِبَ مِنْهُ الْعَطْشَانُ أَزْدَادَ عَطْشًا حَتَّى يَقْتُلَهُ.

The example of the world is that of seawater; the more a thirsty person drinks from it, the thirstier he becomes until it kills him.⁷

The love of the world destroys man eternally, and it is the source of his affliction with inward and outward villainies. The Holy Prophet (S) is reported to have said, “The Dirham and the Dinār have destroyed many a people before you and they will destroy you too”. Even if a person is not, supposedly, afflicted by other vices, which is improbable or rather impossible, the sole attachment to the world is sufficient to cause many an affliction. The criterion of the length of the period of detention in the world beyond the grave and the *Barzakh* is the amount of intensity of these associations and attachments. The lesser they are, the more spacious and brighter his place in the grave and the *Barzakh*, and consequently the lesser the period of one’s detention therein. Hence the *awliyā’*, according to some traditions, do not have to experience the conditions of the grave for more than three days, and that too for the sake of the inherent and natural attachment that they had in the life of this world.

Among the evil effects of the love of the world and attachment to it is that it makes man afraid of death. The fear of death, being the product of the love of the world and attachment to it, is highly objectionable; it is different from the fear of the Day of Resurrection, which is one of the attributes of true believers. The greater part of the sufferings and pangs experienced by a dying man are on account of the severance of the worldly ties, not the fear of death itself.

A brilliant researcher and a judicious analyser of the world of Islam, Mir Dāmād—*karrama Allāh wajhah*—in his *al-Qabasāt*, a book of rare excellence, writes:

لَا تَخَافَنَّكَ الْمَوْتُ فَإِنَّ مَرَارَتَهُ فِي خَوْفِهِ.

Death itself will never frighten you; its bitterness lies in being afraid of it.⁸

Another great evil caused by the love of the world is that it keeps man from religious exercises, devotional rites, and prayers, and strengthens his physical nature. It inculcates disobedience within his physical nature to the commands of his spirit. As a result it weakens his power of resolution and debilitates the will, whereas one of the main secrets and aims of worship and religious exercises is to make the body,

the physical faculties, and the natural instincts subordinate to the spirit, so that the will may control them and force the body to act according to its wishes and prevent it from whatever the spirit wants it to abstain from. If the spirit dominates the body, the domain of the body and the physical faculties is brought under the control of the spirit in a way that everything it wishes the body to perform would be performed without the slightest hardship and hindrance. One of the virtues and secrets of austere worships and laborious devotional exercises is that they are more conducive to the attainment of this goal. Through them man can acquire a strong will and resolution, and overcome his physical nature. If the will becomes complete and perfect and the resolution strong and powerful, the domain of the human body and its external and internal faculties acquires angelic characteristics, and he becomes similar to the angels of God who never transgress Divine commands, obey readily, without any resistance or compulsion, whatever He orders them to do, and refrain from doing whatever they are forbidden from. If the physical faculties of man come under the domination of his spirit, all hardships and hindrances disappear and a state of ease and tranquillity prevails. When that happens, the 'seven realms' of physical nature will become subservient to the heavenly forces, and all the faculties will act as their functionaries.

Therefore, my dear, the strength of will power and resolution is very important and effective in that world. In fact, the strength of will is the criterion of entry into one of the levels of Paradise which is one of the highest heavens. Unless one possesses a strong will and powerful resolution he cannot gain that heaven and that high station. It is reported in a tradition that when the virtuous are stationed in Paradise, a message will be sent to them from the Holy God, saying, "This is the message sent by the Eternal and the Immortal to the one who is also eternal and immortal: Whatever I command to be, it comes into existence; today I bestow on you authority to command whatever you desire to bring into existence and it would come into existence." You can see what a great authority and distinction that would be. What sort of power they have whose resolution and will shall be the manifestation of the Divine Will so that they will be able to grant the apparel of existence to non-existents. It shows that the power of will and resolution is superior to all the physical faculties. And it is also obvious that this message will not be sent out of extravagance and without proper judgement. Those whose will is subordinated to their bestial desires and whose resolution has become dead and inert, they cannot attain this station. The Almighty's Acts are free from extravagance and vain indulgence. In this world everything is based on a system in which all means and ends are arranged according to an order. In that world, too, all matters will be arranged in a similar manner, or rather that world

represents the highest harmony between causes and effects, means and ends. The power and authority of the will is to be cultivated in this world. This world is the sowing ground of the Hereafter; it is the substance out of which the rewards of heaven as well as the misfortunes of hell are carved out.

Therefore, each one of the worships and the rites prescribed by the Shari'ah, besides themselves possessing heavenly and angelic forms, are elements for building the physical paradise and procuring all the paraphernalia of heavenly life. This is confirmed by tradition and affirmed by reason. In the same way as every worship produces its own specific effects on the soul, it also, little by little, strengthens the will and perfects its strength. Therefore, the greater the effort required for a worship, the more productive it is:

وَأَفْضَلُ الْأَعْمَالِ أَحْمَرُهَا.

The best of deeds are those which are the most difficult.⁹

For instance, waking up for the sake of praying to God Almighty in the biting cold of a wintery night and sacrificing the delights of sound sleep makes the soul triumphant over the body and strengthens the will. Though it is a bit difficult and unpleasant in the beginning, but after a little practice its hardship and inconvenience becomes lesser and lesser and the subservience of the body to the soul grows. We see the people who perform it doing all this without any trouble, and if we are lazy and find it difficult, it is because we do not take action. But if we force ourselves to act, gradually the difficulty turns into ease. The people who offer the nightly prayer derive great enjoyment out of it, even more than the pleasure we derive from carnal enjoyments. The self becomes habituated through action, and goodness becomes enduring by becoming habitual.

These worships have several advantages, one of them is that the form that they acquire in that world is so beautiful that its parallel cannot be found in this world, and we are unable to visualize it. Another is that the soul acquires will power and resolution, which by itself has numerous advantages, and we have mentioned one of them. Yet another is that it familiarizes man with the worship and remembrance of God, bringing the unreal to the Real, and turning the heart towards the King of kings, stirring in it the love for the Beauty of the Real Beloved, and diminishing the attachment to and concern for the world and the Hereafter. Perhaps, if this divine passion is produced and a state is achieved in which he knows the real objective of worship and the real secret of meditation and remembrance, both the worlds would lose their significance for him; the vision of the Beloved wipes out the

dust of duality from the mirror of the heart, and God alone knows how magnanimously He will treat such a devotee. Therefore, the practice of the exercises prescribed by the Shari'ah, the worships and the rites, and abstention from carnal desires and lusts, strengthen the human will power and resolution. On the other hand, immersion in sinful physical nature weakens human resolution and will, as mentioned earlier.

It is known to every man of conscience that man is drawn towards Absolute Perfection in accordance with his nature and inherent disposition. The better part of his heart is attracted towards Absolute Beauty and the Most Perfect in all aspects. This characteristic of man is innate in his nature and ingrained in it by God Almighty. Accordingly, the will is a means for the fulfilment of the search of the lovers of Absolute Beauty. However, everyone, in accordance with his own state and condition, has his own idea of perfection, and he sees perfection in something towards which he is attracted. Those who work for the sake of the Hereafter perceive perfection in otherworldly stages and grades and their hearts are turned towards them. And the men of God, who, beholding perfection in His beauty and beauty in His perfection, say:

إِنِّي وَجَّهْتُ وَجْهِيَ لِلَّذِي فَطَرَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ...

... I have turned my face towards Him Who created the heavens and the earth.... (6:79)

And they say *وَلِي مَعَ اللَّهِ حَانَ* 'My ecstasy lies in God'. They long for union with Him, and are in love with His Beauty. The worldlings, since they perceive perfection in worldly comforts and luxuries, those things having acquired beauty in their sight and charmed them, are naturally attracted towards them. Nevertheless, since man's natural inclination is towards absolute perfection, all the worldly attachments are basically errors of judgement. Therefore, the greater his mastery over worldly or otherworldly benefits, whether they are spiritual accomplishments, authority, power, or material treasures, his longing for them increases and the flame of love grows brighter and more ferocious. For example, the sensual appetites of a lusty man will increase if he is given more chances of fulfilling his sensual desires; he will desire some other fulfilment that is not available to him, and the furnace of his lust will become hotter and wilder. In the same way, if the man ambitious for power and authority is allowed to establish his authority over one region, he will turn towards yet another. If the whole earth comes under his domination, he will think of invading other spheres in order to bring them under his dominion. He is not aware that his natural instincts crave for something else. The instinctive love and the natural

quest of man is directed towards the Absolute Beloved. All substantial, physical, and intentional motions, all attentions of the heart and the inclinations of the self are directed towards the beauty of Absolute Beauty, yet human beings do not realize it. They abuse this love, this desire, and this longing, which is meant to be the *Burāq* (the mount upon which the Prophet (S) is said to have performed the nocturnal journey through the universe called *Mi'rāj*) meant for ascension to heaven, the wings to fly to union with the Absolute, by wasting it on unworthy ends and by confining it within absurd barriers and limits, thus missing their goal.

In short, since man's inclination towards absolute perfection is innate, the greater his greed for worldly allurements the more he accumulates them and the more is his heart attracted towards them. Since he mistakenly believes the world and worldly fascinations to be the desired ultimate goal, his greed grows day by day and his desire for them multiplies. His need for the world increases and poverty and deprivation becomes his fate. On the contrary, those who work for the Hereafter, their attention towards the world diminishes, their attention towards the Hereafter increases with their interest therein, and the love for this world and the interest therein diminishes in their hearts till they care no more about the world and its allurements. A sense of richness and plentitude is lodged within their hearts and the treasures of this world lose their value in their sight. Therefore, the men of God are oblivious of both the worlds and free of care for both of them. Their only need is related to Absolute Plentitude. Absence of need and presence of plentitude are infused in their hearts by the light of the Needless-in-Itself.

In the light of the above exposition, the tradition means to say that whosoever makes the world his biggest concern from morning till night, God Almighty puts poverty into his eyes. And whosoever spends his morning and evening making the Hereafter his biggest concern, God Almighty puts plentitude into his heart. It is obvious that the one whose heart attends to the Hereafter, for him all the worldly matters become insignificant, trivial, and easy. He views the world as temporary, transitory, and short-lived, a place where he is for the sole purpose of educating and training himself. He is indifferent to its sufferings and joys. His needs become few, and his dependence on the matters of the world and its inhabitants becomes lesser, and reaches a point where he has no need of them at all. His affairs become integrated and organized, and an inalienable sense of contentment enters his heart. Therefore, the more you look at this world with wonder and love, the more your heart will be attached to it, and your need for it will also increase proportionally to your love. A sense of poverty and privation will appear on the surface of your personality, your affairs will become

disjointed and dissipated. Your heart will become anxious, melancholic, and fearful, and your affairs will not be carried out according to your wishes. Your hope and greed will increase day by day. Grief and regret will seize you; bewilderment and despair will invade your heart. Some of these points have been alluded to in the following traditions from *al-Kāfi*:

عَنْ حَفْصِ بْنِ قُرْطٍ عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ (ع) قَالَ: مَنْ كَثُرَ اشْتِبَاكُهُ بِالدُّنْيَا كَانَ أَشَدَّ لِحَسْرَتِهِ عِنْدَ فِرَاقِهَا.

On the authority of Ḥafṣ ibn Qurt, Abū ‘Abd Allāh (A) is reported to have said: “The greater one’s involvement with the world, the greater shall be his regret at the time of parting from it.”⁹

عَنْ ابْنِ أَبِي يَعْفُورٍ قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ أَبَا عَبْدِ اللَّهِ يَقُولُ: مَنْ تَعَلَّقَ قَلْبُهُ بِالدُّنْيَا تَعَلَّقَ قَلْبُهُ بِثَلَاثِ خِصَالٍ: هَمٌّ لَا يَفْنَى، وَأَمَلٌ لَا يُدْرِكُ، وَرَجَاءٌ لَا يَتَّالِ.

...Ibn Abī Ya‘fūr says, “I heard Abū ‘Abd Allāh as saying, ‘Whoever has a heart attached to the world, has three things attached to his heart: unremitting sadness, unfulfilled desire, and unachievable hope.’”¹⁰

But the otherworldly, the nearer they come to the Court of the Beneficent, the more joyful and tranquil their hearts become; they become oblivious, nay disgusted, of this world and whatever is in it. If the Almighty had not decreed their terms of life, they would not have tarried for a single moment in this world. The Mawlā of the Muwahhidūn, Imam ‘Alī (A), says about them: “They are not sad and dejected here like the people of this world, and in the Hereafter they will be immersed in the oceans of His Mercy.” May God include you and us with them, God willing.

So, my dear, now you know about the evils of this love and attachment, and have learnt how this love can destroy a human being. It deprives the human being of his faith, and makes a mess of his life in the Hereafter as well as in this world. Make up your mind, and try to curtail your love and loosen the bondage to this world as far as possible. Eradicate its roots, and consider this short life in this world as insignificant. Do not attach any value to its pleasures, mixed as they are with punishment, sorrow, and pain. Seek help from God, so that He may succour you in relieving your self from its scourge and suffering, and familiarize your heart with the noble abode that lies with Him. And whatever lies with God is better and lasting.

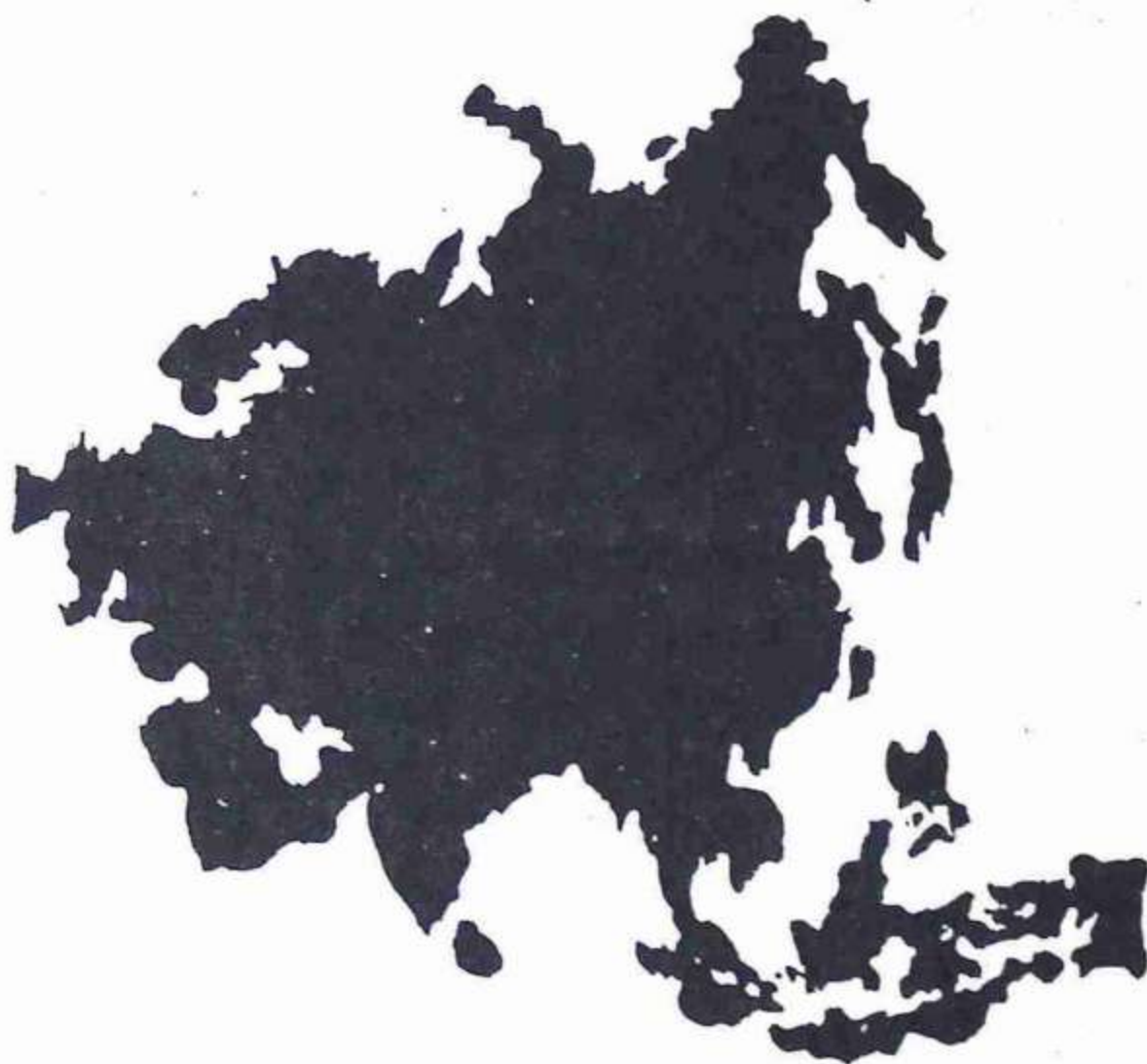
To be continued—’in shā’ Allāh.

NOTES:

1. Al-Kulaynī, *Uṣūl al-Kāfi* (Tehran), Vol. IV (Arabic text with Persian translation by Sayyid Hāshim Rasūli), p. 8.
2. Al-Majlisī, *Bihār al-'anwār*.
3. *Nahj al-balāghah* (e.d. Ṣubḥī al-Ṣāliḥ), *Hikam*, No. 131.
4. *Uṣūl al-Kāfi*, Vol. IV, p. 2.
5. *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, p.3.
6. *Nahj al-balāghah*, *Khuṭab*, No. 5.
7. *Uṣūl al-Kāfi*, Vol. III, p. 205.
8. Mīr Dāmād, *al-Qabasāt*, p. 72.
9. *Uṣūl al-Kāfi*, Vol. IV, p. 9.
10. *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, p. 9.

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Glimpses of the Nahj al-Balāghah * Part 6

by Martyr Murtadā Muṭahharī

translated from the Persian by 'Alī Qulī Qarā'i

7. THE WORLD AND WORLDLINESS:

Renunciation in the Nahj al-Balāghah:

Of the frequent themes of the *Nahj al-balāghah* is strong warning against the dangers of worldliness. Our preceding discussion about *zuhd* (abstinence) and its aims also serves here to throw light on the meaning of worldliness; because, the *zuhd* which is strongly enjoined is the very opposite of the worldliness which is severely condemned. To define and explain any one of them is to define and explain the other. However, in view of the tremendous emphasis laid in 'Ali's moral sermons upon the warning against the dangers of worldliness, we considered it appropriate to devote a separate chapter to this topic with a view to further explaining this concept so that all ambiguities are removed in this matter.

The first point to be investigated is why so much attention has been given to the concept of *zuhd* in the sayings and sermons of Amir al-Mu'minin, to the extent that no other issue has been so much emphasized by him, and neither the Holy Prophet (S) nor any of the other Imams (A) have spoken as recurringly about the deceptions of worldly life, its ephemeral and unenduring nature, the disloyalty of its slippery comforts, and the dangers of wealth, affluence, and immersion in and complete surrender to worldly pleasures and comforts.

The Danger Created by War Booty:

This was not a matter of accident, rather it was something related to the conditions that came into existence during 'Ali's times, that is, during the days of the past caliphs and especially during the caliphate of 'Uthmān. A series of serious dangers visited the world of Islam in the

* This, the seventh and the last part of *Sayrī dar Nahj al-balāghah*, deals with the meaning of the terms 'world' and 'worldliness' as used in Islamic sources in general and the *Nahj al-balāghah* in particular.

wake of the influx of huge quantities of wealth and riches. 'Alī (A) sensed its dangerous consequences and struggled against them. This struggle is reflected in his practices and policies during the period of his caliphate, in the course of which he ultimately gave up his life. This struggle, at the ideological level, is also reflected in his sermons, letters, and sayings.

The Muslims were blessed with great victories in battles that diverted huge amounts of property and wealth into the Muslim world. However, instead of being utilized for public benefit or being distributed justly among the people, the wealth fell into the hands of a few individuals and an elite. Especially during the days of 'Uthmān, this imbalance became greatly pronounced. Persons who possessed nothing only a few years ago appropriated for their personal use fabulous amounts of wealth. This was the time when worldly tendencies gained strength in the Muslim society and the Muslim Ummah started on a course of moral decline and degeneration.

It was following the awareness of this great danger to society that 'Alī raised his cry of protest to warn the Ummah of Islam. Al-Mas'ūdī, writing about the days of 'Uthmān, says:

'Uthmān was a man of extraordinary generosity (of course, it was exercised at the cost of the public treasury). The government officials and the people followed his example. He was the first among the Caliphs to build a house made of stone and mortar with wooden doors made of teak and juniper, and amassed other properties, such as gardens, orchards, and springs, in al-Madīnah. When he died, there were 150,000 Dinārs and a million Dirhams in cash with his treasurer and his property in Wādī al-Qurā, Ḥunayn, and elsewhere was valued above 100,000 Dinārs. His legacy consisted of a large number of horses and camels.

Then he writes:

During his reign, a group of his associates also hoarded similar amounts of wealth. Al-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwām built a house in Baṣrah which still stands intact in the year 332 H. [al-Mas'ūdī's own time]. It is also well known that he built similar houses in Egypt, Kūfah, and Alexandria. When al-Zubayr died he left 50,000 Dinārs in cash, a thousand horses and thousands of other things. The house which Ṭalḥah ibn 'Abd Allāh built of brick, mortar and teak in Kūfah still exists and is known as 'Dār al-Ṭalḥatayn.' Ṭalḥah's daily income from his properties in Iraq was one thousand Dinārs. He had one thousand horses in his stables. A one-thirty-second (1/32) part of the wealth that he left at his death was estimated at 84,000 Dinārs.

Al-Mas'ūdī mentions similar amounts of wealth in the possession of Zayd ibn Thābit, Ya'lā ibn 'Umayyah and others. Evidently, such huge amounts of wealth do not emerge from under the ground nor fall from the sky. Such immense riches are never amassed except by the side of extreme and horrifying poverty. That is why 'Alī (A), in sermon

129, after warning the people of the dangers of worldliness, says:

وَقَدْ أَصْبَحْتُمْ فِي زَمَنِ لَا يَزِدَادُ الْخَيْرُ فِيهِ إِلَّا إِدْبَارًا، وَلَا الشَّرْفُ فِيهِ إِلَّا إِفْبَالًا، وَلَا الشَّيْطَانُ فِي هَلَاكِ النَّاسِ إِلَّا ظَمْعًا. فَهَذَا أَوْ أُنْ قَوِيَتْ عُدَّتُهُ، وَعَمَّتْ مَكِيدَتُهُ، وَأَمَكَّتْ فَرِسَتُهُ. أَضْرِبْ بِظَرْفِكَ حَيْثُ شِئْتَ مِنَ النَّاسِ، فَهَلْ تُبْصِرُ إِلَّا فَقِيرًا يُكَابِدُ فَقْرًا، أَوْ غَنِيًّا بَدَّلَ نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ كُفْرًا، أَوْ بَخِيلًا آتَاكَ الْبُخْلَ بِحَقِّ اللَّهِ وَقَرًّا، أَوْ مُتَمَرِّدًا كَانَ بِأُذُنِهِ عَنِ سَمْعِ الْمَوَاعِظِ وَقَرًّا! أَيْنَ أَخْيَارِكُمْ وَصَلِحَاؤِكُمْ! وَأَيْنَ أَخْرَارِكُمْ وَسَمَحَاؤِكُمْ! وَأَيْنَ الْمُتَوَرِّعُونَ فِي مَكَاسِبِهِمْ، وَالْمُتَنَزِّهُونَ فِي مَذَاهِبِهِمْ!

You live in a period when virtues recede and evils advance step by step, and the Satan becomes greedier in his eagerness to ruin human beings. Today his equipment has been reinforced, his traps are set in every place, and his prey comes easily. Look around; you will see either a poor man hardly able to breathe in extreme poverty and penury, or a rich man who has transformed God's blessings into his own infidelity, or you will see a miser who makes stinginess in discharging the obligations imposed by God a means of increasing his own wealth, or you will find the rebellious whose unruly hearts are deaf to moral admonition.

Where are the virtuous, the righteous amongst you? Where are the free men and the magnanimous? Where are those who avoid every trace of deceit in their dealings and pursue piety and honesty in their ways?

The Intoxication of Affluence:

Amir al-Mu'minin (A), in his utterances, has used the phrase *sakarāt al-ni'mah*, meaning 'intoxication induced by comfort and affluence', which is inevitably followed by a vengeful disaster. In sermon 151 he warns them:

ثُمَّ إِنَّكُمْ مَعْشَرَ الْعَرَبِ أَغْرَاضُ بَلَايَاقِدِ أَفْتَرَبَتْ. فَاتَّقُوا سَكَرَاتِ النِّعْمَةِ، وَآخِذُوا بِوَائِقِ النِّقْمَةِ.

You, O people of Arabia, would be victims of calamities which are drawing near. Beware of the intoxication induced by affluence and fear the vengeful disaster which will follow it.

Then he describes the misfortunes caused by such immoderations. In sermon 187 he foretells the calamities that were to befall the Muslim society in future. He says:

ذَاكَ حَيْثُ تَسْكُرُونَ مِنْ غَيْرِ شَرَابٍ، بَلْ مِنَ النِّعْمَةِ وَالنِّعِيمِ.

This would happen when you would be intoxicated, not by drinking wine, but with wealth and affluence.

Yes, the flow of immense amounts of wealth into the domain of Islam and the unjust distribution of this wealth together with nepotism and partiality, infected the Islamic society with the disease of worldliness and the race for affluence.

'Ali (A) struggled to save the Islamic world from this grave danger, and was severely critical of those who were responsible for the infection to set in. He set an example of an altogether different life style in his own personal living, and, on attaining caliphate, he gave the top priority to the campaign against these dangers in his revolutionary programme.

The General Aspect of 'Ali's Warnings:

This prologue was intended to throw light upon the particular aspect of the warnings of Amir al-Mu'minin (A) about worldliness as a specific reaction to a particular social phenomenon of his times. Yet, aside from this particular feature, there is a general aspect to 'Ali's words that is not confined to his own time and applies to all times and all people as an essential part of Islamic teaching. This specific logic emanates from the teaching of the Holy Quran which is followed up in the sayings of the Holy Prophet (S), Amir al-Mu'minin (A) and the rest of Imams (A), as well as in the writings of great Muslim sages. However, it is a logic which needs a detailed analysis. In the present discussion, our concern will be more with the general aspect of the discourses of Amir al-Mu'minin (A) in the sense that in them 'Ali (A) addresses himself to all human beings of all times.

The Terminology of Every School:

Every school of thought has a terminology which is specific to it. In order to understand the concepts and issues of a certain school, it is essential to be familiar with its terms. On the other hand, in order to understand its particular terminology, it is necessary, in the first place, to understand its general view of the universe, life and man: that is its *weltanschauung*.

Islam has a clear view of being and creation, and has a particular way of looking at man and human life. One of the fundamental principles of the Islamic world-outlook is the notion that there is no duality of any kind whatsoever in being; that is, the world of creation is not divisible into two domains of 'good' and 'evil'. That is, it is not true that some existents are good and beautiful and should have been created, whereas some are evil and ugly and should not have been created but nevertheless exist. Such a view is regarded as *kufr* in the Islamic world-outlook, and is considered contrary to the principle of *tawḥīd*. In the view of Islam, the creation of *all* things is based on good-

ness, wisdom, and beauty:

... مَا تَرَى فِي خَلْقِ الرَّحْمَنِ مِنْ تَفَاوُتٍ ...

Thou seest not in the creation of the All-merciful any imperfection....(67:3)

ذَلِكَ عَالِمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ * الَّذِي أَحْسَنَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقَهُ....

He is the Knower of the unseen and the visible, the All-mighty, the All-compassionate, Who made good everything He created; ... (32: 6,7)

Accordingly, Islam's condemnation of 'the world' does not apply to the world of creation. The Islamic world-outlook rests on the foundation of pure *tawhīd* and lays great emphasis on the Unity of the Acting Principle; it does not admit the existence of any partner who would share God's sovereignty. Such a world-outlook can never be pessimistic. The idea of an evil world abounding in crookedness and wickedness is not an Islamic notion. Then why does it denounce 'the world'?

The 'World' that is Condemned:

Commonly it is said that attachment to the 'world' is condemned and disapproved by Islam. This is both true and false. If what is implied is an emotional attachment, it cannot be true; because, man, in relation to the total system of creation, has been created with a series of congenital emotional attachments and inclinations. In addition, he does not acquire these inclinations, nor are they superfluous or incongruous. Even as in the human body there is no superfluous organ—not even a single nerve ending—so also there are no redundant congenital tendencies of attachment in his nature. All innate human tendencies, and aptitudes have a purpose which is wise and sagacious. The Holy Quran regards such tendencies as the 'signs' of Divine Wisdom and the Creator's consummate design:

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً...

And of His signs is that He created for you, of yourselves, spouses, that you might repose in them, and He has set between you love and mercy... (30:21)

These attachments and sentiments form a series of channels of communication between man and his world. Without them man would not be able to pursue the course of his development. Consequently, it should be said that the Islamic world-outlook, even as it does not

permit us to denounce and reject the world, it also does allow us to regard the natural attachments and the channels of communication as superfluous, useless, and breakable, because such sentiments and tendencies are a part of the general pattern of creation. In fact, the prophets (A) and the *awliyā'* were endowed with these sentiments and emotions to a high degree of exuberance.

The truth is that what is implied by 'attachment to the world' are not these natural and innate inclinations; instead, what is meant is bondage to material and worldly affairs and total surrender to them, which leads to spiritual stagnation and inertia, deprives the human spirit of its freedom of movement and buoyancy, and makes it immobile and dead. That is what Islam calls 'worldliness' and has severely campaigned against it as something contrary to the evolutionary system of creation. Not only this, Islam considers this struggle as being in tune with the laws of the evolutionary processes of creation. The expressions employed by the Quran in this regard are miraculous, as we shall explain in the following sections.

The Relation Between Man and the World:

As made explicit in the last chapter, that which is regarded as disapprovable by the Quran and the *Nahj al-balāghah* is neither the world-in-itself, nor the natural and innate human urges and attachments. In the view of Islam, neither has the world been created without a purpose, nor has man strayed into it aimlessly.

There have been, and are, some schools of thought which view the world with pessimism. In their view, the existing order of the universe is far from being perfect. There have existed other schools which considered man's entry into the world of existence to be the result of some cosmic error, as if man had strayed into it. According to them, man is a total stranger in this world with which he has no ties of consanguinity, and is a prisoner of existence. Like Joseph, he has been thrown into the black-hole of being by his evil brethren where he is confined and his every endeavour should be aimed at finding an exit from this abyss.

Obviously, when the relation of man to the world and nature is regarded as the one between a prison and its prisoner, and an abyss and one entrapped in it, his ultimate aim cannot be anything but seeking 'deliverance'.

The Logic of Islam:

But from the viewpoint of Islam, the relation of man to the world is not that of a prisoner with his prison; or that of one entrapped in a

well with the well; rather it is the kind of relation that exists between a peasant and his farm,¹ or a horse and the racecourse,² or a merchant and the marketplace,³ or a devotee and his temple.⁴ The world, from the Islamic point of view, is a school for man, his training ground, and the place where he can acquire perfection.

There is an anecdote related in the *Nahj al-balāghah* of a man who condemned the world in Amīr al-Mu'minīn's presence. 'Alī (A) rebuked him for his confusing 'the world' which is condemned by Islam with the actual physical world and informed him about his error.⁵ Shaykh Farīd al-Dīn 'Aṭṭār has rendered this incident into verse in his *Muṣibat-nāmeḥ*:

<p>ذم دنیا کرد بسیاری مگر بد توئی زیرا که دوری از خرد هم شب و هم روز باید کشت و کار جمله از دنیا توان برد ای پسر ورنکارد «ای دریغا» بر دهد زانکه دنیا توشه عقبای تو است لیک، دروی کار عقبا گیر پیش پس برای این، تو دنیا دار دوست</p>	<p>آن یکی در پیش شیرداد گر حیدرش گفتا که دنیا نیست بد هست دنیا بر مثال کشت زار زانکه عز و دولت دین سربه سر تخم امروزینه فردا بر دهد پس نکوتر جای تو دنیای تو است توبه دنیادر، مشومشغول خویش چون چنین کردی تو را دنیا نکوست</p>
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In the presence of the Tiger of Providence,

A man denounced the world with vehemence.

"The world", exclaimed Hayder, 'is not to be blamed'.

Wretched are you, being far from wisdom.

The world, son, is a farm

To be attended to day and night.

Whatsoever is of the honour and riches of faith,

All in all it is to be acquired from this world.

Tomorrow's fruit is the blooming of today's seed;

And one who is idle here, shall taste the bitter fruit of regret.

The world is the best place for you,

Wherein you can prepare provision for the Hereafter.

Go into the world, but don't get immersed in the ego.

And prepare yourself for the other world.

If you act thus, the world will suit you,

Hence befriend the world just for this aim.

Nāṣir Khusrow 'Alawī, justifiably considered a philosopher among the poets (*Hakīm al-shu'arā'*), is one of the most profound and truly religious amongst Persian poets. He has composed a eulogy about the

world, simultaneously highlighting both the good and evil qualities of it, which is as much in conformity with the Islamic outlook as it is extraordinarily beautiful from artistic viewpoint. This eulogy appears in his collected poetical works (*dīwān*), and is included in his book *Jāmi' al-ḥikmatayn*. He says:

اگر چند با کس نپایسته‌ای
 به باطن، چو دود دیده پایسته‌ای
 شکسته بسی نیز تو بسته‌ای
 ولیکن سوی شستگان شسته‌ای
 بگویش: «هنوزم ندانسته‌ای»
 چه بنکوهی آن را کز آن رسته‌ای
 تو در رهگذر پست چه نشسته‌ای؟
 که تو شاخی از بیخ او جسته‌ای
 و گر راست بر رسته‌ای رسته‌ای
 نپرسد که بادام یا پسته‌ای
 به تیرش چرا خویش خسته‌ای؟!

جهانا! چه در خورد و پایسته‌ای
 بظاهر، چو در دیده، خس؛ ناخوشی
 اگر بسته‌ای را گهی بشکنی
 چو آلوده بینندت، آلوده‌ای
 کسی کوتورا می نکوهش کند
 زمن رسته‌ای تو؛ اگر بخردی
 به من برگذرداد ایزد تورا
 ز بهر تو ایزد درختی بکشت
 اگر کز بر او رسته‌ای سوختی
 بسوزد، بلی؛ هر کسی چوب کز
 تو تیر خدایی سوی دشمنش

*O world, how apt and essential you are,
 Even though you haven't been loyal to any.
 Sick and wretched you appear to the afflicted eye,
 Yet fine and healthy if one looks at your inside.
 If sometimes you have broken a robust man or two,
 Many a broken one you have joined and restored.
 You are filthy to the unclean,
 To the pure unstained.
 If any one should blame you, say, "You know me not."
 You have grown out of me. If you are wise,
 Why blame the tree of which you are a branch?
 The Lord made me a path for your ascending journey,
 And you have settled down on this lowly road.
 God planted a tree from whose trunk you have grown;
 If you grow out straight, you will be saved,
 And if crooked, confined to the flames.
 Yes, everyone burns crooked branches,
 And asks not "Is it teak or walnut?"
 You are the arrow of God aimed at His enemy,
 Why have you hurt yourself with this weapon?*

Now it is evident that man's relation to the world is similar to the

one that exists between the farmer and his field of cultivation, between the merchant and the marketplace, between the devotee and the temple. It is not possible for man to alienate himself from the world or sever his ties with it or to develop a kind of relationship which is wholly negative. There exists a design and intelligent planning behind every natural urge. Man has neither come to this world by cheating or fraud, nor should he go from here as an accused.

There is a general force of attraction and gravitation that encompasses the whole universe. All the particles in it attract each other according to a set pattern. This pattern of mutual attraction and absorption is determined by a judicious design. Moreover, the force of attraction and love is not confined to man alone. No particle in the universe is devoid of this power. The difference, however, is that man, contrary to other things, is aware of his own leanings and inclinations.

Wahshī Kirmānī says:

کشان هر ذره را تا مقصد خاص	یکی میل است در هر ذره رقااص
دواند گلخنی را تا به گلخن	رساند گلشنی را تا به گلشن
ز زیر ماه تا بالای افلاک	ز آتش تا به باد؛ از آب تا خاک
جنیبت در جنیبت، خیل در خیل	همین میل است اگر دانی همی میل
به جسم آسمانی تا زمینی	از این میل است هر جنبش که بینی

Every dancing particle is permeated with the same force of attraction

That draws it towards a certain specific goal.

It carries one flower to the side of another,

And urges one spark to pursue the company of its likes,

From fire to wind, from water to dust,

From underneath the moon to the top of the heavens,

From flock to flock and from horde to horde,

You will observe this attraction in every moving thing

From heavenly spheres to the terrestrial bodies.

Accordingly, from the viewpoint of Islam the world is neither without a purpose nor is human being created by any error, nor are man's innate tendencies undesirable and evil. Then what is meant by "the world" that the Quran and the *Nahj al-balāghah* regard as undesirable and condemnable?

Before embarking on the issue, a few preliminary principles need to be clarified. It is characteristic of man that he is inherently an idealist and a lover of perfection. He is in the search of something with

which he wants to develop a relationship closer than an ordinary attachment. In other words, he is by nature a devotee and a worshipper in search of something which is the ultimate object of his desire and the end of his entire being.

However, if he is not rightly guided, or not on his guard, his relation with things and inclination towards them is transformed into a relation of reliance and attachment, changing means into end and an association into bondage. As a result his spirit of mobility, freedom and capacity to quest are transformed into inertia, complacency and captivity.

This is what is undesirable and contrary to the perfection-seeking order of the world. It is a defect and a kind of non-being, not a merit or a positive mode of being. It is a dangerous malady and a disaster for man, and this is against which the Quran and the *Nahj al-balāghah* warn.

Without any doubt, Islam does not regard the material world and life in it—even if it involves the greatest material achievements—as a fitting goal of man's highest aspirations. This is because, firstly, in the Islamic world-outlook, this world is followed by the eternal and everlasting world of the Hereafter where conditions of life would be determined by the deeds, good or evil, of a person in this world. Secondly, the worth of a human being is too great to warrant his surrender to the slavery of and servitude to the material aspects of life.

That is why 'Ali (A) so often points out that the world is a good place, but only for him who knows that it is not a permanent abode, but only a road or a caravanserai.

وَلَنِعْمَ دَارُ مَنْ لَمْ يَرْضَ بِهَا دَارًا.

What a good abode it is for him who would not want to make it a home.⁶

إِنَّمَا الدُّنْيَا دَارٌ مَّجَازٍ وَالْآخِرَةُ دَارُ قَرَارٍ فَخُذُوا مِنْ مَمَرِّكُمْ لِمَقَرِّكُمْ.

This world indeed is a transit camp, whereas the Hereafter is a place of permanent abode. So take from the transit what you need for your destination.⁷

From the viewpoint of humanistic philosophies there is no doubt that everything which binds man to itself and immerses him completely within itself violates his human identity by making it inert and frozen. The process of human perfection knows no limit or end, and every halt, delay and bondage is injurious to it. As we find no reason to controvert this view, we accept it without any argument. However, there are two other points that need to be discussed here.

Firstly, does the Quran and following it the *Nahj al-balāghah*

confirm such a relation between man and his world? Is it true that what the Quran condemns is attachment and bondage to the world when taken as the ultimate end of life, an attitude which retards man's movement towards perfection and represents inertness, stagnation, and non-being? Does the Quran abstain from absolutely condemning worldly ties and sentiments so long as they do not become man's ultimate goal of life and stall his progress?

Secondly, if it is admitted that human attachment to beings other than himself causes bondage and servitude, and retards the development of human personality, does it make any difference if that being is God or something else?

The Quran negates every form of bondage and servitude and calls man to welcome every kind of spiritual and human freedom. It does not, however, condemn servitude to God; it does not invite man to liberate himself from God in order to acquire absolute freedom. Instead, the invitation of the Quran is based on liberation from everything besides God and complete surrender to Him. It is based on the rejection of obedience to anything except Him and the acceptance of submission to Him.

The expression '*Lā ilāha illā Allāh*' (There is no god except Allah) is the foundation of the Islamic faith. It implies simultaneously a negation and an affirmation, a rejection and an acceptance, and *kufr* and *imān*. It signifies the negation, the rejection, the renunciation, and the *kufr* in relation to the non-God, and the affirmation, the acceptance, the submission, and the *imān* in relation to God. The essential testimony required by Islam is neither just a 'Yes' nor merely a 'No'; it is a combination of both a 'Yes' and a 'No'.

If the needs of the growth of the human personality demand that man should liberate himself from every kind of bondage, servitude, and submissiveness to anything whatsoever, that he should revolt against everything that compromises his absolute freedom, that he ought to say 'No' to everything—as the Existentialists say—what difference does it make whether that thing is God or something else? And if it is to be decided that man should renounce his freedom and adopt slavery, servitude and submission to something, what difference does it make, after all, whether it is God or something else?

Is there a difference between accepting God as the supreme ideal and accepting some other thing as the *Summum Bonum*? Does it mean that only God is such that servitude to Him is freedom in itself, and that losing oneself in Him is identical with the realization of one's self and the recovery of one's true identity and personality? And if this is true, what is the basis of this claim? How can it be justified?

In our opinion, here we arrive at one of the subtlest, most profound, and progressive teachings of Islam and one of the most glorious of

human ideas. It is here that the sublimity of the logic of Islam and the insignificance and pettiness of other ideologies becomes evident. We shall answer these queries in the following sections.

'The World' in the Quran and the Nahj al-Balāghah:

In the last chapter we said that that which is execrable from the viewpoint of Islam in regard to man's relation with the world is that it should grow to the extent of becoming a malady and an affliction of the human soul. It is the bondage and the enslaving attachment to the world against which Islam has waged an unrelenting struggle considering it as undesirable, not the mere relation and attachment with it. It is the life of captivity that is condemnable, not the life of freedom. The world is rejected as a goal and objective and not as a way or a means.

If the relation of man to the world develops into his servitude and subjugation, it leads to the negation and obliteration of all higher human values; man's worth lies in the greatness of his pursued ends and objectives. Obviously, if, for instance, his ultimate objectives do not go beyond filling his belly to satisfaction, and if all his efforts and aspirations were to revolve around his stomach, his worth will not surpass that of his stomach. That is why 'Alī (A) says: "The worth of a man whose only aim is to stuff his belly is equal to that which is excreted from it."

The question is what kind of relation is appropriate between the human being and the world and what form should it have. In one kind of relation, his personality is effaced and sacrificed to things, and since the worth of anyone in pursuit of an objective is lower than the objective itself, he is, to use a Quranic expression, bound to sink to the level of 'the lowest of the low' (*asfal al-sāfilīn*), becoming thereby the most abject, degenerate and the most contemptible creature in the world. He, then, loses not only his higher values but also his human identity. In the other kind of relation the world and worldly things are sacrificed at the altar of his humanity and are used to serve man while he reclaims his higher ideals. That is why it has been said in a *ḥadīth-e qudsī*:

يَا أَبْنَ آدَمَ خَلَقْتُ الْأَشْيَاءَ لِأَجْلِكَ وَخَلَقْتُكَ لِأَجْلِي.

O son of Adam! I have created everything for thy sake, but I have created thee for My Own Self.

We have already cited two passages from the *Nahj al-balāghah* indicating its position in denouncing the degenerate and distorted kind of relationship between man and the world of nature that leads to

man's servitude and bondage. Here we shall quote a few verses from the Quran to endorse this viewpoint, and return to the *Nahj al-balāghah* for further relevant references.

The Quranic verses relating to man and the world are of two kinds: the first group of verses is of an introductory nature; that is, it lays the ground for the second group of verses. In truth, the first group can be regarded as representing the major and the minor premises of a syllogism of which the second group constitutes the conclusion.

The first set of verses consists of those which emphasize the changeability, the inconstancy and the ephemeral nature of this world. In these verses the reality of material objects is depicted as being changeable, fleeting, and transitory. For instance, the world is compared to the vegetation that sprouts from the ground. In the beginning it is green and flourishing but little by little turns yellow, shrivels, and ultimately dries up. Then the elements break it into bits and scatter it into the wind. Such is life in the present world.

Obviously, whether man should like it or not his physical life is not much more durable than that of the reed, and is subject to a similar fate. If man must base his outlook on reality and not on fancy and if it is only through the discovery of truth and not by flight of imagination and hallucinations that he can hope to attain felicity and true happiness, then he should not forget this truth.

This set of verses constitutes a kind of a background argument for denying the importance of material things as ultimate ideals worthy of man's adoration. These verses are followed immediately by the reminder that man should know that there exists another world which is eternal and everlasting. Don't imagine that the present life is everything that there is; and since it is not worthy of man, do not conclude that life is futile and meaningless, they remind.

The second set of verses illuminates the solution to the problem of man's relation to the world. It can be clearly seen from these verses that the execrable form of relation is one that grows to the extent of becoming a bondage, requiring man's submission, willing surrender and servitude to the transitory things of the world. It is in these verses that the crux of the Quran's logic comes to light:

أَلْمَالُ وَالْبَنُونَ زِينَةُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَالْبَاقِيَاتُ الصَّالِحَاتُ خَيْرٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ ثَوَابًا وَخَيْرٌ أَمَلًا*

1. *Wealth and sons are the adornment of the worldly life; but the abiding things, the deeds of righteousness (which survive one's death and continue to benefit other people), are better with God in reward and better in hope. (18:46)*

This verse, as can be seen, speaks of the ultimate aspiration of

man. His ultimate aspiration is the thing for which he lives and without which life has no meaning in his eyes.

إِنَّ الدِّينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ لِقَاءَنَا وَرَضُوا بِالْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَاطْمَأَنَّنُوا بِهَا وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ آيَاتِنَا غَافِلُونَ*
أُولَئِكَ مَاؤُهُمُ النَّارُ مَا كَانَُوا يُكْسِبُونَ*

2. Surely those who look not to encounter Us and are well-pleased with the present life and are at rest in it, and those who are heedless of Our signs, those—their refuge is the Fire, for that they have been earning. (10:7-8)

In this verse, that which is considered execrable is the absence of hope in the next life and the satisfaction and contentment with material things.

فَاعْرِضْ عَنْ مَنْ تَوَلَّىٰ عَنْ ذِكْرِنَا وَلَمْ يُرِدْ إِلَّا الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا* ذَلِكَ مَبْلَغُهُمْ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ ...

3. So turn thou from him who turns away from Our remembrance, and desires only the present life. That is their attainment of knowledge.... (53:29-30)

... وَفَرِحُوا بِالْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا فِي الْآخِرَةِ إِلَّا لُتْفٌ*

4. ... And they rejoice in this world's life; and this world's life is nothing compared with the Hereafter but a temporary enjoyment. (13:26)

يَعْلَمُونَ ظَاهِرًا مِّنَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ عَنِ الْآخِرَةِ هُمْ غَافِلُونَ*

5. They know an outward part of the present life, but of the Hereafter they are heedless. (30:7)

There are many other verses which have a similar meaning. In all of them the same theme recurs, that is the negation of the world as the goal and ideal of man's highest aspirations and the ultimate object of his desire, and the only source of his happiness and delight. It is held that this form of relation between man and the world, instead of putting the world at man's disposal, sacrifices man to it and dispossesses him of his humanity.

In the *Nahj al-balāghah* as in the Quran we encounter a similar twofold argument. In the first set of statements the transitory nature of the world is depicted in profound, forceful metaphors, allegories and parables put in precise and elegant phrases which follow one another in an absorbing rhythm. In the second category, conclusions are drawn which are exactly the same as those derived by the Quran.

In *Khutbah* 32, people are at first divided into two categories: the worldly and the otherworldly. The worldly people are again divided

into four groups.

In the first group are put those who are meek and tractable like sheep. They are the most innocuous of creatures, never seen to commit any overt injustice or aggression, or covert deceit or subversion. Not that they detest such things but because they lack the power and daring to carry them out.

To the second category belong those who possess both the power and the daring to carry out such ambitions. They muster their will to amass money and wealth, to acquire power and authority, or to occupy important posts and offices and do not stop short of any degree of perverseness.

Those belonging to the third group are wolves in the skins of sheep. They are slaves of the world in the garb of the otherworldly and the pious. They, sanctimoniously, hang their heads in affected humility, walk with the slow steps of a sage and dress like the devout. Through their hypocrisy they win the confidence of the people and become their most confident trustees.

To the fourth group belong those whose hearts burn regretfully with the fire of ambition but their feeling of inferiority has forced them to retire to seclusion. They put on the dress of piety and *zuhd* in order to conceal their deep sense of inferiority and dejection.

All the four kinds of people, regardless of the diverse degrees of their success and failure, are regarded by 'Alī (A) to constitute, spiritually, a single class on account of their commonly shared attitude: worldliness. Why? Because all of them have one common characteristic: they are like the unfortunate birds whom the world has made its prey one way or another. Captured, they enjoy no longer the freedom of flight. They are slaves and prisoners of the world.

In the same sermon, 'Alī (A) describes the qualities of the other-worldly, the opposite group, and says:

وَلَبِئْسَ الْمَتَجَرُّ أَنْ تَرَى الدُّنْيَا لِتَفْسِكَ تَمَنًّا.

Evil is the barter of those who purchase this world at the cost of their souls.

In the eyes of 'Alī (A) the whole world with everything in it is too inferior to be the price of a man's humanity; hence it ends in the great loss of one who exchanges it for his human identity. Nāṣir Khusrow has the same theme in mind, when he says:

تیز نگیرد جهان، شکار، مرا	نیست دگر باغمانش، کار، مرا
لاجرم اکنون جهان شکار من است	گرچه همی داشت او، شکار، مرا
گرچه همی خلق را فکار کند	کرد نیارد جهان، فکار، مرا

جان من از روزگار برتر شد بیم نیاید ز روزگار، مرا

*Never shall I fall an easy prey to the world,
For no more do its woes burden my heart.
In fact, I am the hunter and the world my prey,
Though once it did pursue me on its hunt.
Though many a man has fallen pierced by its arrows,
The world could not make me a target.
My soul flies over the world's tides,
And no more do I worry about its waves and tides.*

This theme that one should never sacrifice one's humanity for anything in the world is a theme that recurs a lot in the sayings of the leaders of the Islamic faith. Amir al-Mu'minin 'Ali (A) in his famous will to al-'Imām al-Ḥasan (A) which is included in the section of *Kutub* (letters) in the *Nahj al-balāghah*, says:

وَ أَكْرَمَ نَفْسِكَ عَنْ كُلِّ دُنْيِيَّةٍ، وَإِنْ سَأَفْتِكَ إِلَى الرَّغَائِبِ، فَإِنَّكَ لَنْ تَعْتَاضَ بِمَا تَبْدُلُ مِنْ
نَفْسِكَ عِوَضًا.

Keep your self above every contemptible thing, because, whatever it should be, it is not worth the compromise of your self.

In the account of his life given in the *Bihār al-'anwār*, al-'Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (A) is reported to have said:

أُثْمِنُ بِالنَّفْسِ النَّفِيسَةِ رَبِّهَا وَلَيْسَ لَهَا فِي الْخَلْقِ كُلِّهِمْ ثَمَنٌ

*The price of my soul is (the good-pleasure of) its Lord.
The whole of creation doesn't equal its worth.*

In the *Tuḥaf al-'uqūl*, the following tradition is recorded:

Al-'Imām al-Sajjād (A) was asked, 'Who is the most important among people?' He replied, 'The one who does not regard the whole world to be equal to his worth.'

There are many traditions which deal with a similar theme, but we shall abstain from quoting more for the sake of brevity.

A close study of the Quran, the *Nahj al-balāghah*, and the sayings of other religious leaders, will reveal that Islam has not depreciated the world; rather it has elevated the station and worth of the human being as compared to it. For Islam, the world is for the sake of man and not the other way round. It aims to revive human values, not to disparage

the world.

Freedom and Bondage:

Our discussion about the meaning of 'worldliness' in the *Nahj al-balāghah* has become somewhat drawn out. However, one issue, which cannot be omitted, remains unanswered. We raised it earlier in the form of a question which we had promised to answer later. The question was this: If attachment and bondage to anything is a kind of unhealthy condition that leads to abandonment of human values and cause stagnation, inertness, and inertia of the human personality, what difference does it make whether that thing is something material or spiritual, this-worldly or otherworldly, or, as goes the saying, 'the Lord or the apple'? It may be said that if the aim of Islam by prohibiting attachment and warning against bondage to temporal things is to safeguard the human being's identity and to rescue him from servitude and to protect him from stagnating and vegetating in life, it should have encouraged man to acquire absolute freedom and to consider every thing that compromises and confines it as *kufr*; for such is the standpoint of some modern schools of philosophy which consider freedom to be the essence of man's human identity. These schools of thought equate man's human identity with his capacity to rebel and disobey every form of servitude and to assert his absolute freedom. Accordingly, every manner of bondage, confinement, and submission is, according to them, inconsistent with man's real identity and leads to self-alienation.

They say that man realizes his true humanity only by refusing to submit and surrender. It is characteristic of attachment that the object of love absorbs man's attention and compromises his self-awareness. This results in his forgetting his own self and, subsequently, this aware and free being called man, whose identity is summarized in his awareness and freedom, becomes a slavish creature devoid of freedom and self-awareness. In forgetting his own identity, man also becomes oblivious of his human values. In this state of bondage and servitude he ceases to progress and edify his self and becomes stagnant and frozen at some point. If Islam's philosophy of struggle against worldliness aims at the resurrection of human identity and personality, it should oppose every form of servitude and liberate man from every form of bondage. This, however, is not the case, for Islam, undeniably, advocates liberation from material for the sake of spiritual servitude. Freedom from the world is acquired for the sake of the fetters of the Hereafter and the apple is renounced for the sake of the Lord.

The 'urafā' who advise absolute freedom from attachments, however, do allow an exception. Hāfiz says:

زهر چه رنگ تعلق پذیرد آزاد است
که خاطر از همه غمها به مهر او شاد است
بنده عشقم و از هر دو جهان آزادم
چکنم حرف دگریاد نداد استادم!

غلام همت آنم که زیر چرخ کبود
مگر تعلق خاطر به ماه رخساری
فاش می گویم و از گفته خود دلشادم
نیست بر لوح دلم جز الف قامت یار

*I am the slave of the magnanimity of him
Who is free of the taint of attachment to anything under the blue
sky—*

*Except the love of the moon-cheeked one,
The joy of whose love redeems all sorrows and woes.
Openly do I declare, and am delighted to proclaim,
I am the slave of Love and free from both the worlds.
Except for the Beloved's Name inscribed on the slate of my heart,
The teacher did not teach me another word.*

From the viewpoint of 'irfān, one must be free of both the worlds but should surrender totally to love. As Ḥāfiẓ says, the tablet of the heart must be clean of every name except that of the Beloved. The heart should be cleansed of every attachment except the love of 'the moon-cheeked one', that is God, whose love brings redemption from all sorrows and woes.

However, from the viewpoint of the so-called humanistic philosophy freedom of the 'ārif, being only relative, does not take us anywhere, because it is freedom from everything for total surrender and servitude to one being, whatever that may be. Servitude is after all servitude and bondage is bondage, regardless of the agent towards which it is directed.

This is the objection raised by the followers of modern humanistic philosophies. In order that the issues involved may be further illuminated, we are compelled to refer to certain philosophical issues.

First of all, one may point out that to assume that there exists a kind of human selfhood and identity and to insist that this identity should be safeguarded, in itself amounts to the negation of movement, progress and development of this selfhood, because, motion and change necessarily result in alienation from this selfhood. This is because movement means becoming: that is, becoming something one is not; it implies continuous transcendence of selfhood and embracing of otherness. Obviously, if we accept this view, it is only by the means of immobility and stagnation that one can preserve his identity; for development necessitates self-alienation. For this reason, some ancient philosophers defined motion in terms of otherness and self-estrangement. Accordingly, to assume that there exists a certain kind of human 'self' and to insist that this self should be safeguarded and protected

from becoming 'non-self', and to speak of movement, progress, and evolution in the same breath, involves an unresolvable contradiction.

Some, in order to free themselves from this contradiction, have said that man's identity lies in being devoid of any kind of 'self' whatsoever. Man, they say, is a creature absolutely undefined in his essence and free from any kind of limit, form, or essence. His essence lies in his being without any defined essence. Man is a creature devoid of a fixed nature and essential necessity. Any attempt to define, limit and confine him amounts to depriving him of his real self and identity.

Such a view may be aptly considered poetry and flight of imagination rather than a philosophy. The absolute absence of a fixed form and essence is possible in one of the two cases: Firstly, such a being should possess infinite perfection and pure and unlimited actuality; that is, it should be a being unlimited and unconfined, encompassing all times and places and predominant over all existents, such as the Being of the Creator. For such a being, movement and growth are impossible; because motion and development involve overcoming of defects and imperfections, whereas such a being cannot possibly be supposed to possess any imperfection. Secondly, it may apply to a being devoid of every kind of actuality and merit. That is, it should be pure possibility and sheer potentiality, a neighbour of nothingness, existing only on the remotest frontiers of existence. It should be devoid of any innate reality and essence though capable of assuming any form or essence. Such a being, which itself absolutely undefined, is always associated with a definite being; though shapeless and colourless in itself, it exists in the protective shadow of a being possessing form, shape and colour. Such a being is what the philosophers call 'the primal matter'. It occupies the lowest status in the hierarchy of existence and stands on the extremity of being, even as the Divine Essence, being absolute perfection, stands on the other extremity of existence—with the difference that the extremity occupied by the Divine Essence circumscribes all the contents of being.

Man, like all other creatures, is situated somewhere between these two extremes and so cannot possibly lack any defined essence. Admittedly, he is different from other creatures, but, unlike them, there is no limit to his movement towards perfection. Whereas other creatures remain confined to certain definite limits which they cannot transcend, there is no end to the possibilities of human development.

Man possesses a special kind of being. But contrary to the view of the philosophers who believe in the precedence of essence and reduce the being of every thing to its quiddity, and who deny the possibility of transcendence and essential change as being self-contradictory, and consider all changes to occur at the level of accidents, the existential nature of man, like that of any other material thing, is fluid, with the

difference that its movement and fluidity know no final limits.

Some commentators of the Quran, in their explanations of the verse: **يَا أَهْلَ يَثْرِبَ لَا مُقَامَ لَكُمْ** "O people of Yathrib, there is no abiding here for you" (33:13), have generalized it to cover all humanity. They hold that man is a creature which does not move to a certain and definite stage or halt; the further he moves the greater are the possibilities open to him. Here we do not wish to indulge in discussing the legitimacy of imposing such interpretations on Quranic verses; we only intend to show that Muslim scholars have thought about man in such terms.

In the ḥadīth about the Prophet's Ascension (*al-mi'rāj*), Gabriel who accompanies the Prophet (S), at a certain point, gives up his journey declaring: "I will get burnt if I move an inch further", while the Prophet (S) leaves him behind and moves further. This is an allusion to the truth mentioned above.

Also, as we know, there is a debate among Muslim scholars about the *ṣalawāt* (Benedictions) upon the Holy Prophet (S) and the Ahl al-Bayt, which we make as a prayer to God to shower greater blessings upon them. Now the debate is whether the *ṣalawāt* is of any benefit to the Holy Prophet (S), who is the most perfect man. In other words, is there any possibility of ascension in the Prophet's station? Or does the *ṣalawāt* benefit only the person who pronounces it and beseeches God to bless the Prophet (S), a favour that has already been granted?

The late Sayyid 'Alī Khān opened this debate in his commentary on *al-Ṣaḥīfat al-kāmilah*. A group of theologians believe that the Holy Prophet (S) is always ascending and climbing higher in his station, and this movement is never halted.

Yes, such is the station of man. That which makes man such is not the absolute absence of a defined essence but a certain kind of essence which is ordinarily referred to as 'human nature' and other similar expressions.

Man does not have any ultimate limits but he has a *path*. The Quran lays great emphasis on what it calls the Straight Path, which is an unambiguous path before man. Man is not constrained by stages so as to be forced to stop at every stage in his journey. Instead there is an orbit in which he should move. This is the orbit of human perfection which is different from those of the animals. This means the movement in a specified orbit, a movement which is orderly not haphazard.

The Existentialist Viewpoint:

Existentialism has been rightly criticized for its refusal to acknowledge any kind of determination or definition of the human nature, for its considering every determination (even in the form of

path or orbit) as contrary to his humanity, and for its emphasis on his absolute freedom and capacity for rebellion; for this philosophy necessarily leads to the breakdown of social morality and the negation of the individual's commitments and responsibilities.

Does Evolution Involve Self-Alienation?

Now returning to what we said earlier, does movement and evolution necessitate alienation from one's self? Should every being, in order to remain itself, abstain from change and evolution? Does it mean that either man should retain his human identity or, if he chooses an evolutionary course, become something alien to his essence?

The answer is that the true evolution of anything is a movement towards the perfect state which conforms to its nature. In other words, the transformations during movement on the straight path of nature by no means necessitate any loss of specific identity.

That which constitutes the real self of a being is its existence, not its essence. Accordingly, any change in essence does not imply mutation of the 'self' into a 'non-self'. Mullā Ṣadrā, who is the champion of this philosophy, holds that man does not have any definite essence; rather every developing being passing through the stages of its evolution is not a single species but a plurality of species. The relation of an imperfect being with its ultimate stage of perfection is not a relation of otherness; rather it is a relation of the thing to itself. It is the relation of an imperfect self to the perfect self. A thing while evolving toward its perfect state is in movement from its self to its self. In a sense, it can be said to be in movement from the non-self towards its true self. A seed that breaks the ground and sprouts leaves, and sends out branches and flowers, does not move from the self to the non-self. If it were aware of itself and aware of its ultimate evolution, it would not feel self-alienated.

That is why the love of true perfection is the love of a higher self, and a praiseworthy love is in itself a desirable and praiseworthy egotism or self-love. Shaykh al-'Ishrāq Shihāb al-Dīn al-Suhrawardī has an elegant *rubā'ī* on this subject:

خود راز برای نیک و بد گم نکنی	هان تا سر رشته خرد گم نکنی
هشدار که راه خود گم نکنی	رهرو توئی و راه توئی منزل تو

*Beware lest you lose the wisdom's thread,
And lose your self for the sake of water and bread.
You are the traveller, the way, the destination,
Beware lest you lose the path from the self to the self.*

On the basis of what has been said it can be surmised that there is a great difference between desiring God, the movement towards God, the love of God, the attachment and the servitude to God and submission to Him, and the love, the submission, and the servitude to other things. The servitude to God is freedom itself. It is the only relation and tie which does not stagnate the human personality or make it inert and immobile. It is the only kind of worship which does not imply self-forgetfulness and self-alienation. Why? Because He is the Absolute Perfection and the Ultimate Goal and the Destination of all existents: *وَأَنَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ الْمُنْتَهَىٰ* * 'And unto thy Lord will be the end of all things' (53:42).

Now we have reached a point from where we can proceed to explain the position of the Quran that forgetting God is forgetting one's own self and the separation from God is absolute annihilation.

Forgetting and Losing the Self:

I remember that about eighteen years ago while discussing the exegesis of certain verses of the Holy Quran in a private gathering, for the first time the point struck me that the Quran very often employs typical expressions about a certain group of human beings, such as those who 'lose', 'forget', or 'sell' their selves. For instance, it says:

... قَدْ خَسِرُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ وَضَلَّ عَنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ *

...They have indeed lost their selves, and that which they were forging has gone astray from them. (7:53)

... قُلْ إِنَّ الْخَاسِرِينَ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ وَأَهْلِيهِمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ...

... Say: 'Surely the losers are they who lose their selves and their families on the Day of Resurrection'.... (39:15)

وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ نَسُوا اللَّهَ فَأَنسَاهُمْ أَنفُسَهُمْ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ *

Be not as those who forgot God, and so He caused them to forget their selves; those—they are the ungodly. (59:19)

The question might occur to a mind with a philosophic bent: Is it possible for a man to lose his self? The loss of anything necessitates two things: the loser and the thing lost. Now how is it possible for a human being to lose its self? Is it not self-contradictory?

Likewise, is it possible for a man to forget himself? A living human being is always immersed in itself and perceives everything as

something other and additional to its own self; its attention is, before everything else, focussed on itself. Then what is meant by forgetting one's self?

Later I realized that this matter occupies a significant place in Islamic teachings, especially in the prayers and some traditions as well as in the writings of Muslim 'urafā'. It shows that often man mistakes 'non-self' as his self, regards that non-self as his real self. Then imagining the non-self to be his self, he treats the non-self and takes care of it as he would have treated and cared for his true self. The true self, as a result, falls into neglect and oblivion, and occasionally undergoes a metamorphosis. For instance, when man imagines his body to represent his total entity, all his endeavour revolves about his body, it means that he has forgotten his self conceiving the non-self to be his real self. Such a man, in the words of Rūmī, is like the one who owns a piece of land somewhere; he carries building materials and hires masons and workers to build a house for him; after much toil, the house is made ready for living; the doors and windows are painted, the floor is carpeted, curtains are hung and the house is furnished beautifully in every way; however, one day when he prepares to move into the new house, all of a sudden he realizes his mistake; to his dismay, he notes that instead of erecting the house on his own land, he has constructed it on a land that belongs to somebody else, while his own plot lies abandoned elsewhere:

کار «خود» کن، کار «بیگانه» مکن	در زمین دیگران خانه مکن
کز برای او است غمناکی تو	کیست بیگانه؟ «تن» خاکی تو
گوهر جان را نیابی فربهی	تا توتن را چرب و شیرین می دهی

*Don't build your house on the land of another,
Work for your own self and toil not for the stranger.
Who is the stranger except your own earthen frame?
On whose account are all your sorrows and woes?
So long as you nurse and pamper your body,
The soul would not prosper, nor would it become sturdy.*

At another place Rūmī says:

دیگران را توز «خود» نشناخته	ای که در پیکار «خود» را باخته
که منم این، والله این تونیستی	توبه هر صورت که آبی بیستی
در غم و اندیشه مانی تا به حلق	یک زمان تنها بمانی توز خلق
که خوش و زیبا و سرمست خودی	این تو کی باشی؟ که تو آن اوحدی

*You, who have lost your self in a losing encounter,
Distinguishing not the other from your own true self;
At every shadow you are quick to exclaim, "Ah! This is me!"
By God it is not you!
Isolate yourself for a while from the crowd,
And immerse yourself to the neck in thought.
Indeed you shall find that you are one with the One,
Beautiful, serene, and blessed is your self.*

Amir al-Mu'minin 'Ali (A) has a saying in this regard which is as profound as it is elegant:

عَجِبْتُ لِمَنْ يَنْشُدُ ضَالَّتَهُ وَقَدْ أَضَلَّ نَفْسَهُ فَلَا يَطْلُبُهَا.

I wonder at the man who searches for his lost things but doesn't care to recover his lost self.⁸

Losing oneself and forgetting oneself is not confined to man's error in recognizing his true identity and essence—such as the ordinary man's self-identification with the body, or the 'arif's occasional identification of himself with his *Barzakhī* body. We have said in the last chapter that actually every being in the natural course of its development moves from the self to the self; that is, it moves from a lower, weaker self to a self which is powerful and higher. Accordingly, the deviation of every existent from the path of its perfection and development is deviation from the self towards the non-self. Man, more than any other creature, being endowed with a free will and freedom of choice, is subject to this deviation. By choosing a deviant objective as ultimate for himself, in reality he replaces his true self with the non-self, mistaking the non-self to be the self. It is on this basis that the human being's total immersion in material aspects of life has been regarded as condemnable.

Therefore, the adoption of devious goals and ends is one of the factors of self-alienation that leads man to forget his true self and finally to lose it.

Devious goals and objectives not only result in the disease of self-loss; they lead ultimately to the metamorphosis of man's human essence, a metamorphosis that is determined by that particular devious goal. A significant part of Islamic teachings is devoted to drive home the point that on the Day of Resurrection every human being shall be raised with the object of his love. Our traditions declare unequivocally: مَنْ أَحَبَّ حَجَرًا حَسَرَهُ اللَّهُ مَعَهُ. that is, everyone, on the Day of Judgement shall be raised in the company of his object of love, whatever that should be, even if it is a stone.⁹

With attention to the indubitable and unequivocal Islamic teaching that on the Day of Judgement man would be raised in the form of what he acquired in this world, it becomes clear that the reason for a person's resurrection together with the objects of his love is that the love and attachment for that object make it the ultimate goal of the path of his becoming. However devious that objective may be, it causes the soul and the inner reality of a person to transform into that object.

This subject has been given great attention by Muslim sages and philosophers, who have made great many interesting observations in this regard. For brevity's sake, we shall quote only one *rubā'i* on this topic:

گر در طلب گوهر کانی، کانی وردری جستجوی جانی، جانی
من فاش کنم حقیقت مطلب را هر چیز که در جستن آنی، آنی

The seeker of a mine of diamonds is himself a mine;

The seeker of the spirit is himself the spirit;

I will divulge the secret of this matter:

You are whatever you seek, you are the object of your quest.

The Discovery of the Self and of God:

The rediscovery of the self, in addition to the above two, requires to fulfil one more condition, and that is the realization and knowledge of the Cause of one's creation and existence. That is, it is impossible for man to recognize himself and know himself by viewing himself in separation from the Cause of his creation. The real Cause of every existent is prior to it and nearer to it than it is to itself:

... وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَبْلِ الْوَرِيدِ *

...And We are nearer to him than his jugular vein. (50:16)

... وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَحُولُ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ وَقَلْبِهِ ...

...And know that God stands between a man and his heart.... (8:24)

The Muslim mystics have laid great emphasis on the point that the knowledge of the self (*ma'rifat al-nafs*) and the knowledge of God (*ma'rifat Allāh*) are not separate from one another. To experience the spirit, which according to the Quran is God's 'breath', is, to experience the Divine Essence. The Muslim mystics have raised severe objections against the statements of Muslim philosophers regarding the problem

of self-knowledge and consider them to be inadequate.

Shaykh Maḥmūd al-Shabistari was sent a series of versified questions by someone from Khurāsān. His poem *Gulshan-e rāz* is the reply he gave to the questions. In one of the questions, the enquirer asks:

که باشم من؟ مرا از من خبر کن چه معنی دارد اندر خود سفر کن؟

*Who am I? Inform me about my self.
What is meant by "Journey within thy self"?*

The Shaykh's reply is elaborate. There he says:

همه یک نور داد، اشباح وارواح گه از آینه پیدا، گه زمصباح
تو گوئی لفظ من در هر عبارت به سوی روح می باشد اشارت
من و تو بر نواز جان و تن آمد که این هر دو ز اجزای من آمد
بروای خواجه خود را نیک بشناس که نبود فربهی مانند آماس
یکی ره بر تر از کون و مکان شو جهان بگذار و خود در خود جهان شو

*Forms and spirits, from the same light are derived,
Reflected of mirror or beaming from the lamp.
'I' the word is everywhere in all your speech.
It refers to the soul, the spirit.
'I' and 'You', are greater than the body and the spirit,
Which are together parts of the self.
Go then, my good man, first know well your self,
And remember: edema is different from robustness.¹⁰
Leave one of them to soar over the undulations of space and time,
Abandon the world to become a world in yourself.*

A further elaboration of this theme will take us outside the scope of our present discussion. To be brief, it should be said that the gnosis of the self is inseparable from that of God. This is exactly the meaning of the famous saying of the Prophet (S), and the same theme recurs in the recorded statements of Imam 'Ali (A):

مَنْ عَرَفَ نَفْسَهُ فَقَدْ عَرَفَ رَبَّهُ.

He who knows his self knows his Lord.

In the *Nahj al-balāghah* it is reported that Imam 'Ali (A) was asked by somebody: 'هل رأيت ربك يا أمير المؤمنين؟' 'Have you seen your God?' 'Ali (A)

replied: أَفَأَعْبُدُ مَا لَا أَرَى؟ 'Would I worship what I have not seen?'
Then he elaborated his answer thus:

لَا تَرَاهُ الْعُيُونُ بِمُشَاهَدَةِ أَلْعِيَانِ، وَلَكِنْ تُدْرِكُهُ أَلْقُلُوبُ بِحَقَائِقِ الْإِيمَانِ.

He is not visible to the eyes but the hearts perceive Him through (the factual experience of) faith (*īmān*).

An interesting point that is implicit in the statements of the Quran is that man is in possession of himself as long as he 'possesses' God. Only through the remembrance of God does he remember his self and become fully aware of it, and to forget God is to neglect one's own self. Forgetting God is accompanied by self-forgetfulness:

وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ نَسُوا اللَّهَ فَأَنْسَاهُمْ أَنْفُسَهُمْ....

Be not as those who forgot God, and so He caused them to forget their selves.... (59:19)

Rūmī, following his verses quoted above, says:

وقت مردن گند آن پیدا شود	گرمیان مشک تن را جاشود
مشک چبود؟ نام پاک ذوالجلال	مشک را برتن مزین، برجان بمال

*Even if the body should lie amidst fragrance and musk,
On death it will petrify and give out its stink.
So scent not the body, but perfume the soul with musk,
What is that musk except the Name of the Glorious Lord?*

Hāfiz says:

«حضورى گرهمى خواهى از او «غائب» مشو حافظ
متى ماتلق من تهوى دع الدنيا وآهملها

*Hāfiz, if you desire presence, do not be absent from Him.
If you desire His rendezvous, abandon the world and forget it.*

This shows why the remembrance of God is essential for the life of the heart; it awakens and illumines the heart and gives peace to the soul; it revives, purifies, refines, and humbles the human conscience and fills it with delight. How profound and beautiful are 'Ali's words in the *Nahj al-balāghah* where he says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى جَعَلَ الذِّكْرَ جِلَاءً لِلْقُلُوبِ، تَسْمَعُ بِهِ بَعْدَ الْوَقْرِ، وَتُبْصِرُ بِهِ بَعْدَ الْعَشْوَةِ، وَتَنْقَادُ بِهِ بَعْدَ الْمُعَانَدَةِ. وَمَاتَرَحَ لِلَّهِ - عَزَّتْ آلاؤُهُ - فِي الْبُرْهَةِ بَعْدَ الْبُرْهَةِ، وَفِي أَرْزَامِ الْفَرَاتِ، عِبَادًا نَاجَاهُمْ فِي فِكْرِهِمْ، وَكَلَّمَهُمْ فِي ذَاتِ عُقُولِهِمْ، فَأَسْتَضْبَحُوا بِنُورِ يَقْظَةٍ فِي الْأَبْصَارِ وَالْأَسْمَاعِ وَالْأَفْئِدَةِ.

Certainly God Almighty has made His remembrance a means for cleaning and polishing the hearts. It makes them hear after deafness, see after blindness, and makes them submissive to guidance after being stubborn and resisting. In all periods and times when there were no prophets, there were individuals to whom He whispered through their thoughts and spoke to them through their intellects. As a result they were enlightened with a light awakening their hearts, their vision and their hearing.¹²

Worship and the Rediscovery of the Self:

There is so much that can be said about worship that if we were to be elaborate we would have to devote scores of chapters to this subject. Here we shall make a brief reference to the value of worship in the rediscovery of the self.

As much as the bondage to material matters and immersion in them severs man from his true self and induces self-alienation, worship helps him in recovering his own self. Worship awakens and arouses man from his spiritual slumber. It rescues him from drowning in the sea of self-neglect and forgetfulness and saves his identity from being lapsed in the world of material things. It is in the mirror of worship and God's remembrance that man can observe himself as he really is and become aware of his failings and faults. It is in worship that he acquires the true perspective of being, life, space and time, like watching a city from a high mountain, and perceives the insignificance, pettiness and abjectness of his materialistic hopes, desires, and ambitions. It is in worship that a yearning is awakened in his heart to attain to the very core of being.

I have always marvelled at the following words of the famous scientist of our age, Albert Einstein. What adds to my amazement is that he was a physicist and a mathematician, not a psychologist, theologian or philosopher. After dividing religion into three stages, he calls the third stage of religious experience as the one arising from 'cosmic religious feeling.' He describes this religious experience in these words:

The individual feels the futility of human desires and aims, and the sublimity and marvellous order which reveal themselves both in nature and in the world of thought. Individual existence impresses him as a sort of prison and

he wants to experience the universe as a single significant whole.¹³

William James, writing about prayer, says:

The impulse to pray is a necessary consequence of the fact that whilst the innermost of the empirical selves of a man is a self of the social sort it yet can find its only adequate socius (its "great companion") in an ideal world.... Most men, either continually or occasionally, carry a reference to it in their breasts. The humblest outcast on this earth can feel himself to be real and valid by means of this higher recognition.¹⁴

Iqbāl also has something profound to say about worship and prayer and their value for the rediscovery of the self. He writes:

Prayer as a means of spiritual illumination is a normal vital act by which the island of our personality suddenly discovers its situation in a larger whole of life.¹⁵

We conclude our discussion of this extensive subject right here.

Some Relevant Issues:

Now that our discussion about the concept of the world in the *Nahj al-balāghah* is nearing its conclusion, I want to clarify some issues with attention to the principles discussed above.

The World Versus the Hereafter:

1. Some Islamic traditions seem to imply that there exists a kind of conflict between the world and the Hereafter. For instance, it is stated that they are like 'two rival wives' who can never be reconciled, or it is said that they are like the East and the West: one cannot approach any one of them without moving farther from the other. How should one interpret these statements in order to reconcile them with what has been said above?

The answer is that, firstly, as has been expressly stated in most Islamic traditions, a reconciliation between winning the world and the Hereafter is not only possible but is a necessity of the Islamic creed. That which is impossible is their reconciliation as ultimate ends and goals.

The enjoyment of the good things of the world does not necessarily require deprivation from the blessings of the next world. That which deprives one of the rewards of the next life is a series of mortal sins, not the enjoyment of a wholesome, comfortable life and the availing of pure and lawful bounties provided by God. Similarly,

that which leads to deprivation in the world is not *taqwā* or righteous deeds or the endeavour for the Hereafter; a number of other factors are responsible for it.

Many prophets, Imams, and pious believers, whose virtuousness and piety are indubitable, have been among those who benefited greatly from the legitimate bounties of the world. Accordingly, even if it be assumed that the religious texts do imply irreconcilability between the enjoyment of the world and that of the Hereafter, they would not be acceptable because of the incontrovertible evidence to the contrary.

Secondly, if we scrutinize such traditions closely, an interesting point comes to the surface in whose light we observe no contradiction between them and the incontrovertible principles of Islam. But before that this point may be explained, we should examine three possible relationships between the world and the Hereafter:

1. The relation between enjoyment of the good things of the world and enjoyment of the rewards of the Hereafter.

2. The relation between the world as the ultimate goal and the Hereafter as such.

3. The relation between adoption of one of these as the ultimate goal with the enjoyment of the other.

There is no conflict whatsoever involved in the first case. Accordingly a reconciliation between the two is quite possible. The second case, however, involves a contradiction; for there is no possibility of reconciling these two opposite goals.

As to the third, it involves in turn two cases: first, the adoption of the world as the ultimate end and the enjoyment of the Hereafter; second, the adoption of the Hereafter as the ultimate goal and the enjoyment of the world. The first case involves a contradiction, whereas the second doesn't.

The Primary and the Secondary:

The conflict between the adoption of either the world or the Hereafter as ultimate ends and the enjoyment of the other is the kind that exists between a perfect and an imperfect end. If the imperfect is made the ultimate goal, the perfect is necessarily missed; whereas if the perfect were one's end and goal, it would not necessarily preclude the imperfect. The same is true of anything primary in relation to its secondaries. If something secondary were made the aim, it would result in deprivation from the primary. But if the primary is made the aim and goal, the secondary, being a corollary of the primary, is automatically included. This is most eloquently explained in *Hikmah* 269 of the *Nahj al-balāghah*:

التَّاسُ فِي الدُّنْيَا عَامِلَانِ: عَامِلٌ عَمِلَ فِي الدُّنْيَا لِلدُّنْيَا، قَدْ شَغَلَتْهُ دُنْيَاهُ عَنْ آخِرَتِهِ، يَخْشَى عَلَى مَنْ يَخْلُقُهُ الْفَقْرَ، وَيَأْتُمُّهُ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ، فَيُنْفِي عُمُرَهُ فِي مَنَفَعَةٍ غَيْرِهِ؛ وَعَامِلٌ عَمِلَ فِي الدُّنْيَا لِمَا بَعْدَهَا، فَجَاءَهُ الَّذِي لَهُ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا بِغَيْرِ عَمَلٍ، فَأَحْرَزَ الْحَظَّيْنِ مَعًا، وَمَلَكَ الدَّارَيْنِ جَمِيعًا، فَأَصْبَحَ وَجِيهًا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ، لَا يَسْأَلُ اللَّهُ حَاجَةً فَيَمْتَنِعُهُ.

There are two types of workers among the people of the world: (One type is represented by) the man who works in this world for this world and his involvement in the world makes him forget the Hereafter. He is worried about those whom he shall leave behind (on death) lest poverty should strike them as if he were himself secure of it (in the Hereafter). So he spends his life for the (worldly) benefit of others. The other type of man works in the world for the sake of the Hereafter and secures his share of the world effortlessly. Thus he derives benefit from the both and comes to possess both the worlds. As a result he acquires honour before God, Who grants him whatever he asks of Him.

Rūmī offers an interesting allegory. He compares the Hereafter and the world to a train of camels and the trail of dung that it leaves behind. If one's aim were to own the train of camels he would also have the camels' dung and wool. But if one wants only the dung and the wool, he will never come to acquire the train of camels and will always be collecting dung and wool of camels which belong to others. He says:

صيد دين كن تا رسد اندر تبع	حسن و مال و جاه و بخت منتفع
آخرت قطار اشتردان عمو	در تبع دنياش همچون پشك و مو
پشم بكزینی شتر نبود تورا	و ربود اشترچه قسمت پشم را

*Hanker you after faith for its pursuit yields
Beauty, wealth, honour, and good fortune.
Consider the Hereafter as a camel train;
The world is a trail of wool and dung in its rear.
If you want only the wool, you will never the camels own;
Yet if you own a camel train, isn't its wool your own?*

That the relation of the world to the Hereafter is like that of a secondary thing to its primary; that worldliness, being a pursuit of the secondary, leads to deprivation from the benefits of the Hereafter; and that otherworldliness by itself ensures the benefits of the world, is a teaching that originates in the Quran. Verses 145-148 of the *Sūrat Āl 'Imrān* expressly, and verses 18 and 19 of the *Sūrat al-'Isrā'* together with verse 20 of the *Sūrat al-Shūrā* implicitly present this view.

A Tradition:

2. There is a well-known tradition found in the texts of ḥadīth as well as other books and is also mentioned in the last will of al-'Imām al-Ḥasan al-Mujtabā (A). This is the text of the tradition:

كُنْ لِدُنْيَاكَ كَأَنَّكَ تَعِيشُ أَبَدًا وَكُنْ لِآخِرَتِكَ كَأَنَّكَ تَمُوتُ غَدًا.

In regard to the world be as if you were going to live for ever. With respect to the Hereafter be as if you were going to die tomorrow. ¹⁶

This tradition has been highly controversial in that it has led to contradictory interpretations. Some interpret it as implying that one should deal with worldly matters with relaxed inattention and without hurry. Whenever one is faced with an affair of worldly life, one should say to himself "There is still a lot of time, why hurry?" But when performing good deeds for the Hereafter, one should imagine as if he were not going to be alive after tomorrow and say to himself: "There isn't much time left; it is already too late."

Others with the conviction that Islam would never recommend negligence and carelessness, which certainly has not been the practice of the leaders of the faith, have said that what is implied is that one should always approach the worldly affairs as if he were immortal, attend to them with attention and care, and not perform them in a perfunctory manner with the pretext that life is fleeting. Rather, they say, the works of the world should be done with firmness and great foresight and attention, as if one were going to live till the end of the world. The rationale for this is that if one were to die, others will derive benefit from one's works. The affairs of the Hereafter, however, are in God's hand; so think of them as if you were going to die tomorrow and there is not much time left for anything.

As can be noticed, the first one of these two interpretations recommends negligence and lack of commitment towards the affairs of the world, whereas the second one advises a similar attitude towards the Hereafter. Obviously, none of these two interpretations can be regarded as acceptable.

In our opinion, this, one of the most subtle of traditions, consists of an invitation to action, care, and attention and avoidance of negligence and indifference, whether with respect to the worldly activities or those which relate to the Hereafter.

Suppose a person living in a house knows that sooner or later he will have to move to another house where he will stay permanently. However, he does not know the day, the month or the year when he shall have to make the shift. Such a man is in a state of dilemma with

regard to matters relating to his present home and his plans about his future house. If he knows that he will move tomorrow, he would not pay any attention to the repairs and upkeep of his present house, and attend only to matters concerning the planned shift. But if he knows that he would not be shifting his residence for several years, he will act in an opposite manner; presently he will devote all his attention to the present house, knowing that there is much time left to deal with those relating to his future residence.

Now this person, in a state of doubt about the exact date of the shift, not knowing whether he will have to shift in near future or remain in his present house for years, meets a friend who wisely advises him to attend to the affairs of his present house as if he were to continue living there for a long time and not to neglect its upkeep. As to the other house, the wise friend advises him to get it ready as if he were going to move tomorrow and have it furnished as soon as possible. This advice will have the consequence that it will make him adopt a serious and active attitude towards both his houses.

Suppose someone wants to start a work, like writing a book or founding an institution or taking up a project which requires years of pursuit. If such a person thinks that he will not live long enough to finish his work, he might desist from starting it. That is why it is said that one must think that he will live for long. But the same person, from the point of view of repenting for his sins and compensating for the past excesses with regard to religious duties or the rights of the people he has transgressed—all of which require little time for their accomplishment given the will to do so—may keep on postponing them every day so that the promised tomorrow may never come. In such cases, contrary to the first kind of attitude, to assume that one has still enough time and there is no reason to hasten, would result in negligence and delay in fulfilment of one's duties. Therefore, here one should assume that there isn't much time left.

Therefore, we see that in one case to assume that one has enough time encourages action and endeavour and the assumption that there is no time left would lead one to abstain from action and endeavour. In the other case, the result is quite the opposite. Here, the assumption that one has still a lot of time leads to negligence and procrastination, and the assumption that there isn't much time left leads to quick accomplishment of duties.... In the light of this, the ḥadith means to say that in regard to one kind of duties one should assume that he is going to live on and with respect to another kind suppose that not much remains of his life.

This interpretation is not baseless. There are several traditions which confirm the above interpretation. The reason that this tradition gave rise to controversy is that attention was not paid to such

traditions.

Safīnat al-bihār, under *rifq*, relates a tradition of the Holy Prophet (S) addressed to Jābir:

إِنَّ هَذَا الدِّينَ لَمَتِينٌ فَأَوْغِلْ فِيهِ بِرِفْقٍ.... فَأَخْرُثُ حَرْثَ مَنْ يَظُنُّ أَنَّه لَا يَمُوتُ وَأَعْمَلُ عَمَلَ مَنْ
يَخَافُ أَنَّه يَمُوتُ غَدًا.

Indeed this (i.e. Islam) is a firm religion. So (do not make it hard on yourself but) act in it with mildness.... Cultivate like him who thinks he will never die and work (for the hereafter) like him who is afraid he will die tomorrow.

In volume XV of *Bihār al-'anwār* (the section on *akhlāq*, *Bāb* 29), it is related from *al-Kāfī* that the Holy Prophet (S) addressed 'Alī (A), saying:

إِنَّ هَذَا الدِّينَ مَتِينٌ... فَأَعْمَلْ عَمَلَ مَنْ يَرْجُو أَنْ يَمُوتَ هَرِمًا وَأَخْذِرْ حَذَرَ مَنْ يَتَخَوَّفُ أَنَّه
يَمُوتُ غَدًا.

This (Islam) is a firm religion.... So work like him who hopes to live for long and be cautious like him who is afraid that he would die tomorrow.

That is, when commencing a useful project that requires a long time for its completion, assume that you will live long enough to complete it. However, in regard to matters which you might postpone thinking that you have enough time to handle them, assume that you shall die tomorrow, so that time is not wasted and delay is avoided.

In *Nahj al-balāghah*, it is related from the Holy Prophet (S) that he said:

أَصْلِحُوا دُنْيَاكُمْ وَأَعْمَلُوا لِآخِرَتِكُمْ كَأَنَّكُمْ تَمُوتُونَ غَدًا.

Attend to the affairs of the world; but with respect to the Hereafter be such as if you were going to die tomorrow.

In the same book, the Prophet (S) is related as saying:

إِعْمَلْ عَمَلَ آمِرٍ يَظُنُّ أَنَّه لَنْ يَمُوتَ أَبَدًا وَأَخْذِرْ حَذَرَ آمِرٍ يَخْشَى أَنْ يَمُوتَ غَدًا.

Work like the man who imagines that he will never die; and be cautious like him who knows he is going to die tomorrow.

In another tradition the Prophet (S) is reported to have said:

أَعْظَمُ النَّاسِ هَمًّا الْمُؤْمِنُ، يَهْتَمُّ بِأَمْرِ دُنْيَاهُ وَأَمْرِ آخِرَتِهِ.

The *mu'min* is the most vexed of men, for he must attend to the affairs of the world as well as those of the Hereafter.

In *Safīnat al-bihār*, under *nafs*, a ḥadīth of al-'Imām Mūsā al-Kāzīm (A) is related from *Tuḥaf al-'uqūl* to the effect that:

لَيْسَ مِنَّا مَنْ تَرَكَ دُنْيَاهُ لِدِينِهِ أَوْ تَرَكَ دِينَهُ لِدُنْيَاهُ.

He who abandons the world for his Hereafter or abandons his Hereafter for his world is not from us.

The above discussion on the whole confirms our interpretation of the ḥadīth and also shows that this approach finds recurring echo in the teachings of the leaders of the Islamic faith.

Concluded; wal-ḥamdu lillāh

NOTES:

1. This tradition of the Prophet (S) is referred to here: الدُّنْيَا مَرْزَعَةُ الْآخِرَةِ.
2. This is a reference to this sentence from the *Nahj al-balāghah*, *Khutab*, No. 28: أَلَا وَإِنَّ الْيَوْمَ الْمِضْمَارَ وَغَدَا السَّبَاقَ.
3. This is a reference to this sentence from the *Nahj al-balāghah*, *Hikam*, No. 131: إِنَّ الدُّنْيَا... مَتَجَرُّ أَوْلِيَاءِ اللَّهِ.
4. This is a reference to this sentence from the *Nahj al-balāghah*, *Hikam*, No. 131: إِنَّ الدُّنْيَا... مَسْجِدُ أَحِبَّاءِ اللَّهِ.
5. *Nahj al-balāghah*, *Hikam*, No. 311.
6. *Ibid.*, *Khutab*, No. 223.
7. *Ibid.*, *Khutab*, No. 203.
8. Al-'Amudī, *al-Ghurar wa al-durar*, vol. 4, p. 340.
9. *Safīnat al-bihār*, under *ḥubb*.
10. This a reference to the famous words of Ibn al-'Arabī about one who imagines to have known the mysteries of the self through the statements of philosophers: فَقَدْ اسْتَسَمَّنَ ذَاوَرَمَ وَنَفَخَ فِي غَيْرِ ضَرَمٍ.
11. *Nahj al-balāghah*, *Khutab*, No. 179.
12. *Ibid.*, *Khutab*, no. 222.
13. A. Einstein, *Ideas and Opinions* (London 1973) based on *Mein Weltbild*; ed. by Carl Seeling, p. 38.
14. Muḥammad Iqbāl, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (Lahore 1971), p. 89.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 90.
16. *Wasā'il al-Shi'ah*, vol. 2, p. 535, (*Bāb* No. 82, ḥadīth No. 2).

Monetary Resources and Banking Facilities under the Law for Usury-Free Banking*

To introduce the usury-free banking system and to show how the absorption of deposits and granting of banking facilities would take place in such a system, we can depict two different phases. First, it is the determination of legal criteria and the operational approaches which have been accomplished in the form of laws, by-laws, and instruction texts. The second phase consists of planning to get the society generally prepared and training the personnel of the banks in order to get them acquainted with the concepts, methods, and operations which would eventually replace the system of usury by the usury-free banking system. As regards the law and the by-laws thereof, it should be mentioned briefly that the Law for Usury-Free Banking was approved on 30 August 1983 (10/6/62) by the Islamic Consultative Assembly and confirmed by the Guardian Council. By virtue of this law, the by-laws therefrom were prepared, on the proposal of the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran, by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance in four chapters, and approved by the Cabinet. The pertinent instructions were also prepared and communicated. After the official communication of executive instructions and by-laws, the Law for Usury-Free Banking became mandatory and operative as of 21 March 1984 (1/1/63) in all banks throughout the country.

This report, drawn up in two parts, introduces the operational methods for mobilizing monetary resources (Chapter II of the Law) and also the operative procedure of the banks in the process of granting facilities on the basis of the Islamic banking criteria (Chapter III of the

* This paper, prepared by members of the staff of the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran, was presented at the International Seminar on Islamic Banking (Tehran, June 11-14, 1986) organized by the Central Bank.

Law).

PART ONE: Mobilization of Monetary Resources

Types of Bank Deposits:

Since the implementation of the Law for Usury-Free Banking, the banks could take up the acceptance of two types of bank deposits:

- A. *Qard al-ḥasanah* deposits;
- B. Term investment deposits.

A. *Qard al-ḥasanah* Deposits

1. Banks are authorized to receive *Qard al-ḥasanah* deposits in two forms: Current¹ and Savings.

2. Both types of *Qard al-ḥasanah* deposits (current and savings) constitute binding obligations of the banks. Banks are bound to refund the principal of the *Qard al-ḥasanah* deposits on demand.

3. By definition, no return will accrue on the *Qard al-ḥasanah* deposits.

4. *Qard al-ḥasanah* deposits are considered as the banks' own resources which will be used within the framework of the monetary policies.

5. To encourage *Qard al-ḥasanah* savings deposits, banks may consider bonuses and prizes to be awarded to the holders of such deposits, without any prior agreement or undertaking with the depositor.

6. Since the implementation of the Law for Usury-Free Banking, the banks have not been allowed to accept any funds for the credit of the savings accounts opened before the year 1363 (ending 20 March 1984). In addition, the banks were bound to proceed with converting the savings accounts, with the consent of holders of such accounts, to one of the types of authorized accounts, by the end of 1364 (20 March 1985). After the expiry of this period, those savings accounts which had not been converted to the new titles were regarded as *Qard al-ḥasanah* savings deposits.

B. Term Investment Deposits:

1. Banks accept Term Investment Deposits in the two forms of Short-Term Investment Deposits and Long-Term Investment Deposits. Short-term investment deposits enable the depositor to make use of his funds as he wishes, while long-term investment deposits, based on the stipulated incentives for such deposits, should have been

placed with the bank for at least one year. According to the Law, banks are bound to utilize term investment deposits as a proxy to the depositors on the basis of the contracts stipulated in the Law for Usury-Free Banking² which appear in detail in Part Two of this report.

2. Banks shall guarantee to refund the principal of the term investment deposits or shall insure them at their own expense.

3. Acceptance of term investment deposits to be utilized on a particular project is permitted in accordance with the pertinent regulations. Refunding the principal of such deposits is guaranteed only if this point is mentioned in the contract concluded between the bank and the customer.

4. Accrued profits as a result of the credit operations of the banks shall be divided between the depositors and the bank in proportion to the duration and amount of the term investment deposit and with due observance of the bank's share of resources with respect to the duration and amount in total funds utilized for these operations.

5. Banks shall not announce or pay any predetermined sum as profit on any term investment deposit.

6. For the exploitation of term investment deposits, banks shall receive attorney's fees from the depositors' share of the profits, whose maximum and minimum rates shall be determined by the Currency and Credit Council. It is to be noted that no other charges under any heading shall be borne by the depositors.

7. Banks shall give priority to the resources of the depositors when utilizing the deposits. In the event that the total facilities granted are less than or equal to the total of term investment deposits, net of the statutory reserve requirement, the whole amount of profits derived from the facilities granted shall be divided among the depositors. If total facilities granted by banks for these purposes exceed the total of such deposits, the difference shall be considered as the banks' share of the profits.

In the light of the above, it is quite clear that in the Law for Usury-Free Banking, the variety of deposits will meet the motivations and needs of different groups of depositors. For instance, the attitude of banks and customers confronting the *Qard al-hasanah* current accounts and their mutual reactions thereto are exactly similar to those encountered when dealing with the ordinary current accounts in a typical interest-based banking system. The only difference is that in the interest-based banking system, the current account is considered as another liability of the bank and in times of crisis there is no guarantee for its repayment. But the repayment of *Qard al-hasanah* current account deposits, is the obligation of the bank, since, from the Islamic point of view with regard to the nature of this type of deposit and the agreement of both parties, "the money itself" is not kept with the

banks but rests at the disposal of the banks which have the right of possession, and the customer, when in need, claims merely "the money equivalent". Utilization of these deposits by banks has nothing to do with the depositors, and in any case, repayment of such funds is guaranteed by the banks.

Qard al-ḥasanah savings deposit has no parallel in the interest-based banking system and is peculiar to the Islamic banking system. With an eye to the dominance of Islamic culture in Iran in which interest-free lending is one of the most fundamental economic relations between Muslim individuals, usury and interest being strictly prohibited, *Qard al-ḥasanah* was established as a new deposit in the Law for Usury-Free Banking, and, as the accompanying statistics indicate, it has enjoyed the support and satisfaction of the people to a considerable extent. These deposits have reduced the total costs of bank resources in Bank Melli Iran by 2 per cent in 1363, according to the surveys of that bank. Precedents of such kind of depositing existed prior to the Revolution in the form of *Qard al-ḥasanah* Funds, which operated outside the banking system. These Funds, most of which formed part of the activities of the mosques and managed by individuals who volunteered for their administration, with a minimum of personnel and administrative expenses, used to collect surplus resources of generous individuals in the form of *Qard al-ḥasanah* and loan them out to needy individuals (again in the form of *Qard al-ḥasanah*) for their urgent needs. The activity of these Funds still goes on in Iran today. *Qard al-ḥasanah* savings accounts, due to their nature of being borrowed resources, will be made available to banks and regarded as their exclusive resources. The high volume of these deposits has enabled the banks to grant *Qard al-ḥasanah* facilities to various economic sectors attentive to the economic policies of the country. The Currency and Credit Council, which implements monetary policies in the country, required the banks to pay Rls. 172 billion from these resources to meet the urgent needs of the people and the agricultural sector in the year 1363 (1984-85). In 1364, in view of the rising trend of *Qard al-ḥasanah* resources, these policies resulted in the payments of 400 billion rials to the sectors of agriculture, industry, construction of residential units in rural areas, and to provisions for meeting the urgent needs of the people.

The resource of *Qard al-ḥasanah* deposits is regarded as a principal distinctive feature of the Islamic banking system as compared to the previous system.

Those depositors who intend to gain profits from their deposits in addition to their inclination to save, may make use of term investment deposits. Term investment deposits are divided into two types: short-term and long-term. From the procedural viewpoint of

receipt and payment, short-term investment deposit is exactly the same as savings deposit in the interest-based banking system. After a lapse of three months, with the minimum stipulated balance, the sums needed by the customers will be paid on demand. Long-term investment deposit is placed for a period of at least one year and therefore receives a greater share of profits earned from the banks' activities.

Term investment deposits belong to the people and in contrast with *Qard al-ḥasanah* are not viewed as the banks' resources. According to the law, the banks utilize the funds of such deposits by proxy on behalf of the depositors in usury-free banking operations and for granting of facilities. The consequence of activities, whether it is profit or loss, will be borne by the depositors. Banks' share of profits would merely be tantamount to the attorney's fees of utilizing the funds of this type of deposits. The Law for Usury-Free Banking empowers banks to undertake repayment of the principal of deposits if necessary and in view of the policies and interests of the State. For the time being, during the period of transition from an old system to one completely new, refund of the principal of term investment deposits by banks is undertaken by agreement and mentioned on the forms used for opening these accounts.

Term investment deposits in the Islamic banking system is a worthy experiment in Iran. In the beginning some Western experts did not foresee a desirable consequence for such deposits and ultimately for Islamic banking in Iran. It was because at commencement of Islamic banking, the clients of banks were notified that in the next coming year the term investment deposits would be utilized by proxy on behalf of their holders in the forms of partnership, *mudārabah*, purchase and sale, etc. and the profits derived from these operations would be divided among depositors, without there being any specific foreseeable rate. Notwithstanding gloomy forecasts about the efficiency of banks in these affairs and their lack of acquaintance with market transactions, the Islamic banking system fortunately received the trust, appreciation, and welcome of the people. As the attached figures show, the total of this type of deposits has enjoyed a positive growth.

PART TWO: Granting of Banking Facilities

Introduction:

Chapter III of the Law for Usury-Free Banking governs the procedure for granting banking facilities out of the deposits received as provided for in the Law. According to this chapter of the Law, banks shall grant all their loan facilities in conformity with the methods stipulated in the Law. These methods, which are entirely based on

Islamic rules and contracts, and as stipulated in the Law, are: Partnership (Civil and Legal), Direct Investment, *Mudārabah*, Instalment Sales, Hire-Purchase, Sale on Credit, Forward Delivery Transactions, *Qard al-ḥasanah*, *Ju'alah*, *Muzāra'ah*, and *Musāqāt*. These contracts constitute the methods through which banks render the required services to their customers. On this basis, the procedure for granting credits in a typical banking system is replaced by a system in which credits and facilities granted come chiefly under State control towards specific goals and directions, and banks direct the money supply preferably towards production and investment on the basis of economic policies.

There is a highly important point in understanding Chapter III of the Law, i.e. the procedures under the title of "facilities granted" for implementing a large part of authorized banking operations. In view of the fact that the banks play a fundamental role in intermediating between suppliers and users of funds, such facilities are granted in a manner in which the banks playing the exclusive role of suppliers of financial and monetary resources, provide the necessary facilities for the expansion of productive activities relating to industry, mines, agriculture, construction and housing, as well as commerce and services. Even in the Direct Investment and Legal Partnerships, the ultimate aim is determined so that after reaching the utilization phase, the shares of banks in Direct Investment and Legal Partnership are sold out at the earliest possible moment and therefore the financial resources of banks are released and ready to be reinjected into the process. It is only in this way that the role of banks as the intermediary of funds will lead to the attainment of the objectives provided in the Law for Usury-Free Banking. Now, let us see how the above-mentioned procedures function in connection with meeting all financial needs of various sectors of the society. For this purpose, we first specify types of application of these methods for granting banking facilities to each type of economic activity and its financial needs as follows:

Type of Economic Activity	Methods of Granting Banking Facilities in Islamic Banking
1. Productive: —Industry, Agriculture, & Mines	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Instalment Sales 2. Civil Partnership 3. Legal Partnership 4. Hire Purchase 5. Forward Delivery Transactions 6. Direct Investment 7. <i>Qard al-ḥasanah</i> 8. <i>Muzāra'ah</i> 9. <i>Musāqāt</i> 10. <i>Ju'alah</i> 11. Sale on Credit

Monetary Resources and Banking Facilities

2. Commercial	--Imports, Exports, & Domestic	1. <i>Mudārabah</i> 2. Civil Partnership 3. Legal Partnership 4. <i>Ju'ālah</i>
3. Services	—	1. Civil Partnership 2. Legal Partnership 3. Hire Purchase 4. Instalment Sales 5. <i>Ju'ālah</i>
4. Housing	--Construction & Repairs	1. Civil Partnership 2. Instalment Sales 3. Hire Purchase 4. <i>Qard al-ḥasanah</i> 5. <i>Ju'ālah</i> 6. Direct Investment
5. Personal needs	—	1. <i>Qard al-ḥasanah</i>

With the elimination of interest from the banking system, current loan operations (and chiefly overdraft facilities), which were the most prevailing means of meeting the short-term needs of clients in the traditional banking system, were omitted, and, in the Islamic system, are only undertaken for productive affairs and provide for up to five million Rials in the form of *Qard al-ḥasanah*. Meanwhile, similar provision for meeting such needs by other means, which do not violate the provision of the Law for Usury-Free Banking, is under consideration.

Methods for Granting Banking Facilities:³

In this part, we shall first explain general specifications of all these methods and then give the definitions and rules of each method separately.

A. General Specifications:

1. Banking facilities shall be granted in such a manner that the principal amount thereof as well as any expected profit thereon would, based on their respective projections, be capable of liquidation within a definite period of time.

2. The criteria for the determination of the rate of profit and/or the expected rate of return on the facilities granted by the banks, as well as the minimum and maximum rate of profit and/or the expected rate of return, will be approved by the Currency and Credit Council.

3. The criteria for the determination of the period in which the facilities are granted by the banks and the manner of liquidation of the

principal together with the profit arising therefrom will be approved by the Currency and Credit Council.

4. Banks shall exercise the necessary and sufficient supervision over the proper performance of the concluded contracts both from the viewpoint of the procedure of utilization and the return on facilities granted. Banking operations emanating from the granting of facilities, as the case may be, shall be centred in the bank granting the facilities, at its discretion.

5. The provision of facilities shall be contingent, if deemed necessary, upon a sum of money entitled "Advance Deposit". Determination of the case of necessity and the minimum amount of "Advance Deposit" shall rest with the Currency and Credit Council.

6. The granting of facilities by banks shall depend on their discretion and, if deemed necessary, after taking sufficient security to safeguard the interests of the banks and the good performance of the respective contracts.

7. In cases where the provision of facilities by banks is in connection with properties which on the recognition of the banks have limited or monopolistic utilization, or as a result of installation and exploitation their subsequent utilization is not economical, banks shall grant facilities by means of taking additional security.

8. Banks shall, if necessary, arrange for insuring annually in the banks' favour, the properties which are the subject of the facilities granted, and/or the securities obtained in respect thereof, during the execution of the respective contracts for an amount at least equivalent to the outstanding balances due from the provision of such facilities.

9. The granting of any one of the different types of facilities jointly by two banks or more to an individual or real persons or legal entities is authorized. In any case, the administration of such facilities shall be undertaken by one bank, as chosen by the participating banks.

10. From the date of implementation of the Law the provision of new facilities by banks shall take place on the basis of the Law for Usury-Free Banking and the Monetary and Banking Law, provided it is not in conflict with the Law for Usury-Free Banking. Banks are bound, with the consent of their clients, to adapt the facilities granted in the past to Islamic rules in the shortest time possible. In the event that adaptation of the banks' past transactions and contracts with the banks' new operations is not feasible, the former transactions and contracts shall remain in force until the expiry of their maturities.

11. Banks are bound to stipulate in their contracts, when concluding *Muḍārabah*, Instalment Sales, Hire Purchase, Sale on Credit, Forward Delivery Transactions, and *Qarḍ al-ḥasanah* contracts, that these contracts shall be tantamount to enforceable documents and subject to the procedural by-law of legal documents, drawn and

attested by public notaries.

12. In cases where the subject of facilities to be granted involves transfer of title to property in the form of Instalment Sales or Sale on Credit, notification of the customer by the banks on the cash value of such properties is imperative.

13. The banks may construct low-priced housing units for the purpose of creating necessary facilities for expansion of housing.

14. The Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran shall prepare each year the programme for the creation of low-priced residential units by banks with regard to the monetary policies subject to Article 20 of the Law and in harmony with the policies of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development and shall communicate it to the banks for implementation.

B. Definition and Specifications of Each Method:

1. Qard al-ḥasanah:

1. *Qard al-ḥasanah* is a contract according to which one of the parties (lender) gives possession of certain amount of his possession to the other party (borrower) so that the borrower may pay back the same or, if it is not possible, its equivalent cash value to the lender.

2. The banks, in accomplishing the objectives stipulated in clauses 2⁴ and 9 of Article 43 of the Constitution and to meet the basic needs of the people, through the allocation of a portion of their resources in conformity with the rules to be approved by the Currency and Credit Council and confirmed by the Prime Minister, shall provide *Qard al-ḥasanah* loans in the following instances:

First: Securing the means, tools and other possibilities required to create employment for those people who lack such possibilities, in the form of co-operatives.

Second: Helping to increase production with due emphasis on agricultural, livestock, and industrial production.

Third: To meet essential needs.

3. The expenses incurred in granting *Qard al-ḥasanah* loans shall be determined in each case on the basis of the directives issued by the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and collected from the borrower.

2. Civil Partnership:

1. Civil Partnership is based on the contribution of cash or non-cash capital by several real persons or legal entities, to a common pool on a joint-ownership basis, with the intention of making a profit,

on a contractual basis.

2. The banks shall participate in Civil Partnerships in order to provide the necessary facilities for productive activities, services, and commercial needs.

3. Civil Partnership will be formed and materialized only if the partners, according to the contract, pay their shares in cash to a special account to be opened with the bank in the name of the partnership. In the event that all or part of the share is non-cash, in accordance with the rules of Civil Partnership, this share shall be transferred to the Director or Directors of the Civil Partnership.

4. Payment of the partners' shares of capital in Civil Partnerships, in conformity with the contract, may be made in several instalments.

5. Civil Partnerships are liquidated and dissolved when the objectives of the company are accomplished.

6. Banks are bound to stipulate in the Civil Partnership contract that the Director(s) of such partnerships are not permitted to enter into transactions or to undertake financial commitments that exceed the combined total value of the cash capital paid into the account or non-cash capital transferred to the Director(s) of the partnership.

3. Legal Partnership:

1. The purpose of Legal Partnership is to provide part of the "capital" of new joint-stock companies or to purchase part of the shares of existing joint-stock companies.

2. For the purpose of creating necessary facilities for the expansion of production, commerce, and services, banks may provide for part of the capital required by those joint-stock companies which are formed or will be formed for the aforesaid affairs.

3. Before entering into partnership agreements, the banks are obliged to survey and appraise the status of the joint-stock companies whose stocks are to be purchased or the projects proposed for partnerships from technical, financial and economic points of view. The participation of each bank, based on the resources of the bank and on the investment deposits, is permitted if the results of survey and appraisal indicate forecasts of no loss on the part of the partnership.

4. The minimum ratio of the capital of companies in which the banks shall participate, to the total financial resources of such companies shall be determined, if deemed necessary, by the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran at the start of the partnership.

5. Banks may sell their shares of the joint-stock companies.

6. The Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran may determine, if deemed necessary, the extent of participation of one or several banks from the resources of the bank and from investment

deposits in a new joint-stock company as well as the ratio of stocks purchased by one or several banks from the aforesaid resources in an existing joint-stock company.

4. Direct Investment:

1. Direct Investment means the provision of capital by banks for the implementation of profit-making productive and development projects.

2. Banks have no right whatsoever to invest in the production of luxury goods and non-essential consumer products.

3. The ratio of capital to total financial resources required for the implementation of projects, up to the utilization phase, should not be less than forty per cent.

4. One hundred per cent of fixed investment required for the implementation of such projects must be provided in the form of long-term financial resources (whether capital and/or other resources).

5. Implementation of the projects subject to Direct Investment is permitted with the formation of joint-stock companies. Such joint-stock companies, which are formed independent of banks, shall be subject to the Articles of Association regulations and by-laws governing their activities.

6. Banks are bound to survey and appraise the proposed projects for investment from economic, technical, and financial points of view prior to engaging in Direct Investment. Direct Investments from the banks' resources and investment deposits in such projects are authorized only if the result of survey and appraisal of the projects are justifiable from the financial point of view. The minimum profitability (rate of return) of the projects shall be determined by the Currency and Credit Council.

7. Banks are bound to report their plans for the allocation of funds for Direct Investment, in conformity with the respective instructions, to the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in order that such plans are submitted to the Islamic Consultative Assembly along with the General State Budget Bill.

8. In coordination with the High Council of Banks, the banks may offer for sale to the public part or all of their shares in companies which have been established through Direct Investment, once the said companies start operation.

9. The Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran may, if necessary, inspect Direct Investment operations of banks.

5. *Muḍārabah*:

1. *Muḍārabah* is a contract according to which one of the two parties (Owner) undertakes to provide the capital (in cash) and the other party (Agent) utilizes it in trading while both parties share the accrued profit.

2. Banks may act as Owner and put the cash capital (resources) required to create necessary facilities for the expansion of commercial affairs at the disposal of the Agent, whether a real person or a legal entity.

3. To grant such facilities, the banks shall give preference to the legally-established co-operatives.

4. Banks are not permitted to enter into *Muḍārabah* contracts with the private sector for import activities.

5. Types of expenses acceptable in *Muḍārabah* shall be determined and announced by the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

6. Forward Delivery Transactions:

1. 'Forward Delivery Transactions' means advance cash purchases of products at a certain price (with due observance of the Shari'ah).

2. In order to create facilities required to raise working capital for production units, whether such units are owned by real persons or legal entities, banks may engage in advance purchase of the products of productive units, solely at the request of such units.

3. Banks are prohibited to sell the products so purchased in advance, prior to the date of delivery, except when the purchased products are handed over to the bank before maturity.

4. Advance purchase of the products of productive units by banks, according to the contract, is authorized only if the products:

(a) are produced by the productive unit applying for the transaction;

(b) are not rapidly perishable (unless precautionary facilities are available for their safe conservation during the period from their delivery to their sale);

(c) are easy to sell.

5. The object of the phrase "easy to sell", subject of the aforementioned clause (c), is that, at the time of Forward Delivery Purchase, the bank may satisfy itself that the products to be transacted are easily saleable at the maturity of delivery.

6. The price of Forward Purchase of productive goods by banks shall be fixed with due regard to the factors affecting price determination including forecast of their selling price at the date of delivery as well as the profit expected by banks. In any way, the advance purchase

price shall not exceed the cash price of such products at the time of transaction.

7. Banks are obliged to observe the following points and incorporate them in the respective contracts when engaging in Forward Delivery purchase of products:

(a) To identify the main specifications of such products in a manner that contributes to the determination of prices.

(b) To pay in full to the seller, at the time of transaction, the forward purchase price of the products bought forward.

(c) To specify the date of delivery.

(d) To specify the quantity, number, weight, and other common specifications of the products to be transacted.

(e) To specify the place of delivery for the products purchased forward.

8. Banks are authorized to engage in Forward Delivery purchase of products on condition that the duration of delivery of all the products to the bank (starting from the date of transaction) is at the most equal to one production cycle provided that, it does, in any case, not exceed one year.

7. Instalment Sales (on Credit) to Provide Working Capital for Production Units:

1. By 'Instalment Sales' is meant the surrender of the original commodity at a certain price to the other party in a manner that the whole or part of the said price is received in equal or unequal instalments at definite maturity or maturities.

2. Banks may purchase raw materials, spare parts, machine tools, and other initial needs of production units solely on the written request of the applicants and utilization of these factors and sell them in instalments to the applicants in order to create necessary facilities for the provision of working capital for production units. To estimate the extent of the needs of production units, the volume of raw materials proportionate to the rate of production during one production cycle should be taken into consideration.

3. The Instalment Sale price of such commodities shall be fixed with due regard to the cost price and the bank's anticipated profit.

4. The period for collecting the value of the goods sold by instalment shall not exceed the duration of one cycle of production and at the most one year. In exceptional cases, this period may be extended at the most up to one more year with the consent of the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

5. In the event that Instalment Sales take place to procure working capital for new production projects, the collection period of more than

one year shall be determined and specified, according to the case, by the pertaining bank.

8. Instalment Sales of Means of Production, Machinery, and Establishments:

1. The goods and properties subject to this chapter are machinery and establishments whose useful life is more than one year according to the table to be prepared by the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

2. In order to create necessary facilities for the expansion of industrial, mining, agricultural, and service sectors, banks may purchase the properties subject to paragraph 1 above exclusively on the written request of the applicants and their undertaking concerning the purchase, utilization or direct use of such goods and properties, and sell them in instalments to the applicants.

3. Instalment Sale price of such goods and properties shall be fixed according to the cost price and bank's expected profit.

4. The collection period of Instalment Sale price of these properties shall not exceed the useful life of such properties as described in the pertinent table. The starting date for the calculation of useful life shall be the commencing date of production operations as determined by the bank.

9. Instalment Sales—Housing:

1. Banks may sell by instalments the residential units constructed by them.

2. Banks shall fix the sale price of residential units with due regard to the cost, respective expenses, as well as a reasonable profit for the bank.

3. Rules for granting facilities to the applicants of low-priced residential units constructed by banks shall be enacted with the proposal of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development and the approval of the Economic Council.

4. In exceptional cases, as determined by the Prime Minister, the necessary facilities shall be provided for the government organizations out of the resources of banks.

10. Hire Purchase:

1. Hire Purchase is conclusion of a lease contract in which it is stipulated that the leaseholder shall ultimately receive the title of the lease at the end of the lease period and upon meeting all the stipula-

tions of the contract.

2. In order to create the necessary facilities for the expansion of services, agricultural, industrial, and mining sectors, banks may take up Hire Purchase transactions as lessors.

3. Banks may purchase movable and immovable properties exclusively on the written request and undertaking of the applicant to the effect that the transaction is carried out as Hire Purchase and for his own use, and put them at the disposal of the applicant in the form of Hire Purchase.

4. Banks may sell the residential units they have constructed by way of Hire Purchase.

5. Banks are bound to stipulate in the contracts they conclude that the leaseholder may himself derive benefit from the hired goods except in emergencies or in the cases of force majeure as determined by the bank.

6. The rules governing the provision of facilities to the applicants of low-priced residential units constructed by banks shall be enacted by the Economic Council.

7. The duration of Hire Purchase shall not exceed the useful life of the respective properties. The starting point of the calculation of useful life and the starting date of exploitation shall be determined by the bank.

8. Hire Purchase transactions by the banks on properties whose useful life is less than two years is prohibited.

9. The level of rent in the case of properties purchased and residential units constructed shall be determined with due consideration of the cost, the Hire Purchase duration, and a reasonable profit for the bank. In calculation of the profit, the amount received in advance shall be considered.

10. Banks are bound to receive in advance at least twenty per cent of the cost price as part of the rent for duration of the lease.

11. It should be stipulated in the Hire Purchase contract that at the end of the lease period and after payment of the last instalment of rent, in case all undertakings of the leaseholder have been in conformity with the contract, the leasehold itself shall come into the possession of the leaseholder.

12. In the event that the leaseholder chooses to engage in the entire settlement of the remaining instalments prior to the end of the lease duration, banks are allowed, in addition to granting the necessary discount in the amount of remaining rent, to transfer the ownership of the property, according to the contract, to the leaseholder.

13. Banks are bound to stipulate clearly in the Hire Purchase contract the cancellation cases and the procedure of settling accounts.

11. *Ju'alah*:

1. From the viewpoint of banking facilities, *Ju'alah* is the undertaking of one party "*Jā'il*" or "Employer" to pay a specified amount of money or wage (*Ja'l*) to another party in return for rendering a specified service in accordance with the terms of the contract. The party rendering the service shall be called "*'Āmil*" or "Contractor".

2. In order to create necessary facilities for the development of production, commercial, and service sectors, banks may take up *Ju'alah* transactions as *'Āmil* or, as circumstances may allow, as *Jā'il* by conclusion of contracts.

3. In cases where the bank acts as *'Āmil* of the *Ju'alah*, it is to be stipulated in the *Ju'alah* contract that the bank has the right to entrust to another party the performance of part of the specified services under the heading of secondary *Ju'alah* or any other title. In this case, the bank is bound to supervise the operations, the procedure of utilization, and the settlement of funds.

4. In cases where the bank acts as *Jā'il* of the *Ju'alah*, the *'Āmil* may entrust another party to perform part of the work with the consent of the bank.

5. Responsibility for initial preparations and procurement of materials, means, and other instruments required for carrying out the work, may be undertaken by the *Jā'il* or the *'Āmil* in conformity with the terms of the contract.

6. Receipt or payment of part of the amount of the *Ju'alah* contract, under the title of "advance receipt" and/or "advance payment" shall be authorized with the observance of the maximum and/or minimum rules determined by the Currency and Credit Council.

12. *Muzāra'ah*:

1. *Muzāra'ah* is a contract wherein one of the parties (*Muzāri'*) turns over a specified plot of land for a specified period of time to another party (*'Āmil*) for the purpose of farming the land and dividing the harvest between the *Muzāri'* and the *'Āmil*.

2. To increase productivity and production of agricultural produce, banks may commit, as *Muzāri'* and by contract, the cultivable lands which they own or the lands which in one way or another they are entitled to possess or utilize.

3. In addition to land, banks may provide for other necessary factors as well, such as water, seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, means and instruments of production and transportation according to the terms of the contract.

4. Banks may pay, in emergency cases, with regard to the proportion of each party's share of crops, some money in cash to the 'Āmil during the production period.

13. Musāqāt:

1. *Musāqāt* is a contract concluded between the owner of trees and the like with the 'Āmil in return for a specified common share of the produce. The produce can be fruit, leaves, flowers, etc.

2. To increase productivity and production of agricultural produce, banks may commit for *Musāqāt* the orchards and fruit-bearing trees which they own, or their profits accrue to them, or when they are permitted to occupy and utilize them.

3. Banks may provide for other necessary factors such as water, fertilizers, pesticides, and transportation vehicles according to the contract.

4. Banks may pay, in emergency cases, with regard to the proportion of each party's share of the produce, some money in cash to the 'Āmil during the production period.

14. Purchase of Debt:

1. In order to create necessary facilities for production, commercial, and services units, as well as guilds, banks may discount their documents and commercial papers.

2. Banks are bound to make sure of the reality of the debt prior to the discount of documents and commercial papers.

3. Banks are bound to make sure of the creditability of the undertakers prior to the discount of documents and commercial papers.

The points mentioned in this part throw light upon the fact that all the credit and monetary requirements of the economic sectors and various commercial activities can be achieved through the contracts set forth in the Law for Usury-Free Banking. It is further elucidated that in Islamic banking, investigation and perusal of the applications of the clients are essential, banking facilities are channelled towards the attainment of certain economic goals through the supervision exerted by banks, and the anticipated profit is materialized with a higher degree of confidence. Another point to remember is that in the Islamic banking system the banks are not authorized to proceed with transactions and purchase and sale of commodities through Islamic contracts merely to derive a benefit and to influence the supply and demand situation of the market by acting as a big competitor possessing enormous amounts of capital; rather, they are bound to grant facilities exclusively in line with, and in proportion to, the clients' demands.

In the light of this exposition of the procedures for the mobilization of banking resources and the granting of facilities and also with due scrutiny of the operational approach of the country's banking units, it can be said that the Divine laws of the Shari'ah and Islamic criteria have enjoyed significant importance in the preparation of the law, the by-laws, and the instruction manuals of the usury-free banking, and have been incorporated therein to the highest possible extent. Furthermore, the society's acquaintance with the Islamic tenets, its preparedness to accept them, as well as the efforts of the authorities in this regard, have all been instrumental in bringing about success in implementing usury-free banking.

Private Sector Deposits during 1362-64 (in million rials)

	Outstanding 1362*	Outstanding 1363*	Outstanding 1364*
Sight Deposits	2,013,504	2,509,005	2,747,325
Non-Sight Deposits	3,586,556	3,409,332	3,958,480
Time Deposits	849,280	—	—
Long-Term Investment Deposits	—	998,413	1,191,536
Savings (Interest Oriented)	2,737,276	—	—
Savings (<i>Qard al-hasanah</i>)	—	1,496,744	903,504
Short-Term Investment Deposits	—	938,275	1,863,440
Total (Sight & Non-Sight Deposits)	5,600,060	5,918,337	6,705,805

*End of the year

NOTES:

1. *Qard al-hasanah* Current Accounts are in fact (with slight legal variations) the same as current accounts which are prevailing in all banks of the world and offer similar services and facilities.

2. Civil Partnership, Legal Partnership, Direct Investment, *Mudārabah*, Forward Delivery Transactions, Instalment Sales, Hire Purchase, *Ju'alah*, *Muzāra'ah*, and *Musāqāt*.

3. Please note that the terminology of some of the Islamic contracts as applicable to Islamic banking in Pakistan is similar to their counterparts practised in Iran only in name but in view of concepts and particularly in practice they are different and distinguishable from each other.

4. Paragraph 2 of Article 43 of the Constitution says: "... Securing conditions and possibilities of work for all, for the purpose of attaining the goal of full employment and putting the means for work at the disposal of all persons who are able to work but are without the means for work."

Paragraph 9 Article 43 of the Constitution says: "... Emphasizing the increase of agricultural produce, livestock and industrial products in order to meet the public needs, to lead the country to the stage of self-sufficiency, and to set it free from dependence."

The Impact of the New Banking System in Iran on the Instruments of Monetary and Credit Policy*

At the outset of discussion, it is necessary to recapitulate the changes brought about as a consequence of the implementation of the Law for Usury-Free Banking Operations in the banking system of the Islamic Republic of Iran:

1. Interest rate was phased out of the banking operations.
2. The manner of accepting deposits was changed.
3. Redemption of the principal amount of the deposits has been guaranteed by law.
4. Extension of loans and credits in the traditional manner was done away with and new credit facilities, extendible in fourteen forms which are compatible with the Islamic principles, were approved.
5. Upon the elimination of the interest rate, one of the most basic classic tools of the monetary policy was wrested out of the Central Bank's hands.
6. As embodied in the new law, the monetary policy was separated from the other parts of the banking law and new instruments in monetary system of Iran were introduced.
7. Irrespective of the nature and forms of the credits extended by banks, the regulations were drawn up in such a manner that the banks should virtually remain as the "intermediary of funds".
8. The Interest-Free Banking Operations, specifically the monetary policy, was turned into an effective instrument for achieving the objectives of economic and development plans of the country.

With the ratification of the new law, all the previous laws and regulations which were not at variance with the Islamic criteria were

* This paper, prepared by members of the staff of the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran, was presented at the International Seminar on Islamic Banking (Tehran, June 11-14, 1986) organized by the Central Bank.

recognized as enforceable and valid. As a result, the changes effected in the existing laws and regulations were minimal and all the remaining rules and regulations which did not violate the Islamic criteria were kept intact.

Moreover, the respective rules in the law are approved in such a way that the banks are authorized to grant credit facilities for procurement of goods, properties, and commodities needed by the applicants only in return for and against the undertaking by the respective applicants. Consequently, the banks are, implicitly by law and explicitly by the approved regulations, forbidden to engage in commercial activities as traders and are authorized to conduct banking operations as "intermediary of funds" only.

It is worth mentioning that, the new law is formulated in three main parts, i.e. (1) Mobilization of Resources, (2) Banking Facilities and (3) Central Banking, so as to separate the banking operations dealing with the mobilization and utilization of resources from the operations governing the execution of the monetary policy.

In this paper, an attempt will be made to succinctly analyze the impact of these developments on central banking in Iran. It also may shed some light on the consequences of such developments on banking operations, if it is deemed necessary.

Entry into force of the new Law for Usury-Free Banking raises numerous questions within the context of changes in the central banking activities, to which, to a certain extent, answers could theoretically be furnished. Conclusive answers to these questions, however, require the passage of time and the gaining of further experience:

1. Whether as a result of the implementation of the new law the objectives and functions of the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran have undergone changes or have been disrupted?

2. Whether the changes effected in the authority and the instruments of monetary policy will reduce the outcome and effectiveness of the monetary policy?

3. Whether the monetary policy under the new law and regulations shall be applicable as before?

Below, the first question separately, and the second and third questions in combination, shall be discussed.

To begin with, it should be pointed out that the general objective and function of the Central Bank have not changed much: whatever existed in the old law as objectives and functions have been retained as valid and applicable when not in contradiction with the Islamic legal criteria.

Another important and basic point is worth mentioning in this respect. The ordinary banking operations of the Central Bank vis-a-vis

the government, government organizations and the wholly State-owned companies as well as banks, to the extent of their special resources, can be outside the scope of the new banking operations and be subject to the customary banking practices instead. In other words, since from the Shar'ī viewpoint, the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran and other organizations which are totally owned by the government are all considered government as a whole, payment or receipt of any amount on deposits, loans and credits, in any manner or under any title, granted by the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran to such organizations are by no means usury and are recognized as permissible, for the reason that such amounts are ultimately posted to the government revenues on the one hand and to its expenditures on the other and, consequently, has no bearing whatsoever on the government resources. The functions or the authority of the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran in such cases, therefore, have not changed as a result of the elimination of interest rate and are as before.

Questions 2 and 3 specifically touch upon the changed instruments and, consequently, the changed authority emanating from the monetary policy and the applicability of such instruments and, thereupon, the effectiveness of monetary and credit policy in the new banking system. Therefore, we have tried to answer both questions in conjunction with each other.

Generally the monetary and credit policies are implemented for attaining various objectives. Classically, the goals of monetary or credit policies, no matter what kinds of instruments are used, consist, more or less, of bringing about the following impacts on:

1. The liquidity of the private sector.
2. The volume of credits.
3. The price levels (to bring inflation under control).
4. The level of employment.
5. The volume of investments.
6. The cost price.
7. The volume of production.
8. Trade exchanges (promotion of trade).
9. External rate of the local currency (foreign exchange rate).
10. Foreign exchange receipts and payments of the country.
11. The profits accruing to the depositors and shareholders of the banks.

In view of the fact that the objectives of the monetary and credit policies have not changed under the new law, the magnitude and the scope of the monetary policy's goals are therefore still in place. Hence, in the remaining portion of this paper, the changes relating to the instruments of the monetary and credit policies as well as the application and the impact of such developments on the objectives of the

monetary policy shall be analyzed. It is to be mentioned that the most important development in this respect was the abolition of interest rate and its removal from the totality of the classical instruments of the monetary and credit policy of Iran, because the rest of the classical instruments have been retained in the current laws and regulations.

Elimination of Interest Rates:

The most significant and basic development in banking in Iran has been the elimination of interest rate from the Iranian banking operations. As mentioned above, through the introduction of this measure, not only the banking operations have undergone a fundamental change, one of the most basic classical tools of monetary policy at the disposal of the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran has also been done away with, in that, within the framework of the traditional banking, any change in the rediscount rate by central banks would cause a corresponding change in the interest rates in the money market generally and in the interest rates of the banks specifically. Needless to say that each of these changes would, in turn, lead to a change in the liquidity of the private sector as well as the credit volume and probably foreign exchange movements. As a consequence of these changes, central banks can, under certain circumstances, bring about changes in the level of domestic prices, cost price of goods and services, production volume, volume of investment, and employment level, and can facilitate the trade exchanges and restore the equilibrium in the balance of payments of the country as well.

Having the above introductory rework in mind considering the foregoing statement, the following questions are raised: In place of interest rate as a tool which in the past was employed to achieve the said goals, what tools are introduced to be utilized in due course? And, can these tools have efficacy in realizing the intended objectives? These questions shall be discussed and analyzed in the following section:

Elimination of Interest Rate and Attraction of Deposits:

As provided in the law, two mechanisms are put at the disposal of the bank to attract deposits. The proper employment of these two mechanisms, as tools of the monetary policy, can, to a certain degree, lead to the increase in the volume of deposits. Rewards (prizes) and bonuses paid to Qard al-ḥasanah and investment deposits are one category of such mechanisms, while the commission fee for managing investment deposits is the other.

Awarding prizes and bonuses for the purpose of attracting Qard al-

hasanah deposits, in any form as provided for in the law, can be a flexible and effective device in attracting deposits. Although permitted by the Monetary and Banking Law of Iran, this device, with greater emphasis in the new law, is capable of being used as a promotion device by the banks on the one hand, and as a tool of monetary and credit policy for attracting deposits on the other. Considering that this matter has explicitly been specified as an instrument of the monetary policy, the amounts or values of such prizes and bonuses could, if necessary, be raised so as to attract the deposits in a desired manner. It is evident that the higher the value of prizes and bonuses paid, the greater the volume of deposits would be attracted.

The second mechanism as provided in the law is the fixing of commission fees for employment of investment deposits. Since the income of the depositor constitutes a portion of the income of the bank's portfolio, the depositor expects, by forecasting the income resulting from the bank's portfolio, to earn a "certain" amount of income. In view of the fact that a change in the rate of the said commission fee gives rise to a corresponding change in the expected profit, by employing this tool the absorption of such deposits can be realized.

Within this context, there exists another tool which can possibly be instrumental in mobilization of investment deposits. Generally, the intended use of this instrument, in its classical form, is to effect a change in the liquidity and, as a result, in the volume of credits granted by the banking system. Utilization of this instrument is still possible, as the new law has made provisions for it. But, if the use of this instrument is intended exclusively to effect a change in the yield (return) of such deposits, there is no question that a different approach should be taken towards determining the reserve ratios of investment deposits, for the reason that, as specified in the relevant regulations, the profit paid to investment deposits is determined after making allowance for the reserve ratios of such deposits. Therefore, when all the factors are taken as constant, the reserve ratios directly affect the profit of the depositor in two ways. One way is the increase in the profit of such deposit when apportioning the profits between the bank and the customer, while second one is through the profit resulting from a higher proportion of the said deposits as they enter into the banking operations.

Therefore, the higher the reserve ratios of investment deposits, the lesser the profit payable to the depositor; similarly the lesser the reserve ratios, the higher the profit payable to the depositor. As a result, a change in the reserve ratios, merely as a device to vary the amount of expected profits accruing from investment deposits, can play a role in changing the volume of deposits, thus complementing the

instrument of commission fees for managing the deposits.

Elimination of Interest Rate and Extension of Credit Facilities

In traditional banking, through decrease or increase in the interest rate as a lever, it is possible to change the volume of credits. By eliminating the interest rate from the new banking mechanisms, this lever was thrown out of the banking system as well as the monetary policy in Iran. To compensate for this loss and, at the same time, to complement the instruments of the monetary policy, in Islamic banking new instruments have been devised so as to carry out the monetary as well as credit policy by taking recourse thereto. These instruments can largely make up for the abolition of interest rate and remove the disability afflicting monetary policy that will be caused by the elimination of interest rate.

The new instruments which can be instrumental in controlling and changing the volume of the banks' credit facilities, as provided in the law, are the following:

1. Fixing a minimum or maximum ratio for profits of the banks with respect to some credit facilities extended by the banks.
2. Fixing a minimum rate of expected return (yield) for certain kinds of facilities extended by the banks.
3. Fixing a minimum and maximum profit ratio for the banks for certain types of facilities as related to the cost price.

In elaborating this subject matter, it is necessary to initially enumerate the main particulars of loan and credit in traditional banking and then to compare the main features of credit facilities in Islamic banking therewith. The main features of loan and credit include, *inter alia*, the amount, tenure (duration), interest rate, and the terms and conditions of repayment. The credit facility in Islamic banking does also include such features, i.e. the amount, tenure, advance payment, profit ratio or the rate of expected profit as well as the terms and conditions of repayment. In either system, the volume of credit facility has always been used in aggregate or in particular as ceiling in execution of monetary policy. The "expected return" (yield), "profit ratio" and also the "rate of profit" are, however, among the new devices which are used in Islamic banking as monetary and credit instruments.¹

In Islamic banking, with the exception of credits granted as *Qard al-hasanah*, the credits are, in all cases, extended for activities which are generally profit-making and are associated, in one way or the other, with the transfer of ownership of goods or property subject of extended facilities, and the receiving of profits from such activities is

expected. In consequence, the "profit rate" or the "expected rate of return" can be employed as a lever by the monetary policy. The reason being that the lower the profit margin or the expected rate of return, the higher the demand for credit facilities. Conversely, the higher the profit margin or the expected rate of return, the lower the demand for credit facilities. Considering these characteristics, the law furnishes the monetary policy with profit rate, profit ratio as well as the expected rate of return as instruments to be employed. Further explanation will be given below concerning these concepts or levers.

Determining the factors of Leverage:

The definitive question here is that in what manner could the "profit rate", "profit ratio" and the "expected rate of profit" or "yield" be applied as the instruments of monetary policy. The other related question is that, if these three levers are used as the tools of monetary policy, what is their impact?

Determination of "Profit Rate":

As defined, in the footnote No. 1, the profit rate or profit margin means the proportion of the profit earned in one of the transactions (sale on credit, instalment sale or hire-purchase) in a specified period as a percentage of the volume of banking facilities extended.

In view of the fact that in such transactions a bank's profit, as a portion of the price of credit sale, is added to the cost (or cash) price, therefore, the higher the bank's profit (profit margin) (at a time when it is imperative to enforce deflationary policy), the higher the price of credit sale, and the more expensive the cost of credit facilities for the customer, the lower will be the demand. Conversely, the lower the profit rate (profit margin) of the bank (when the pursuit of expansionary policy is required), the lower will be the cost of credit facilities and, ultimately, the higher the demand for facilities. Should this reasoning be a sound one, it is highly likely that the monetary policy would succeed in putting this instrument to use. The success of monetary policy in this respect, however, seems more assured in the sphere of short-term credit facilities.

Determination of the Expected Rate of Profit:

As noted, the definition given for the expected rate of profit is true also for the rate of return or yield. The expected rate of profit in partnership, Muḍārabah, Ju'alah, Investment, and forward buying involves the future, and its realization depends on the actualization of

conditions anticipated with respect to banking facilities. To examine the impact and application of the expected rate of profit as an instrument of monetary policy, a wider discussion of credit extension by the banking system is called for. If the term "investment" is used in its wider sense, i.e. "the employment of the bank's financial resources in every conceivable manner or form", or the "extension of credit facilities in general", and, moreover, if each specific case of credit extension is regarded as one single project or opportunity, we would be much nearer to our goal of discussing this subject.

Considering the above definition, we should take notice of the fact that there exist numerous and varied opportunities in the various sectors of economy (markets) for banking investments (granting of credit facilities). Needless to say that these opportunities offer either high or low profits and involve either high or low risks. The investments in the fields of commerce and services, for example, yield higher returns than those in agriculture. Meanwhile, the risks involved in investing in certain branches of industry and mining may be higher than those in agricultural sector. To sum up, should the banks review the various investment opportunities available and arrange them in the order of magnitude of the rates of return or the rates of expected profit, all the opportunities available (as well as the demand for credit facilities) would have a pattern similar to the one presented by the table given at the end.

As illustrated therein, all the opportunities in which the banks can make investments (extend credit facilities) are within the purview of the set contained in the said table: the reason being that the above set, which in fact is the aggregate potential demand for credit facilities, comprises the totality of investment opportunities in the economy. This set consists of: nt_1 projects, needing mt_1 amount of money, and yielding the highest rate of return in the market, i.e. r_1 , nt_2 projects, needing mt_2 amount of money, and yielding the next highest rate of return, i.e. r_2 ; and finally nt_n projects, needing mt_n amount of money, and yielding the lowest rate of return in the market, i.e. r_n . In this way, there does not exist any investment opportunity not incorporated in the said set. We also should take note of the fact that the said totality is divided into various sectors of the economy, such as agriculture, industry, mining, commerce, services, etc. It is even possible to subdivide it into subsectors on lines similar to the set in the table.

On the basis of the above argument, any decision adopted by the monetary authorities with respect to determination of the expected rate of return and the rates of return on different investments (especially the rates of return on investment in various sectors of the economy) will naturally embrace a number of existing investment opportunities whose rates of return are either equal to or higher than

the rate determined by the monetary authorities for the implementation of the monetary policy. It does not, however, include those investments (opportunities) whose rates of return or the rates of expected profit are lower than the officially-set rate. In other words, through each decision taken by the monetary authorities, it is possible to exclude the access to credit facilities of that portion of potential demand which does not generate economically reasonable income, or if necessary to qualify a higher proportion of potential demand for obtaining credit facilities. In this way, when the minimum expected rate of return is determined, say, r_2 , all the investments whose rates of return are equal to, or higher than, r_2 will be in position to utilize the banking credits.

By reducing the respective rate, which means the adoption of an expansionary policy, the demands for bank's credit would increase, while the adoption of deflationary policy would inevitably decrease such demand. Even this rate, if warranted, could be multi-tiered, in that different rates could be charged for different sectors of the economy so as to inject a higher or lower amount of financial resources into these sectors. This mechanism, as explained above, has the same effect on the credit volume as the classical tool of interest rate. Moreover, the application of this new instrument would produce another beneficial effect: those investment projects which are in need of credit facilities, but nevertheless are troubled by low productivity, either due to high operating costs or inefficiency, and so cannot avail themselves of the banking facilities, would be forced to take necessary steps towards raising their efficiency and strengthening their own positions. As a matter of fact, measures taken in improving the efficiency of economic and productive units would, ultimately, raise the productivity and efficiency of the economy in all respects.

We discussed above the use of this mechanism in its restrictive form. It could be used in an unrestricted form too. Based on the policy adopted by the monetary authorities, and for the purpose of attaining a certain goal, it is possible to allocate to the banks a portion of the expected return on investments. If put to use, this form of application of the respective instrument might be more effective and efficient.

For, in the first place, the aggregate amount of investments (opportunities) which are qualified to utilize banking credit facilities is thus determined. Secondly, in the case where no profit is realized, nothing is to be paid to the banks on this account. If, however, the realized profit does reach, or exceed, a predetermined level, the amount to be allocated to the bank shall, at the maximum, be up to the predetermined level. The remainder of the realized profit shall, therefore, be paid to the recipient of the credit facility, which, in itself, could motivate the applicant to obtain credit facilities from the banking

system. Utilization of this mechanism in this particular manner, although not explicitly provided for in the law, seems practicable, considering the nature of mechanisms in toto.

Determination of the Bank's Share of the Profit (Profit Ratio):

In accordance with the new law, determination of the bank's share of profit (Profit Ratio) is another instrument of monetary policy put at the disposal of the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Determination of profit share means the apportioning of shares of the bank and the recipient of credit from the profits resulting from partnership, Muḍārabah, Musāqāt, and Muzāra'ah transactions. In practice, the proportion of profit (Profit Ratio) is determined on the basis of forecasts made prior to the realization of the profit. But, the apportionment of the profits between the bank and the user of the bank's credit facilities is dependent on the realization of profit resulting from transactions covered by banking credit. In this way, if the respective transaction produces some profit, a portion of it would accrue to the bank and the other to the recipient of the credit facility. If the said transaction does not generate any profit, nothing would be distributed to any of the parties concerned. Finally, in the case where a loss is incurred in a transaction, it would be borne by one or both of the parties concerned, depending on the terms and conditions of the contract.

Since in such operations the bank and the applicant jointly perform some activities, and frequently jointly finance the required resources for execution of a certain project, the share of each party of the profit, therefore, is proportional to the volume of resources put in by each party, although other factors may also play some role in this matter. Evidently, the relationship of the share of profit to the volume of resource should not, from the bank's standpoint, be obligatory, and in practice is not so either. Only in this manner, the impact of the said instrument of the monetary and credit policy would be effective.

Elimination of Interest and Discount and Rediscount Function:

Discounting in its specific form, i.e. redemption of debt, is permitted in Islam. Thus, in accordance with the provisions of the new law, redemption of debt (discounting) is recognized as one type of new credit facility, and is currently practised. The Shar'i and legal permissibility of discounting has encouraged the bankers and the banking experts to search, under certain functions, for ways and means of

utilizing this mechanism. Although not much experience has been gained in its use during the period under review, it seems that the discounting, in its Shar'ī form, will possibly turn into one of the most important instruments of the monetary policy in the future.

Needless to say, the extensive use of this instrument requires further research into the matter. It should be, however, pointed out that the redemption of commercial papers, i.e. the buying of any bill originating from commercial transactions or any discount relating to a factual indebtedness, by the banks is permissible. Thus, the commercial bills and drafts, purchased (discounted) by the banks, could be re-purchased (rediscounted) by the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran on the one hand, and certificate of indebtedness originating from the new banking operations, i.e. the new banking credit facilities granted, which denote the real claim of the banks on their customers, can also be discounted by the Central Bank on the other hand. The said mechanism, i.e. the discounting by the Central Bank of the certificate of indebtedness relating to credit facilities granted by the banks, is capable of playing, in an extensive and all-embracing manner, the role of rediscount rate as seen in traditional banking. Its use, however, is not widespread at the moment. To put the matter differently, upon the changing of the conditions for rediscounting or, generally, discounting by the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the banks can concurrently put into effect the necessary changes in the conditions for discounting the commercial bills and/or their transactions. On the whole, the conclusion can be drawn that the use of this instrument is not only possible but, in fact, is practicable on a very wide level.

Open Market Operations:

The most basic objectives of open market operations which in traditional banking are mainly conducted by means of selling and buying short- and long-term securities for the purpose of absorption or injection of monetary resources into the market or the banks are as follows: adjustment of seasonal liquidity, offsetting sudden fluctuations due to receipts or payments of governmental funds, counteracting sharp swings in price of government bonds, and also as a supplement to interest rate for the purpose of indirectly changing the rates of interest in the money market and eventually influencing the credit volume and ultimately bringing pressure to bear on internal monetary movements and the like. The above-mentioned characteristics of open market operations, with its direct and indirect results, place central banks in a special position, so that they try their best to avail themselves of the mechanism. Subsequent to new developments in Iranian banking

practices and the abolition of interest rate, the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran can, for monetary policy purposes, engage in open market operations, in buying and selling commercial papers and certificates of indebtedness.

It is evident that the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran, by resorting to these operations, would be in a position to influence the market liquidity and, ultimately, the volume of banking credit or other aims of this nature as discussed above. Utilization of this instrument, in place of the interest rate, which is eliminated from the banking operations, could fill up a considerable part of the vacuum thus created; the reason being that the values fixed for the buying and selling of these certificates of indebtedness (receivables) or commercial papers from the market would, in so far as the exertion of the monetary policy is concerned, yield the same result as the interest rate.

The Set of Economy's Investment Opportunities (Demand for Credit Facilities)

Particulars of Investments	Expected Rate of Return	Agricultural Sector		Industrial Sector		Commercial/ Services Sector		other sectors		Total	
		No.	Amount	No.	Amount	No.	Amount	No.	Amount	No.	Amount
Investment with the maximum Expected Rate of Return	r_1	na_1	ma_1	ni_1	mi_1	ns_1	ms_1	nm_1	mm_1	nt_1	mt_1
Investment with the next highest Rate of Return	r_2	na_2	ma_2	ni_2	mi_2	ns_2	ms_2	nm_2	mm_2	nt_2	mt_2
" " " "	r_3	na_3	ma_3	ni_3	mi_3	ns_3	ms_3	nm_3	mm_3	nt_3	mt_3
" " " "	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
" " " "	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
Investment with the minimum Expected Rate of Return	r_n	na_n	ma_n	ni_n	mi_n	ns_n	ms_n	nm_n	mm_n	nt_n	mt_n

r: the Expected Rate of Return.

na: the number of projects in the agricultural sector.

ma: the amount of investment in agricultural projects.

ni: the number of projects in industrial and mining sector.

mi: the amount of investment in industrial and mining projects.

ns & ms: the number of projects and the amount of investment in commercial and services sector, respectively.

nm & mm: the number of projects and the amount of investment in other sectors of the economy.

nt & mt: the total number of projects and the total amount of investment in all sectors of the economy.

NOTES:

1. Definitions for these three concepts shall elucidate the topic under discussion:

The "Expected Rate of Return", which is alternately called the yield, is the expected profit during a specified period derived from the credit facilities extended; this rate, in principle, is forecasted and computed prior to the actual extension of credit.

The "Rate of Profit" is the profit resulting from transactions involving banking credit facilities as a proportion of the cost of goods or services thereof.

The "Profit Ratio" is the bank's share of the realized profit or profits derived from the transactions subject of credit facilities extended by the banks; this ratio is determined, as a rule, before the extension of credit.

An Introduction to Imāmiyyah Scholars:
Al-Sayyid al-Raḍī: Life and Works Part 2

by Dr. Waḥīd Akhtar

WORKS OF AL-RADĪ:

Al-Sayyid al-Raḍī, despite his comparatively short span of life, authored books on different subjects covering a vast field of Islamic studies and literature. Most of his works are anyhow related to language and literature directly and indirectly. His works on the Quran and ḥadīth mainly deal with the issues of literary significance such as poetic devices and figures of speech. Even his greatest work *Nahj al-balāghah* was compiled with a view to put together the best pieces of 'Ali's writings and sermons from a literary angle. However, in spite of his preoccupation with aesthetic and artistic aspects of the Quran and ḥadīth, his works reveal the breadth and depth of his knowledge in various areas of Islamic learning. He can be justifiably compared with the greatest of mufassirūn, muḥaddithūn, mutakallimūn and poets. In order to have an idea of his scholarship and genius one has to go through the list of his works. Even a cursory glance at the titles and contents of his works would suffice to acquaint one with al-Raḍī's versatility. Taking into consideration his immense responsibilities as the *naqīb al-nuqabā'*, *nāzir dīwān al-maẓālim* and holder of other high offices, one may wonder how he could manage to find time to study and write on a variety of subjects with the authority of a great scholar, as if he had devoted all his energies to academic and literary pursuits only.

Among his major works we can name the following:³¹

1. *Khaṣā'is al-'A'immaḥ*: It was his first work, in which he dealt with the distinguishing qualities and traits of the Twelve Infallible Imams (A). He has mentioned this work in his own introduction to the *Nahj al-balāghah*, saying that he compiled it in his youth. The book has been recently published from Qum.

2. *Talkhiṣ al-bayān 'an majāzāt al-Qur'ān*: In this book al-Raḍī, with unprecedented insight and breadth of knowledge, discusses the

metaphors and other figures of speech employed in the Holy Quran. This work followed al-Raḍī's earlier work of the same nature dealing with the Prophet's traditions. In the introduction, he writes: "These two works reflect the guiding light that leads people from darkness towards the light and illuminates their path. These represent two virgin fields which remained unexplored till now, and I was the first person to touch them." As referred to earlier, Ibn Khallikān acknowledged *Talkhiṣ al-bayān* as a work unparalleled in its uniqueness.

Dr. Muḥammad 'Alawī Muqaddam, a modern Iranian scholar, in a comparative study of al-Raḍī's *Talkhiṣ al-bayān* and Abū 'Ubaydah Mu'ammār ibn al-Muthannā's *Majāz al-Qur'ān*, has rightly pointed out that the latter work, compiled in the last part of the second century Hijrah, deals with *majāz* (metaphor) in a very limited sense, mostly confined to the interpretation of the Quran, while al-Raḍī's book deals with the different meanings of the Quranic vocabulary at a higher literary level of communication. He adds that *Talkhiṣ al-bayān* is the first work which is exclusively devoted to metaphorical import of the Quranic words. It is radically different from Abū 'Ubaydah's book, which is more a work of tafsīr and *ta'wīl* (interpretation) of the Quran than a work devoted to the figures of speech employed in the Quran. Similarly al-Jāhīz's two works, *al-Bayān wa al-tabyīn* and *al-Ḥayawān*, are not exclusively devoted to metaphorical language of the Quran. In the same way Ibn Qūṭaybah (d. 276/889) has devoted only some parts of his book on the subject to the problem of metaphorical significance of the Quran. *Talkhiṣ al-bayān* cannot be considered a book of exegesis in the strict sense of the term, for al-Raḍī did not comment upon all the Quranic verses one by one, but he selected only those verses of the Quran for interpretation that had some metaphorical import. He even totally ignored some *sūrahs*, saying that they did not contain any verse having metaphorical significance. His training and close contact with scholars of Arabic language and literature like Ibn al-Sirāfi, Ibn al-Jinnī (d. 392/1002), Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī ibn Rub'ī (d. 420/1029) and Ibn Nubātah (d. 394/1003-4) enabled him to deal with the intricate meanings of the Quranic metaphors. Discussing various meanings of a verse or a phrase in detail al-Raḍī gave reasons for preferring a particular interpretation to other possible interpretations.³² His discussion is so conclusive that any scholar could hardly dispute his choice of a particular meaning.

3. *Majāzāt al-'āthār al-Nabawiyyah*: On the pattern of *Talkhiṣ al-bayān fī majāzāt al-Qur'ān* this book was written prior to the former with the purpose of interpreting the metaphorical import of the sayings of the Prophet (S). This book was first printed in Baghdad with the efforts of Sayyid Ḥasan al-Kāzīmī; a new edition of it edited with notes by Maḥmūd Muṣṭafā was recently published from Egypt.

4. *Ḥaqā'iq al-ta'wīl fī mutashābih al-tanzīl*: This is an exegesis written by al-Raḍī. At one place in *Majāzāt al-'āthār al-Nabawiyyah* al-Raḍī has referred to it by the title *Ḥaqā'iq al-ta'wīl*, and at another place he referred to it as a larger book on *mutashābihāt* of the Quran. Al-Najāshī mentions it by the title *Ḥaqā'iq al-tanzīl*, whereas the author of *'Umdat al-maṭālib* refers to it as *al-Mutashābih fī al-Qur'ān*. This is the same book about which Ibn al-Jinnī, a teacher of al-Raḍī, wrote that it would be very difficult to find a book like this concerning the meaning of the Quran. This book was published from Najaf by Muntadā al-Nashr.

Aḥmad ibn 'Alī Dāwūdī narrates from Abū al-Ḥasan al-'Umari, who said: "I have seen one volume of an exegesis of the Quran ascribed to al-Raḍī..., which was said to be greater than the tafsīr written by Abū Ja'far al-Ṭabarī (al-Ṭūsī)." In the view of Muḥaddith al-Nūrī the Quranic commentary referred to by al-'Umari was entitled *Ḥaqā'iq al-tanzīl wa daqā'iq al-ta'wīl*; as said above, it was larger, better and more useful than *al-Tibyān*, the tafsīr by al-Ṭūsī. This tafsīr was written in the style of al-Sayyid al-Murtaḍā's *al-Ghurar wa al-durar*. In this tafsīr al-Raḍī has explained only those verses about which certain difficulties and doubts were raised by somebody. Firstly he refers to the difficulties raised, then answers them briefly. Secondly he goes into details, and in the course of his discussion refers to some other relevant Quranic verses. He has successfully proved, contrary to many Arab scholars' views, that there exist no superfluous letters in the Quran; every letter has its own place and meaning.

5. *Ma'ānī al-Qur'ān*: This is al-Raḍī's third work on the Quran. Ibn Shahr Āshūb is of the view that it might have been the same book which was mentioned by al-'Umari.

6. *Akhbār quḍāt Baghdād*: This book which seems to be about the *quḍāt* of Baghdad, probably a historical account, is not extant now.

7. *Ta'liq khilāf al-fuqahā'*: This book is also not available today. It seems to be a book on fiqh.

8. *Ta'liqat al-'Īdāḥ*: A commentary on the *Īdāḥ* by Abū 'Alī al-Fārisī.

9. *Mukhtār shi'r Ibn Ishāq al-Ṣābi*: A selection of al-Ṣābi's poetry.

10. *Al-Jayyid min shi'r Ibn al-Ḥajjāj*: This is a selection of Ibn al-Ḥajjāj's poetry, also known as *al-Ḥasan min shi'r al-Ḥusayn*—al-Ḥusayn being the name of Ibn al-Ḥajjāj.

11. *Al-Ziyādāt fī shi'r Abī Tammām*: Ḥabīb ibn Aws al-Ṭā'ī, known as Abū Tammām, was a Shī'ī, or rather a leader of the Shī'ah, as reported by al-Jāḥiẓ. He died during the reign of al-Wāthiq bi Allāh in the year 228/842-43 or 231/845-46 at Mosul.

12. A bunch of letters exchanged between al-Raḍī and Abū Ishāq al-Ṣābi. This collection was said to be in three volumes. Had it been

available, it could have been one of the rare collections of its own type.

13. A biography of al-Ṭāhir Dhū al-Manāqib (al-Raḍī's father), written at the age of twenty in the year 379/989-90.

14. *Dīwān shi'r*: As reported, al-Raḍī's collected poetical works were in four large volumes. At present a part of it is accessible to us.

15. The last work of al-Raḍī to be mentioned is the immortal *Nahj al-balāghah*, a collection of the sermons, sayings and letters of Amīr al-Mu'minin 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (A). We shall discuss the importance of this work in some detail, for this is the work that has immortalized the name of al-Raḍī in the annals of history. Due to this work al-Sharīf al-Raḍī's name has been inseparably connected with the name of 'Alī (A) and his writings.

Apart from Shī'ī 'ulamā', who have been paying rich tributes to al-Raḍī for centuries, Sunnī scholars have also mentioned his name with respect with particular reference to his mastery of Arabic language and his genius as a poet. The oldest of Sunnī scholars who made a mention of him was his contemporary Abū Manṣūr 'Abd al-Malik ibn Muḥammad al-Nishābūrī al-Tha'ālibī (d. 429/1037-38). In *Yatīmat al-dahr*, a bibliography of contemporary poets and writers, he says:

Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn Mūsā ibn Muḥammad ibn Mūsā ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Mūsā al-Kāzim (A) was the *Naqīb* of the Ṭālibiyyīn in Baghdad, and was called al-Raḍī and Dhū al-Ḥasabayn.... Before completing ten years of his age he started writing poetry. At present he is considered the most eminent poet of our time, the noblest of the chiefs of Iraq possessed of nobility of lineage and pride of genealogy. His manners are decent and his virtues are known. He combines all good qualities, and is the greatest of the poets of the family of Abū Ṭālib. Among them there have been famous poets such as al-Jumānī, Ibn Ṭabāṭabā', Ibn al-Nāṣir, etc. If he is said to be the most eminent of all the poets of Quraysh, such an assertion cannot be dubbed as an exaggeration. His verses selected for the present volume are the best evidence of this claim.... I cannot name any poet of our age who can compose elegies better than him.... His collection of poetry is huge, and consists of four big volumes, the major part of which is available....³³

Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī (d. 463/1070-71), a junior contemporary of al-Raḍī, in his *Ta'rīkh Baghdād*, has mentioned him on many occasions. In the context of the year of his death, he writes:

He was a man of virtue, literature and scholarship.... He started learning the Quran at a very young age, and learnt the entire Quran by heart in a short time. He authored some books dealing with the meaning of the Quran, the like of which are hard to be found.³⁴

He adds that he was an excellent poet. Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad

ibn 'Abd Allāh is reported to say in the presence of Abū al-Ḥasan ibn Maḥfūz that a group of literary scholars held that al-Raḍī was superior to all the poets of the Quraysh. Ibn Maḥfūz said:

It is true that among the poets of the Quraysh some were excellent, but their output was small in quantity. A poet maintaining a high standard and being also most prolific at the same time cannot be found among them except al-Raḍī.³⁵

Abū al-Faraj al-Jawzī (d. 598/1201-2), Ibn Athīr al-Jazarī (d. 630/1232-33), Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd al-Mu'tazilī (d. 655 or 656/1257 or 1258) and others paid similar tributes to al-Raḍī's great skill and creativity in poetry.³⁶ Even Ibn Khallikān (681/1282-83), who for the first time raised unfounded doubts about the ascription of the *Nahj al-balāghah* to 'Alī (A) in *Wafayāt al'a'yān wa anbā' abnā' al-zamān*, after narrating an incident that presented al-Raḍī as a child prodigy, writes:

He wrote a book on the exposition of the meaning of the Quran, the like of which cannot be found. This book is a proof of the wide span of his knowledge in (Arabic) grammar, syntax and lexicography. He authored such a book on the subject of *Majāzāt al-Qur'ān* (Figures of speech in the Quran), a book of unprecedented excellence in its field. Several scholars have attempted to compile a collection of his poetical works, among them the best one is that which is compiled by Abū al-Ḥakīm al-Khayrī...³⁷

Abū al-Fidā' 'Imād al-Dīn Ismā'il (672-732/1273-1331), in his famous work *al-Mukhtaṣar fī ta'rīkh al-bashar*, in the context of the incidents occurring in the year 406/1015-16, did not add anything new to what was recorded by earlier writers, and acknowledged his eminence as a poet of great merit. Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ṣafadī (d. 764/1362-63), in *al-Wāfi bi al-wafayāt*, after reproducing Ibn Khallikān's account of al-Raḍī, mentions several of his works, such as *al-Mutashābih fī al-Qur'ān*, *Majāzāt al-'āthār al-Nabawiyyah*, *Talkhiṣ al-bayān 'an majāzāt al-Qur'ān*, *Akhbār quḍāt Baghdād* in addition to the collection of his letters in three volumes and his collected poetical works in three volumes.³⁸ Shaykh 'Abd Allāh al-Yāfi'i (d. 768/1366-67), in *Mir'āt al-Jinān*, Ḥāfiẓ ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī (d. 852/1448) in *Lisān al-mizān* and al-Qiftī in *Anbā' al-ruwāt* have made particular mention of al-Raḍī's poetry. Only Ibn Ḥajar has added that while his brother al-Sayyid al-Murtaḍā's works excelled his works in quantity, al-Raḍī's works were superior to those of al-Murtaḍā in quality.³⁹

Al-Raḍī occupies a unique place among Muslim scholars in many respects. In exegesis his work in the Quranic metaphors is unparalleled, as a linguist and littérateur he surpasses all his contemporaries. As a faqīh, muḥaddith and literary critic he is respected by all, but his

excellence in poetry overshadowed all his other achievements. Dr. Zaki Mubārak, a modern scholar, in his work *'Abqariyyat al-Sharif al-Raḍī*, discussed in detail various aspects of his versatile genius. According to him, most of al-Raḍī's works are of academic nature and his method is also research-oriented, yet all his writings possess a kind of artistic beauty. A number of his works could not be preserved, but his extant writings were sufficient to prove that he was one of the most prolific writers, whose position as a great master of Arabic would never be diminished. With reference to *Ḥaqā'iq al-ta'wīl* and *Majāzāt al-'āthār al-Nabawīyyah*, he points out that precision, brevity, economy of words and a cautiousness not to indulge in unnecessary diversions just to show off scholarship are the distinguishing features of his style. This shows his sensitivity for the creative use of words. At one glance he appears to be a great linguist lecturing amidst the scholars of language in Baghdad, at another glance he emerges as a great fighter against injustice, while at a third glance he proves himself to be a mature and seasoned statesman. In a different mood he is seen in the guise of a true lover who responds to the objects of beauty in the most beautiful fashion. On other occasions he enlightens us with his minute observations as a traveller, whereas in the role of the founder and principal teacher of the Dār al-'ilm he acts as the greatest educationist of his age. However, his position in Arabic poetry and prose remains intact and unchallenged even after a lapse of ten centuries, during which hundreds of great poets and prose writers were born among Arabic-speaking people.⁴⁰

Al-Raḍī's earlier biographers have hinted that his poetical works consisted of four volumes. He is unique in Arabic poetry because his style is a synthesis of artistic beauty and scholarship. Aḥmad ibn 'Alī Dāwūdī al-Ḥasanī, author of *'Umdat al-maṭālib*, himself a descendant of Abū Ṭālib, quotes Abū al-Ḥasan al-'Umarī:

Al-Raḍī's poetry is well-known. He is the most eminent among the poets of the Quraysh. It is enough to know that in the tribe of the Quraysh a number of renowned poets have been born, the oldest among them were Ḥārith ibn Hishām, Hubayrah ibn Abī Wahab, 'Umar ibn Rabī'ah and Abū Dhuhayl, and the latest were Muḥammad ibn Ṣāliḥ al-Ḥasanī, 'Alī ibn Muḥammad al-Jumānī and Ibn Ṭabāṭabā' al-'Iṣfahānī.⁴¹

Al-'Allāmah al-'Aminī, in *al-Ghadīr*, volume 4, says that despite his greatness as a poet he never considered poetry to be a matter of pride for himself, but regarded it as a means to attain his ultimate goal.⁴² When Zaki Mubārak was invited by Baghdad University to deliver lectures on a great Arab poet, he selected al-Raḍī as the greatest among them and opted for speaking about him. He complained that Anīs al-Maqdisī, when writing a book on the leaders of Arabic poetry in the

'Abbāsīd period, regarded Abū al-'Atāhiyah (131-210/748-825) as one of the leading figures of those days, but utterly failed to mention al-Raḍī.⁴³

Al-Raḍī's poetry is not blotted with any form of lampoon. If he satirizes somebody or refers to any of his opponents ironically, he never mentions his name. Zaki Mubārak makes the following critical remarks about his poetry:

You shall see that despite holding the highest religious honours and positions, that is *Niqābat al-'ashrāf*, he stands out as the best among the greatest poets who ever talked about beauty and love. You shall see that al-Sayyid al-Raḍī is unparalleled among poets in his *qaṣā'id* known as *Hijāziyyāt*, particularly when he composes verses in praise of the eye and the heart. You shall find that he has left all his predecessors far behind in his treatment of the theme of truthfulness and truthfulness, and it is difficult for any poet in future to come up to his mark. You shall not find in the entire history of Arabic poetry any one who took up the theme of nobility and greatness at the same level at which al-Raḍī treated it, and no other tongue could express them in a language better than that of al-Raḍī.⁴⁴

Almost all histories of Arabic literature and poetry devote some space to al-Raḍī's contribution as a poet and as an architect of Arabic prose. Hannā al-Fākhūrī, in *Tārīkh adabiyyāt-e 'Arab*, on more than one occasion, mentions al-Raḍī's name among the greatest of Arab poets. His name finds eminent place in the choicest company of the geniuses of the later phase of the 'Abbāsīd period, an enviable company consisting of al-Mutanabbī, Abū Nuwās, Abū al-'Alā' al-Ma'arrī, Ibn al-Fāriḍ and Māhyār al-Daylamī. The last one was a pupil of al-Raḍī.⁴⁵ Devoting a full chapter to al-Sharīf al-Raḍī's contribution to Arabic poetry, al-Fākhūrī gives a brief account of his political influence, confirming the view that he was considered to be a personage deserving to occupy the high office of the caliphate.⁴⁶ It is also recorded that his poetry in praise of his contemporaries was never inspired by any kind of greed for reward, which he despised. He rather employed his poetic skill as a political and ideological weapon. His poetical works are generally divided into various forms having specific and distinct features: *Hijāziyyāt*: the verses composed during his *hajj* pilgrimages, consisting of forty *qaṣā'id*, are acknowledged as the masterpieces of the Arab genius in poetry, ranked with the *Hāshimiyyāt* of al-Kumayt, *khamriyyāt* of Abū Nuwās, *zuhdiyyāt* of Abū al-'Atāhiyah and *tashbihāt* (similies) of Ibn al-Mu'tazz; *Shī'iyyāt*: compositions charged with emotion about the martyrs and oppressed among the 'Alawids and the Ṭālibiyyin; *rithā'iyyāt*, elegiacal poetry; and *fakhriyyāt*, remembrance of the past glory and praise of his ancestors. All the different forms and styles of his poetry were basically aimed at arousing a passion for justice among his followers. Fewer poets in the history of

world literature could succeed like al-Raḍī to combine a sense of purpose with the highest form of artistic excellence.⁴⁷ Literary critics acknowledge al-Raḍī's elegiacal works as his best, which still remain unsurpassed in Arabic poetry. J.M. 'Abd al-Jalīl, in his *History of Arab Literature*, refers to al-Raḍī among the choicest of the best poets of the 'Abbāsīd period.⁴⁸

NAHJ AL-BALĀGHĀH

The most important work of al-Raḍī is the compilation of selected sermons, letters and sayings of Amīr al-Mu'mīnīn 'Alī (A). He selected 241 sermons, 79 letters, and 489 sayings.⁴⁹ Those numbers vary in different editions of *Nahj al-balāghah*. The number of sermons varies from 238 to 241 and the number of letters varies from 77 to 79, whereas sayings vary from 463 to 489. Al-Raḍī, in the introduction to *Nahj al-balāghah*, gives an account of the circumstances that led him to compile the utterances and writings of 'Alī (A). According to this account, while busy in writing *Khaṣā'is al-'A'imma* he planned to devote the last part of the book to the sayings and writings of Amīr al-Mu'mīnīn (A). This task was so absorbing and fascinating that his friends and brothers-in-faith desired that he should compile a book covering all the forms of 'Alī's utterances such as letters, lectures, counsels, moral admonitions and aphorisms, for, they would prove to be masterpieces of eloquence, rhetoric, aphorisms and jewels of wisdom, probably the best after the Quran and ḥadīth of the Prophet (S) in Arabic language and literature. He writes:

... And these were not collected in any other work, nor found together in any other book... Amīr al-Mu'mīnīn (A) was the fountain of eloquence and (his utterances) the source of rhetoric. Through him hidden delicacies of eloquence and rhetoric came to light, and from him were learnt its principles and rules. Every speaker and orator had to tread on his footprints, and every eloquent preacher availed of his utterances. Even then they could not equal him, for the credit for being the first and foremost remained with him, because his utterances were those that carried the reflection of Divine knowledge and savour of the Prophet's utterances. Accordingly I acceded to their request, as I knew that it meant great reward, handsome reputation and a treasure of recompense. The object of this compilation is that I should bring forth Amīr al-Mu'mīnīn's greatness and superiority in the art of rhetoric: which is in addition to his countless qualities and innumerable distinctions, and to show that he has risen to the highest pinnacle of this attainment, is singular among all those predecessors whose utterances are quoted here and there, whereas his own utterances are like an onrushing and irresistible stream, and such a treasure of subtleties in language is unmatched. Since I proudly trace my descent from him I feel pleasure in quoting a couplet of al-Farazdaq:

أُولَئِكَ آبَائِي فَجِنِّي بِمِثْلِهِمْ إِذَا جَمَعْتَنَا يَا جَرِيرُ الْمَجَامِعِ

*These are my forefathers O Jarir.
When we get together, can you cite any as their equals?*

In my view Amir al-Mu'minin's utterances are divisible in three categories: firstly sermons and decrees, secondly letters and communications, and thirdly maxims and counsels. Allah willing I intend to compile first the sermons, then letters, and then maxims and counsels, and propose a separate chapter for each category, leaving blank pages in between each of them so that if anything has been left out and is found afterwards it may be inserted there-in....⁵⁰

Apart from al-Radi's assessment of 'Ali's utterances and their literary as well as philosophical aspect, the important point to be noted is his reference to other sources. This is in itself enough to counter the allegations of the later writers like Ibn Khallikan and Ibn Hajar that a major portion of *Nahj al-balaghah* was falsely ascribed to 'Ali (A). Before coming to those allegations I would like to quote another passage from al-Radi's introduction to *Nahj al-balaghah* which far more explicitly refers to the earlier sources from which al-Radi selected the contents of his compendium:

In this compilation in some places there is repetition of words or subject matter. The excuse for this is that Amir al-Mu'minin's utterances have been related in numerous forms. Sometimes it happened that a particular utterance was found in a particular form in a tradition and was taken down in that very form. Thereafter the same utterance was found in some other tradition either with acceptable addition or in a better style of expression. In such a case with a view to further the object of compilation and to preserve a beautiful utterance from being lost it was decided to repeat it. It has also happened that a particular utterance had appeared earlier but due to remoteness it has been entered again. This is through omission, not by intent. In spite of all this I do not claim that I have collected Amir al-Mu'minin's utterances from everywhere and that no single sentence of any type or construction has been left out. In fact I do not rule out the possibility that whatever has been left out might be more than what has been collected, and what has been in my knowledge and use is far less than what has remained beyond my reach. My task was to strive to the best of my capacity and it was Allah's part to make the way easy and guide me to the goal; Allah may will so.⁵¹

The Sources of Nahj al-balaghah

Though al-Radi has not furnished a bibliography of the sources from which he collected the writings and sayings of Amir al-Mu'minin (A), he has referred occasionally to certain books and their compilers in his explanatory notes on various sermons, letters and sayings. Several scholars have sought to trace back the sources of different utterances and letters collected in *Nahj al-balaghah* to the works compiled centuries before the birth of al-Radi. The most painstaking research

in this context was done by an Indian Sunnī scholar Imtiyāz ‘Alī ‘Arshī, who died a few years ago. He succeeded in tracing back the early sources of 106 sermons, 37 letters and 79 stray sayings of Amīr al-Mu‘minīn (A) in his book *Istinād-e Nahj al-balāghah*, originally written in Urdu, subsequently translated into Arabic in 1957, then into English and Persian. The translator of the Persian text adds very useful notes, which usually provide further knowledge about the sources of *Nahj al-balāghah* and occasionally point out ‘Arshī’s errors in some matters. However, this work still stands as the most valuable research in this field. Besides this work, some others deserve special mention such as ‘Abd al-Zahrā’ al-Husaynī al-Khaṭīb’s *Maṣādir Nahj al-balāghah*, Hibat al-Dīn al-Shahristānī’s *Mā huwa Nahj al-balāghah*, Sayyid ‘Alī al-Naqawī al-Naṣirābādī’s introduction to the Urdu translation of *Nahj al-balāghah* by Muftī Ja‘far Ḥusayn, and *al-Mu‘jam al-mufahras li alfāz Nahj al-balāghah*, a joint work of al-Sayyid Kāzīm al-Muḥammadī and al-Shaykh Muḥammad Dashtī. Sayyid Muḥammad ‘Askarī Ja‘farī and Sayyid ‘Alī Ridā also dealt with the issue of basic sources of *Nahj al-balāghah* in their prefaces to their separate translations of the book into English. Here follows with some minor corrections and additions ‘Arshī’s list of the early sources containing the utterances and writings of ‘Alī (A):^{5 2}

1. *Khuṭab Amīr al-Mu‘minīn ‘alā al-manābir fī al-juma‘ wa al-‘a‘yād wa ghayrihā*, by Zayd ibn Wahab al-Jahnī (d. 96/714-15). This book was available till the fifth century H., for Abū Ja‘far al-Ṭūsī (d. 460/1067) has quoted from it in his writings.

2. *Kitāb khuṭab Amīr al-Mu‘minīn*, by Abū Ya‘qūb Ismā‘il ibn Mahrān ibn Muḥammad al-Sākūnī al-Kūfī (d. circa 148/765).

3. Abū Mikhnaf Lūṭ ibn Yaḥyā al-‘Azdī (d. circa 157/773-74) has quoted Amīr al-Mu‘minīn’s utterances in the following works of his own: *Kitāb al-Jamal*, *Kitāb ahl al-Nahrawān wa al-Khawārij*, *Kitāb al-ghārāt*, *Kitāb maqtal ‘Alī*, *Kitāb maqtal Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr wa al-‘Ashtar wa Muḥammad ibn Hudhayfah*, and *Kitāb al-shūrā wa maqtal ‘Uthmān*. (Here may be added another work: *al-Khuṭbat al-Zahrā’ li Amīr al-Mu‘minīn*.)^{5 3}

4. *Kitāb khuṭab Amīr al-Mu‘minīn* by Abū Muḥammad Mas‘adah ibn Ṣadaqah al-‘Abdī al-Kūfī (d. 183/799). He was a pupil of al-Imām Mūsā al-Kāzīm (A), and Ibn Shādhān has narrated traditions on his authority.

5. *Kitāb khuṭab ‘Alī* by Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm ibn al-Ḥakam ibn Zāhīr al-Fazārī al-Kūfī (d. 177/793) Abū al-‘Abbās al-Najāshī (d. 450/1058) has narrated on his authority.

6. Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm ibn Sulaymān Hashamī (Nahamī) al-Khazzāz al-Kūfī (third century H.) besides compiling *al-Khuṭab li Amīr al-Mu‘minīn*; compiled other books such as *Kitāb al-du‘ā’*, *Kitāb khalq al-*

samāwāt, and *Kitāb maqṭal Amīr al-Mu'minīn*. Al-Shaykh al-Ṭūsī has quoted from his works.

7. *Kitāb khuṭab 'Alī—karram Allāh wajhah*—by Abū Mundhir Hishām ibn Muḥammad ibn Sā'ib al-Kalbī (d. 206/821). He also wrote *Maqṭal 'Uthmān*, *Kitāb al-Jamal*, *Kitāb Ṣiffīn*, *Kitāb al-Nahrawān*, *al-Ghārāt* and *Maqṭal Amīr al-Mu'minīn*. His book containing al-Imām 'Alī's *khuṭab* was studied by al-Najāshī.

8. Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn 'Umar al-Wāqidī (d. 207/823) quoted al-Imām 'Alī's writings and sermons in many of his books such as *Kitāb al-Jamal*, *Kitāb Ṣiffīn* and *Kitāb al-sunnah wa al-jamā'ah wa dhamm al-hawā wa tark al-Khawārij fī al-fitan*. Al-Raḍī has referred to some of his works. He also compiled *Khuṭab Amīr al-Mu'minīn (A)*.

9. Abū al-Faḍl Naṣr ibn Muzāḥim al-Manqarī (d. 212/827) compiled a number of books, all of which contain utterances of 'Alī (A). Al-Najāshī has mentioned these works: *Kitāb Ṣiffīn*, *Kitāb al-Jamal*, *Kitāb al-Nahrawān* and *al-Ghārāt*. He also compiled *Khuṭab 'Alī (A)*, *Kitāb al-manāqib*, and *Kitāb akhbār al-Mukhtār*.

10. Abū al-Khayr Ṣāliḥ ibn Abī Ḥammād al-Rāzī (214/829) compiled a book *Khuṭab 'Alī (A)*. He was among the companions of al-Imām al-Ḥasan al-'Askarī (A), and his book is mentioned in al-Najāshī's *al-Fihrist*.

11. Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī ibn Muḥammad al-Madā'inī (d. 224/839) compiled *Khuṭab 'Alī (A) wa kutubuh ilā 'ummāliḥ* and some other books including *Ta'riḫ al-khulafā'*.

12. Abū al-Qāsim al-Sayyid 'Abd al-'Azīm ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Alī al-Ḥasanī (d. 250/864), popularly known as Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīm, whose tomb at Shahr Ray is a place of pilgrimage. He also compiled *Kitāb khuṭab 'Alī (A)*.

13. Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad ibn Sa'id al-Thaqafī al-Kūfī (d. 283/896) compiled different collections of al-Imām 'Alī's utterances and letters, which are: *Rasā'il 'Alī*, *Kalām 'Alī fī al-shūrā*, *al-Khuṭab al-mu'arrabāt*, *Kitāb al-Saqifah*, *Maqṭal 'Uthmān*, *Kitāb bay'at Amīr al-Mu'minīn*, *Kitāb al-ḥakamayn*, *Kitāb al-Nahrawān*, and *Kitāb maqṭal Amīr al-Mu'minīn*. Al-Shaykh al-Ṭūsī says that he came to know of all these books through Aḥmad ibn 'Abdūn.

14. Abū Ja'far Muḥammad ibn Jarīr ibn Rustam al-Ṭabarī, one of the contemporaries of the famous historian Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī (circa 226-310/840-41-922), collected the sermons and letters of Amir al-Mu'minīn in two of his books: *al-Ruwāt 'an Ahl al-Bayt* and *Kitāb al-mustarshid*.

15. Abū Ja'far Muḥammad ibn Ya'qūb al-Kulaynī (d. 328/939) quoted a number of al-Imām 'Alī's sermons and utterances in *Uṣūl al-Kāfī*, *Rawḍat al-Kāfī* and *Rasā'il al-'A'immaḥ*.

16. Abū Aḥmad 'Abd al-'Azīz ibn Yaḥyā ibn Aḥmad ibn 'Isā

al-Jallūdi (d. 320/932), besides *Kitāb al-Jamal*, *Kitāb Ṣiffīn*, *Kitāb al-ḥakamayn*, *Kitāb al-ghārāt*, *Kitāb al-Khawārij* and *Kitāb ḥurūb ‘Alī*, compiled ten volumes containing al-‘Imām ‘Alī’s writings and utterances: *Khutab ‘Alī*, *Kitāb shi‘r ‘Alī*, *Rasā’il ‘Alī*, *Mawā‘iz ‘Alī*, *Dhikr kalām ‘Alī fī al-malāḥim*, *Qawl ‘Alī fī al-shūrā*, *Kitāb mā kāna bayna ‘Alī wa ‘Uthmān min al-kalām*, *Kitāb qaḍā’ ‘Alī*, *Kitāb al-du‘ā’ ‘an ‘Alī*, *Kitāb al-‘adab ‘an ‘Alī*.

Hibat al-Dīn al-Shahristānī has mentioned the following other books: *Kitāb dhikr ‘Alī li Khadijah wa faḍā’il Ahl al-Bayt ‘Alayhim al-salām*.⁵⁶

17. Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī al-Mas‘ūdī (d. 346/957), the author of the famous book *Murūj al-dhahab*, has collected numerous sermons and sayings of al-‘Imām ‘Alī (A) in *Ḥadā’iq al-‘adhhān fī akhbār Āl Muḥammad* and *Mazāhir al-‘akhbār wa ḡarā’if al-‘āthār*.

18. Abū Ṭālib ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Abī Zayd Aḥmad ibn Ya‘qūb ibn Naṣr al-‘Anbārī (d. 356/967), author of one hundred and forty books, compiled a collection of supplications of the Imams (A) *Ad‘iyat al-‘A‘immah*, in which supplications of Amīr al-Mu‘minīn (A) are also included.

19. Abū ‘Abd Allāh Aḥmad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Abī Rāfi‘ al-Kūfī al-Baghdādī, a teacher of al-Shaykh al-Mufīd (d. 413/1022) has collected the utterances of al-‘Imām ‘Alī (A) in his books *al-Kashf fī mā yata‘allaq bi al-Saqīfah* and *al-Diyā’ (al-Ṣafā’?) fī ta’rīkh al-‘A‘immah*. Al-Shaykh al-Ṭūsī says he was introduced to his works through al-Mufīd, al-Ḥusayn ibn ‘Ubayd Allāh, Aḥmad ibn ‘Abdūn and others.

20. Abū al-‘Abbās Ya‘qūb ibn Aḥmad al-Ṣaymarī, probably son of Abū ‘Abd Allāh Aḥmad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Abī Rāfi‘, mentioned above, compiled a collection of al-‘Imām ‘Alī’s utterances and sermons.

21. Abū Sa‘īd Mansūr ibn al-Ḥusayn Wazīr al-‘Ābī (d. 422/1031) collected aphorisms by al-‘Imām ‘Alī (A) in *Nuzhat al-‘adab fī al-muḥāḍarāt*, and subsequently brought out and abridged this book under the title *Nathr al-durar*.

A number of other works were also compiled before al-Raḍī that contained al-‘Imām ‘Alī’s writings and utterances. A selected list of those may be added to the above-mentioned books:⁵⁵

1. Abū ‘Uthmān ‘Amr ibn Baḥr al-Jāḥiẓ (d. 255/869) compiled in a book, *Mi‘at mukhtārah min kalām Amīr al-Mu‘minīn*, one hundred aphorisms selected from the utterances of ‘Alī (A). His major work *al-Bayān wa al-tabyīn* also contains the words of Amīr al-Mu‘minīn (A).

2. Ibrāhīm ibn Hilāl al-Thaqafī (d. 283/896) edited a book entitled *Rasā’il Amīr al-Mu‘minīn wa akhbāruh wa ḥurūbuh*.

3. Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Khālid al-Barqī (d. 270/883 or 280/893), in his famous work *al-Maḥāsin*, considered to be the fifth Shi'i compendium of ḥadīth after the Four Major Compendia (*al-Kutub al-'arba'ah*), has quoted al-'Imām 'Alī's writings and sermons. He was a companion of al-'Imām Muḥammad al-Taḳī al-Jawād (A) and al-'Imām 'Alī al-Naqī al-Hādī (A). Al-Shaykh al-Ṣadūq benefited from his works to a great extent.⁵⁶

4. Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan ibn 'Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn Shu'bah al-Ḥarrānī al-Ḥalabī (d. 320/932 or 380/990) collected some sayings and speeches of the Imam (A) in *Tuḥaf al-'uqūl*. He writes:

If we desire to quote all his ('Alī's) sermons and utterances only in regard to the Unity of God, leaving all other themes, it would equal this very book.⁵⁷

5. Al-Qādī Nu'mān al-Miṣrī (d. 363/973) compiled a book *Khuṭab Amīr al-Mu'minīn*.

6. Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Muslim al-Kūfī al-Marūzī al-Dinawarī known as Ibn Qutaybah (213-276/828-889) in '*Uyūn al-'akhbār* and *Gharā'ib al-ḥadīth* quoted utterances of al-'Imām 'Alī (A).

7. Aḥmad ibn Wādih al-Ya'qūbī (d. 276/889) quoted al-'Imām 'Alī's utterances in his well-known history *Ta'rikh al-Ya'qūbī*.

8. Abū al-'Abbās al-Mubarrad (d. 285/898) in his *al-Fāḍil* and *al-Kāmil*.

9. *Ta'rikh al-rusul wa al-mulūk* by Muḥammad ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/922).

10. Al-Ḥasan ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn Sa'id al-'Askarī (d. 382/992) narrated from al-'Imām 'Alī (A) some of his sermons in *al-Mawā'id wa al-zawājir*.

11. Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn Durayd al-'Azdī (d. 321/933) quoted some utterances of al-'Imām 'Alī (A) for furnishing examples of Arabic idioms, proverbs, and aphorisms in his major lexicon *al-Jamharah fi al-lughah*.

12. *Al-'Iqd al-farīd* by Ibn 'Abd Rabbih (246-328/860-940).

13. *Kitāb al-'aghānī* and *Maqātil al-Ṭālibiyyīn* by Abū al-Faraj al-'Iṣfahānī (284-356/897-967).

14. *Kitāb al-nawādir* by Abū 'Alī al-Qārī' (d. 356/967).

15. Ibn Bābawayh al-Shaykh al-Ṣadūq (d. 381/991) quoted extensively from al-'Imām 'Alī's utterances in *Man lā yaḥḍuruḥu al-faqīh*, *Ilal al-sharāyi'*, *'Uyūn akhbār al-Riḍā*, *al-'Amālī*, *Ma'ānī al-'akhbār*, *al-Tawḥīd*, *al-Khiṣāl*, *al-'I'tiqād*, *Thawāb al-'a'māl* and other books.

16. Al-Shaykh al-Mufid (d. 413/1022) quoted al-'Imām 'Alī's writings and sayings in many of his books, particularly devoting a lengthy section of *al-'Irshād* to Amīr al-Mu'minīn's sermons, judicial

judgements, decrees, letters, and sayings. Among the extant works of that period *al-'Irshād* is the most systematic and comprehensive record of al-'Imām 'Alī's words after *Nahj al-balāghah*.

Among the contemporaries of al-Raḍī, several other scholars were engaged in collecting and quoting Amīr al-Mu'minīn's utterances in their works. The following can be named here: Ibn Miskawayh (d. 421/1030) in *Tajārib al-'umam*, Ḥāfiẓ Abū Na'im al-'Iṣfahānī (d. 430/1038) in *Hilyat al-'awliyā'*, Shaykh al-Ṭā'ifah al-Ṭūsī (d. 460/1067) in *al-Tahdhīb, al-'Istibṣār, al-'Amālī* and other works. Al-Qāḍī Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Salāmah al-Shāfi'ī (d. 453/1061) in *Ma'ālim al-ḥikam*.

'Aziz Allāh 'Uṭaridī has prepared a list of sources which includes many a name not found in other lists. Such names are as follows:⁵⁸

1. Ḥārith al-'A'war al-Ḥamdānī: He compiled a collection of Imam 'Alī's *khuṭab* before Zayd ibn Wahab. Al-Kulaynī through Abū Ishāq al-Ṣābi'ī has quoted him as narrating the sayings of the Imam (A).

2. Aṣbagh ibn Nubātah.

3. 'Ubayd Allāh ibn Ḥurr al-Ju'fī: The famous Sunnī muḥaddith al-Bukhārī has mentioned a collection of al-'Imām 'Alī's words compiled by him. He was a poet and an admirer of al-'Imām 'Alī (A), who never submitted to Mu'āwiyah and was involved in anti-State activities. Al-'Imām al-Ḥusayn sought his help, but he declined to come to his side. Afterwards he repented his failure to help him. Al-Najāshī has referred to him in his *al-Rijāl*.

4. Ḥusayn ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn Ibrāhīm al-Ghadā'irī (d. 411/1020).

5. Ṣa'ṣa'ah ibn Ṣawḥān, a companion of al-'Imām 'Alī (A), who narrated the Imam's instructions to Mālik al-'Ashtar at the time of his appointment to governership of Egypt.

6. Faraj ibn Farwah compiled a collection of the Imam's sayings on the authority of Mas'adah ibn Ṣadaqah, who narrated from al-'Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (A). Al-Sayyid 'Alī ibn Ṭāwūs wrote at the back of a manuscript of this compilation that it was written after 200/815. This manuscript was in possession of Ḥasan ibn Sulaymān al-Ḥillī, from which he has quoted in his works.

7. Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Ṣaffār al-'Ash'arī al-Qummi, author of *Baṣā'ir al-darajāt*, had compiled *al-'Irshād* containing the utterances of al-'Imām 'Alī (A); not available now.

8. Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad Abū 'Ubayd al-Harawī (d. 401/1010) compiled a book of the uncommon words used in the Quran and ḥadīth, in which he quoted from Amīr al-Mu'minīn also.

9. Abū 'Ubayd al-Qāsim ibn Salām al-Harawī also wrote a book on the vocabulary of ḥadīth, in which he referred to the utterances of the Imam 'Alī (A). Al-Sayyid al-Raḍī has referred to this work.

10. Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyā Tha'lab (d. 291/903), the grammarian.

11. Abū al-Qāsim ‘Abd Allāh ibn Aḥmad al-Ka‘bī al-Balkhī (d. 319/931) has quoted *al-Khuṭbat al-Shiqshiqiyyah* in his book *al-’Inṣāf*.

12. Abū Ja‘far ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Qubbah al-Rāzi has quoted *al-Khuṭbat al-Shiqshiqiyyah* on the authority of Abū Ja‘far ibn Baṭṭah in *al-’Inṣāf*.

13. Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad al-Bayhaqī (d. 225/839) has quoted extensively from al-’Imām ‘Alī (A) in *al-Maḥāsin wa al-masāwi’*.

14. Muḥammad ibn Ṭayyib Abū Bakr al-Baḥrī al-Bāqillānī (d. 403/1012) has quoted from al-’Imām ‘Alī (A) in *I’jāz al-Qur’ān*.

15. Muḥammad ibn Ḥabīb al-Hāshimī al-Baghdādī (d. 245/859).

16. Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Allāh Ḥākīm al-Nishābūrī.

17. ‘Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn al-‘Abbās al-Shirāzi, popularly known as Abū Ḥayyān al-Tawḥidī, an eminent scholar, quoted from al-’Imām ‘Alī (A) in *al-Baṣā’ir*.

18. Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Marzabānī al-Khurāsānī, a scholar of literature and literary sciences, was one of the teachers of al-Mufid. His work *al-Muwaffaq* contains the utterances of al-’Imām ‘Alī (A).

19. Aḥmad ibn ‘Abd al-‘Aziz al-Jawhari; Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd quoted from him in *Sharḥ Nahj al-balāghah*, particularly from his valuable book *al-Saqīfah*.

20. Abū Ja‘far al-Balādhurī (d. 279/892), author of *Ansāb al-’ashraf* and *Futūḥ al-buldān*, has quoted the words of al-’Imām ‘Alī (A) in his works.

21. Sulaym ibn Qays al-Hilālī was among the first to compile a collection of ḥadīth, in which he quoted numerous traditions from al-’Imām ‘Alī (A).

22. Abū Ḥanīfah al-Dinawarī (d. 290/903), a very authentic narrator and an authority in literary sciences, quoted a number of sermons and sayings of al-’Imām ‘Alī (A) in *al-’Akhbār al-ṭiwāl*.

23. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Ishāq Abū al-Qāsim al-Zujāji (d. 339/950), the author of *al-Jamal*, in his other work, *al-’Amālī*, narrated the utterances of al-’Imām ‘Alī (A).

24. ‘Abd al-Malik ibn Muḥammad al-Tha‘alibī (350-429/961-1037), author of *Yatīmat al-dahr*, in *al-’Ijāz wa al-’Ijāz*, quoted many an utterance of al-’Imām ‘Alī (A).

25. Abū ‘Umar ibn Yūsuf ibn Ya‘qūb al-Kindī (d. 350/961) in his book *al-Wulāt* has narrated the words of al-’Imām ‘Alī (A).

26. Abū Ṭālib ‘Ubayd ibn Aḥmad ibn Ya‘qūb al-’Anbārī has narrated some supplications of al-’Imām ‘Alī (A) in his *Kitāb al-’ad‘iyah*.

27. Abū ‘Abd Allāh Aḥmad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Abī Rāfi‘ authored two books, one entitled *Kashf dar akhbār wa ta’rikh Saqīfat Banī Sā’idah* and *Ta’rikh al-’A’immah*, in which he quoted the utterances of al-’Imām ‘Alī (A).

28. Abū Muḥammad Aḥmad ibn A'tham al-Kūfī (d. 314/926-27) in *Kitāb al-futūḥ* narrated the sermons and words of al-'Imām 'Alī (A).

29. Abū Muḥammad Ḥusayn ibn Sa'id ibn Ḥammād ibn Mahrān al-'Ahwāzī collected some of the sermons and sayings of al-'Imām 'Alī (A).

30. 'Alī ibn al-Wāsītī, the author of *'Uyūn al-ḥikam*, compiled a book on *faḍā'il Ahl al-Bayt* in 457/1065, from which al-'Allāmah Bāqir al-Majlisī has quoted in the seventeenth volume of *Bihār al-'anwār*. This book contains the utterances of al-'Imām 'Alī (A).

31. Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Washshā', author of a twenty-volume work *Zuhrat al-Riyād*, in his other work *Zarf wa zurafā'*, has quoted from al-'Imām 'Alī (A).

32. Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Hāshim al-Qummi, one of the earliest Shi'i exegetes of the Quran, has quoted extensively from al-'Imām 'Alī (A).

33. Yazīd ibn 'Abd al-Malik ibn al-Mughīrah ibn Nawfal ibn Ḥarth ibn 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib (d. 167/783) is one of the authorities among narrators of ḥadīth. He narrated in his works the sermons of al-'Imām 'Alī (A). In one of his works entitled *Tuḥfat al-'aḥbāb wa ma'rifat imāmat sayyid ulī al-'albāb*, he has copied in full a sermon of al-'Imām 'Alī (A) that was delivered on the occasion of the assassination of the Third Caliph and al-'Imām 'Alī's taking reins of the caliphate into his hands. This *risālah* is included in a collection of *rasā'il* owned by Imām Yaḥyā of Yaman. At the present it is in the British Museum Library, London.

For many centuries, Shi'i, Sunni, Mu'tazili and other scholars continued their pursuit to trace and collect the sayings and writings of al-'Imām 'Alī (A). The early sources from which al-Raḍī selected the contents of *Nahj al-balāghah* seem to be inexhaustible. Recently some letters of al-'Imām 'Alī (A) were edited and translated into Urdu by a Sunni scholar 'Abd al-Salām of Rāmpūr. All these letters were addressed to different Companions of the Prophet (S), and were published with replies by their addressees. However, *Nahj al-balāghah* remains among all such collections, compiled before and after al-Raḍī, the most outstanding of all due to its philosophical depth, literary excellence, and the penetrating historical insight reflected in its contents. The book has always been a source of enjoyment and inspiration for scholars and thinkers of successive generations irrespective of their faith and creed.

Misconceptions about Nahj al-balāghah and Their Source:

No scholar of Sunni or Shi'i profession questioned genuineness and authenticity of *Nahj al-balāghah* for more than two centuries. The

first person to raise doubts about its attribution to Amir al-Mu'minin was Ibn Khallikān (d. 681/1282), who, without referring to any author or source, made the following remarks about the authorship of *Nahj al-balāghah*:

People have different opinions about the compiler of *Nahj al-balāghah*, a collection of the utterances of al-'Imām 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (A). There is difference as to whether it was compiled by al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā or his brother al-Raḍī. It is also said that it is not at all the composition of 'Alī (A) and that the one who compiled it and attributed it to him made it himself; but Allah knows the truth.⁵⁹

These remarks were made in *Wafayāt al-'a'yān* in connection with the account of the life and work of al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā, al-Raḍī's elder brother. Ibn al-'Athīr al-Jazarī (555-630/1160-1232) in *Mukhtaṣar al-Wafayāt*, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ṣafadī (d. 764/1362) in *al-Wāfi bi al-wafayāt*, al-'Allāmah al-Yāfi'ī (d. 768/1366) in *Mir'āt al-Jinān*, and Ibn al-'Imād in *Shadharāt al-dhahab* were content just to repeat Ibn Khallikān's conjecture without bothering to substantiate it. Al-'Allāmah al-Dhahabī (d. 748/1347) in *Mizān al-'itidāl* was the first person to pick up the audacity to raise the unfounded doubt to a degree of certainty a century after Ibn Khallikān. He wrote in his account of al-Murtaḍā:

Al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā, who is accused of fabricating *Nahj al-balāghah*, was a scholar of considerable knowledge. Whosoever sees his book *Nahj al-balāghah* would come to believe that it was falsely attributed to Amir al-Mu'minin (A), because it contains open abuse rather than downgrading of the two caliphs, Abū Bakr and 'Umar. Contradictions and mean matters have also crept into it, which do not conform with the spirit of the Companions of the Quraysh and our knowledge of the later Companions. One is convinced that the major part of this book is forged and unauthentic.⁶⁰

Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī (d. 748/1347) repeated al-Dhahabī's objections without bothering to probe deeper into the matter.

The most interesting and at the same time the weakest part of the objections concerns ascription of the authorship of *Nahj al-balāghah* to al-Murtaḍā. The objectors belonged to the Umayyad West and had deep prejudices against Shi'ī scholars, and perhaps under the impact of Umayyad propaganda their prejudice was so deep-rooted that even their scholarship could not rise above it. Among the four contemporaries of al-Raḍī and al-Murtaḍā, three, that is, al-Tha'ālibī, al-Najāshī (d. 450/1058), and al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī (d. 463/1071) have given accounts of both the brothers. Al-Shaykh al-Ṭūsī did not give any account of al-Raḍī in *al-Fihrist* or *al-Rijāl*, but he did not count *Nahj al-balāghah* among the works of al-Murtaḍā, which dispel any conjecture attributing its authorship to him, because al-Ṭūsī was very close to him as his

student. Al-Tha'ālibī and al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī did not mention *Nahj al-balāghah* either in the account of al-Murtaḍā or that of al-Raḍī. Al-Najāshī in unambiguous terms attributed *Nahj al-balāghah* to al-Raḍī. Al-Ṭūsī's exclusion of *Nahj al-balāghah* from the works of al-Murtaḍā, and al-Najāshī's mention of it among the works of al-Raḍī are sufficient to prove that it was without any doubt a work of al-Raḍī.⁶¹ The objectors, who could not even determine authorship of the book exactly, depended on nothing but their whim to raise doubts about its authenticity.

A more convincing proof of al-Raḍī's authorship of *Nahj al-balāghah* can be found in his own other works in which he has mentioned it. Those books are the following:

1. *Khaṣā'is al-'A'immaḥ*: A manuscript of this work of al-Raḍī is in Riḍā Library Rāmpūr (India), which reveals that Faḍl Allāh ibn 'Alī al-Ḥusayn al-Rāwandī (d. 555/1160) accepted *Khaṣā'is* as al-Raḍī's work. In this book, as quoted above, al-Raḍī has mentioned his intention of compiling *Nahj al-balāghah*.⁶²

2. *Ḥaqā'iq al-tanzīl*: Only the fifth part of this book is accessible to us. Its authorship is unanimously attributed to al-Raḍī. On page 167 of this book al-Raḍī makes this remark:

Anybody who needs a proof of our claim should refer to our book *Nahj al-balāghah* and think upon its contents. We have compiled all forms and genres of the utterances of Amir al-Mu'minin (A) in this book, which comprises sermons, letters, aphorisms, and admonitions, and is divided into three independent parts, each containing a specific genre.⁶³

3. *Majāzāt al-'āthār al-Nabawiyyah*: Al-Najāshī and others have included this book among al-Raḍī's works. At two places in this book al-Raḍī has referred to *Nahj al-balāghah* as a work of his own compilation.⁶⁴

It is important to note that even Ibn Khallikān, al-Dhahabī and Ibn Ḥajar did not question the authenticity of the attribution of *Nahj al-balāghah* in its entirety to 'Alī (A). They were mainly skeptical of those parts which were critical of the Caliphs Abū Bakr and 'Umar. But if we find such utterances and writings of Amir al-Mu'minin (A) in both Shī'ī and non-Shī'ī sources earlier than *Nahj al-balāghah*, baselessness of al-Dhahabī's and Ibn Ḥajar's objections can be conclusively proved. Let us again refer to *Istinād-e Nahj al-balāghah* by 'Arshī, a contemporary Sunni scholar of India. With respect to the harshest of the sermons concerning the issue of the caliphate, known as *al-Khuṭbat al-Shiqshiqiyyah*, 'Arshī refers to the following early sources in which the sermon had occurred:⁶⁵

1. Abū Ja'far Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Khālid al-Barqī (d. 274/

887) has quoted it in full in *al-Mahāsin wa al-'ādāb*.

2. Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad al-Thaqafī al-Kūfī (d. 283/896) quoted it in *al-Ghārāt*.

In his notes on *al-Ghārāt*, Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥaddith, quoting Imtiyāz 'Alī Khān 'Arshī, says that this *khuṭbah* is not found in it; even Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd and al-'Allāmah Muḥammad Bāqir al-Majlisī (1037-1110 or 1111/1627-1698 or 99) did not refer to *al-Ghārāt* as an early source of this sermon.⁶⁶

3. Abū 'Alī Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb al-Jubbā'ī al-Baṣrī al-Mu'tazilī (d. 303/915-16) narrated it.

4. Abū Ja'far Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Qubbah al-Rāzī (a teacher of al-Mufīd and a pupil of Abū al-Qāsim al-Balkhī, a Mu'tazilī in his youth) quoted it in *al-'Inṣāf*.

5. Abū al-Qāsim 'Abd Allāh ibn Aḥmad ibn Maḥmūd al-Ka'bi al-Balkhī al-Mu'tazilī (d. 319/931) in *al-'Inṣāf*.

6. Abū Ja'far Muḥammad ibn 'Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn Mūsā ibn Bābawayh al-Qummi, known as al-Shaykh al-Ṣadūq (d. 318/930), has quoted it in two of his books: *'Ilal al-sharāyi'* and *Ma'āni al-'akhbār*.

7. Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn al-Nu'mān, known as al-Shaykh al-Mufīd (d. 413/1022) in *Kitāb al-'irshād*.

8. Shaykh al-Ṭā'ifah Abū Ja'far Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Ṭūsī (d. 460/1068) in *al-'Amālī*.

'Arshī adds that al-Shaykh al-Ṣadūq has narrated this *khuṭbah* on the authority of two different chains of narrators:⁶⁷

(a) "Narrated to us Muḥammad ibn 'Alī Mājalawayh from his uncle Muḥammad ibn al-Qāsim, he from Aḥmad ibn 'Abd Allāh al-Barqī, he from his father, he from Ibn Abī 'Umayr, he from Abān ibn 'Uthmān, he from 'Abān ibn Taghlib, he from 'Ikrimah, he from 'Abd Allāh ibn al-'Abbās."

(*'Ilal al-sharāyi'* and *Ma'āni al-'akhbār*)

(b) "Narrated to us Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Ishāq al-Ṭāliqānī, from 'Abd al-'Aziz ibn Yaḥyā al-Jallūdī, from Abū 'Abd Allāh Aḥmad ibn 'Ammār ibn Khālid, from Yaḥyā ibn 'Abd al-Ḥamid al-Ḥammānī, from 'Isā ibn Rāshid, from 'Alī ibn Khuzaymah, from 'Ikrimah, from Ibn al-'Abbās." (*Ma'āni al-'akhbār*)

Al-Sayyid al-Raḍī has not quoted the entire chain of narrators, and was content to remark that the sermon was popularly known as '*al-Shiqshiqiyyah*', while his teacher al-Mufīd narrates both the chain of narrators and the story behind its narration. This is indicative of the fact that this sermon was so famous in those days that al-Raḍī did not find it necessary to prove its veracity by quoting the chain of its narrators. Surprisingly, the same famous sermon was used by his and 'Alī's opponents to question his veracity and to malign him by accusing him and/or his brother of forging it. The kind of criticism Ibn Khallikān

and his followers dabbled in not only discredits them as researchers but also makes their other works suspicious in the eyes of impartial and objective students of history. Those who could not find any of the above-mentioned books to cross-check the veracity of *Nahj al-balāghah* had failed miserably even in determining correctly its authorship.

Al-Shaykh al-Mufīd has collected a number of 'Alī's speeches in *al-'Irshād* concerning the issue of the succession to the Prophet (S) and 'Alī's criticism of the ways and means adopted by his opponents to deprive him of the caliphate. The famous *khuṭbah* known as *al-Shiqshiqiyyah* begins with the following preface:

(A group of traditionists report by a variety of chains of authority (*ṭuruq*) on the authority of Ibn al-'Abbās, who said:)

I [i.e. Ibn al-'Abbās] was with the Commander of the Faithful at al-Raḥabah. I mentioned the [matter of] caliphate and those who had preceded him. He breathed heavily and said:

"By God, Ibn Abī Quḥāfah took on...."⁶⁸

This *khuṭbah* ends with the following words:

... Then you would have found that your world is more insignificant in my eyes than a goat's snot.⁶⁹

At this point 'Alī's speech was interrupted by a man from Kūfah. Ibn al-'Abbās, after narrating the text of the speech, adds:

I have never regretted anything nor felt such distress like the distress I felt at losing the rest of the speech of the Commander of the Faithful, peace be on him. When he finished reading the letter, I said: "Commander of the Faithful, would you continue your speech from the point which you reached?"

He answered: "In no way, in no way. It was like foam on the camel's mouth (*shiqshiqah*) as it opens its mouth to bellow and then falls silent."⁷⁰

Apart from *al-'Irshād* this *khuṭbah*, as claimed by 'Arshī, is found in other sources also. In no way can it be dubbed as al-Raḍī's or al-Murtaḍā's fabrication. Sayyid Hibat al-Dīn al-Shahristānī, in *Mā huwa Nahj al-balāghah*, has quoted different versions of *al-Khuṭbat al-Shiqshiqiyyah* from: *Nathr al-durar wa nuzhat al-'adab* by the vizier Abū Sa'īd al-'Ābī; *al-'Irshād* by al-Shaykh al-Mufīd; *al-Maḥāsin wa al-'ādāb* by al-Barqī; al-Ṣadūq in *Ṭal al-sharāyī*; and a book of al-Jallūdi.⁷¹ All the versions have minor differences, which indicate that the source from which al-Raḍī quoted this sermon was other than these four. After enumerating the earlier works containing this *khuṭbah*, Hibat al-Dīn al-Shahristānī points out that Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, one of the compilers of *al-Khuṭbat al-Shiqshiqiyyah*, was a follower of the Banū Umayyah and a staunch admirer of the third caliph 'Uthmān ibn

'Affān. Much earlier than Ibn Khallikān made his remark questioning the authenticity of the attribution of *Nahj al-balāghah*, certain doubts had come to circulate as indicated by Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd al-Mu'tazili (d. 655/1257), who referred to a discussion concerning the attribution of *al-Khuṭbat al-Shiqshiqiyyah* with his teacher Abū al-Khayr Muṣaddiq ibn Shabīb [*sic.* Shayb] al-Wāsiṭi (d. 605/1208), who said:

I read this *khuṭbah* in the presence of Abū Muḥammad 'Abd Allāh ibn Aḥmad, known as Ibn al-Khashshāb (493-567/1099-1172)... and asked him if he considered this *khuṭbah* to be a forged one and not of 'Alī (A). Ibn al-Khashshāb said: "By God, I am convinced that it is from 'Alī and I am as sure of it as I am convinced of your truthfulness." Al-Wāsiṭi said to Ibn al-Khashshāb: "A group is of the view that this *khuṭbah* was fabricated by al-Raḍī, may God be pleased with him." Ibn al-Khashshāb said: "Is it not beyond the eloquence of al-Raḍī or any other? How could he speak from such a high level of spirituality in such a (forceful) style? We are well acquainted with al-Raḍī's writings, his style and his technique. I have assessed both his poetry and prose; these words as compared to those of al-Raḍī are so different that there is no question of confusing them with his writings." He further said: "By God, I have read this sermon in books written two hundred years before the birth of al-Raḍī. Yes, of course, I have seen it written in many books. I can identify this *khuṭbah* very well and know that which of the 'ulamā' and men of letters quoted it (in his work) much before al-Raḍī's father was born."⁷² (*Sharḥ Nahj al-balāghah*, vol. I)

On another occasion, in his *Sharḥ Nahj al-balāghah*, Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd writes:

A group of blind followers of their own whims and wishes is of the opinion that the best part of *Nahj al-balāghah* is fabricated and forged by a group of Shī'i writers and is something new. Most of them consider a part of it to be the product of al-Raḍī's pen or of others. But this group consists of prejudiced people, whose heart's vision is blocked by partiality and who have deviated from the right and straight path of truth; they have strayed from truth due to perversion, lack of knowledge, and unfamiliarity with literature and poetry. (vol. I, p. 543)⁷³

At another place he writes about the words of Amīr al-Mu'minin (A):

His eloquence is such that he is the leader of the eloquent and the guide and master of orators. It is said about his utterances that his words are below the Word of the Creator only, but over and above the words of all creatures; and from him the world has learnt the art of speech and rhetoric.⁷⁴

There were people in the age of al-Raḍī himself whose hearts and eyes were sealed in such a manner that they attributed some of 'Alī's utterances to Mu'āwiyah. Al-Raḍī's commentary on the following *khuṭbah* is important:⁷⁵

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، إِنَّا قَدْ أَصْبَحْنَا فِي ذَهْرِ عُنُودٍ، وَزَمَنِ كُنُودٍ، يُعَدُّ فِيهِ الْمُحْسِنُ مُسِيئًا، وَيَزْدَادُ الظَّالِمُ فِيهِ عُتُورًا، لَا نَنْتَفِعُ بِمَا عَلِمْنَا، وَلَا نَسْأَلُ عَمَّا جَهِلْنَا، وَلَا نَتَخَوَّفُ قَارِعَةً حَتَّى تَحُلَّ بِنَا.

His comments are as follows:

People with no ability to understand literature ascribe it to Mu'āwiyah, whereas these are undoubtedly the words of Amir al-Mu'minin. How can dirt compare with pure gold?... 'Amr ibn Baḥr al-Jāḥiẓ, a critic gifted with insight and a distinct sensibility, has probed the matter minutely. He has included this *khuṭbah* in *al-Bayān wa al-tabayīn*, and has mentioned those who attributed it to Mu'āwiyah. Subsequently he says: "This speech is very much like the speeches of 'Alī (A) and is in conformity with the great man's classification of people, and it also corresponds with his manner of depicting the people's modes of behaving in anger, under oppression and waywardness, and in the state of dissimulation and fear."⁷⁶

Similarly, al-Raḍī refers to his sources on a number of occasions, and also gives an account of the circumstances that were responsible for the mood and theme of a certain sermon. He has referred to: al-Jāḥiẓ; al-Wāqidi; Abū Ja'far al-'Iskāfi; Hishām ibn al-Kalbī; Sa'id ibn Yaḥyā al-'Umawī, the author of *al-Maghāzī*; Abū 'Ubayd al-Qāsim ibn Salām; al-Ṭabarī; Tha'lab; Ibn al-'A'rābī; al-Mubarrad, and many others. How could an author who allegedly forged the utterances and writings of Amir al-Mu'minin (A) be so honest in acknowledging his indebtedness to his predecessors?

Those who raised doubts about the contents of *Nahj al-balāghah* were unaware of the high status and prestige of its compiler, both in the society and in the academic circles. A man of his eminence could not even think of fabricating sermons and letters in the name of al-'Imām 'Alī (A). Had any such attempt been made by anybody, Shī'ī scholars themselves would have been the first to reject it, as an anthology of poetry attributed to al-'Imām 'Alī (A) (*Dīwān-e 'Alī*) was never accepted by the majority of Shī'ī scholars as authentic. Some other such works, for example, the commentary on the Quran attributed to al-'Imām al-Ḥasan al-'Askari (A) or *Fiqh al-Riḍā* attributed to al-'Imām al-Riḍā, are at issue among Shī'ī scholars. But no one among al-Raḍī's contemporaries or from the successive generations of Sunnī or Shī'ī 'ulamā' ever questioned *Nahj al-balāghah*'s authenticity for more than two centuries. Regarding the contents of *Nahj al-balāghah* the Muslim scholars of all shades of opinion never doubted al-Raḍī's veracity. They were aware of the presence of earlier sources of al-'Imām 'Alī's utterances. There is abundant reliable evidence in support of the existence of such collections in the first and second centuries of Hijrah, from which 'Abd al-Ḥamid ibn Yaḥyā, Ibn al-Muqaffa', and Zayd ibn 'Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib had quoted al-'Imām 'Alī's

sermons and letters.

In the third and fourth centuries, too, several collections of 'Ali's *khutab* and *rasā'il* were compiled, some of which have been already referred to above. Ibn Abī al-Hadīd (d. 655 or 656/1257 or 58); Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad, known as Ibn Taymiyyah (661-728/1263-1328); and his pupil Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ṣafadī (d. 764/1362-63) accepted *Nahj al-balāghah* as a genuine collection of al-'Imām 'Ali's words. The former not only wrote one of the most famous commentaries on it, but also repudiated all doubts about its authenticity. Ibn Taymiyyah and al-Ṣafadī were among staunch opponents and critics of the Shī'ah, but both of them verified the authenticity of *Nahj al-balāghah* and the veracity of al-Sharīf al-Raḍī. Al-Ṣafadī, in the account of al-Raḍī, writes:

People are of the view that *Nahj al-balāghah* is his own writing. But I heard my teacher, al-'Imām al-'Allāmah Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn Taymiyyah say: "*Nahj al-balāghah* is not al-Sayyid al-Raḍī's product. What in this book is the utterance of 'Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib (A) is known, and whatever is from al-Raḍī that is also known." (*al-Wāfi bi al-wafayāt*, vol. 2, p. 375)⁷⁷

Instead of going into further details of the controversy about the authenticity of *Nahj al-balāghah*'s ascription and forwarding more evidence against those who created doubts about it, I would recommend the keen reader to consult *al-Mu'jam al-mufahras li alfāz Nahj al-balāghah*, edited by al-Sayyid Kāzīm al-Muḥammadī and al-Shaykh Muḥammad al-Dashtī, who have done a commendable job in preparing a very comprehensive bibliography of the sources of the book along with a detailed item-by-item list of the sources of each and every sermon, letter, and saying contained in *Nahj al-balāghah*. Moreover, since the death of al-Raḍī scholars of eminence have been always interested in writing commentaries on *Nahj al-balāghah*, which is another very strong proof of its authenticity. So many Sunnī, Mu'tazilī, and Shī'ī scholars would not have taken pains to comment upon al-Raḍī's own fabrications.

'Alī Naqī Munzawī, in the catalogue of the library of Mishkāt, donated to Tehran University, has enumerated 33 narrators of al-'Imām 'Ali's utterances before al-Raḍī and fourteen after him till the tenth Hijrah century.⁷⁸ Dānish Pizhoh, in his preface to *Farmān-e Mālik Ashtar*, edited by Ḥusayn 'Alawī Āwī, has given a list of its early commentators.⁷⁹ Sayyid 'Abd al-Zahrā' al-Khaṭīb, in *Maṣādir Nahj al-balāghah wa asāniduh*, has counted thirty-three books written concerning the sources of *Nahj al-balāghah*.⁸⁰ Hundreds of manuscripts of *Nahj al-balāghah* in various libraries of the world and even a greater number of the manuscripts of other earlier works containing al-'Imām 'Ali's utterances invite all seekers of truth to trace the sources and ascertain the authenticity of *Nahj al-balāghah*. There are also numerous

documents available which contain certificates and testimonials issued by eminent scholars to their pupils authorizing them to narrate the contents of *Nahj al-balāghah* along with the permission to narrate aḥādīth of the Prophet (S) and the Imams (A).⁸¹ This is enough to show that *Nahj al-balāghah* has been considered to be of equal value in reliability with the most authentic compendiums of ḥadīth. The narration of *Nahj al-balāghah*'s traditions had started during the lifetime of al-Raḍī. Quṭb al-Dīn al-Rāwandī (d. 573/1177), in the preface of his commentary on *Nahj al-balāghah*, refers to a daughter of al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā, who had studied the book under al-Raḍī himself and was authorized to narrate its traditions to others, and she used to narrate *Nahj al-balāghah* on her uncle's authority. Shaykh 'Abd al-Raḥīm al-Baghdādī has narrated from this learned lady of the family of the Imams (A).⁸²

Contents of Nahj al-Balāghah

Nahj al-balāghah comprises various issues that cover major problems of metaphysics, theology, fiqh, tafsīr, ḥadīth, prophetology, imamate, ethics, social philosophy, history, politics, administration, civics, science, rhetoric, poetry, literature, etc. Most of the discussions about various theological issues and philosophical notions in Islam have their origin in this very book. Similarly, all the controversies regarding socio-political problems in the Muslim society and state left their echo in *Nahj al-balāghah*, or rather those were inspired from the utterances of al-'Imām 'Alī (A). The book not only reflects the spirit of early Islam and the teachings of the Quran and the Prophet (S) in the proper perspective, but also serves as a guide to traverse the future in the light of these teachings. It is a matter of regret that *Nahj al-balāghah* was not properly utilized by the Muslims as a source book of Islamic philosophy, kalām, fiqh, and ethics due to misconceptions about its attribution to al-'Imām 'Alī (A). In the presence of strong and sufficient evidence in support of the contents of the book being authentic, it was sheer prejudice and lack of the spirit of inquiry that was responsible for neglecting such a reliable source of Islamic ideas. In recent times, the Orientalists have spread the unfounded doubts of Ibn Khallikān and al-Dhahabī among Muslim and non-Muslim scholars in the name of objectivity in research, thus giving a respectable appearance to their ignorance, which was, of course, combined and prompted by their motive to alienate the Muslims from their intellectual heritage. I know many a scholar in India and Pakistan questioning the authenticity of *Nahj al-balāghah*'s ascription to Amīr al-Mu'mīnīn using lofty words of research-objectivity with a hefty pose of a dispassionate seeker of truth. None of them, I am sure, ever studied any book about early

sources of the sermons and letters of al-'Imām 'Alī (A), nor did any one of them ever try to gain really objective information about the book. Unfortunately none of them bothered to go through even the valuable research done by Imtiyāz 'Alī Khān 'Arshī, a widely read and respected writer in the literary circles of Urdu in the Subcontinent. It was because of my first-hand knowledge of this pitiable situation that I have intentionally devoted the major part of the present article to the issue of the authenticity of the attribution of the contents of *Nahj al-balāghah*, in the light of earlier sources, to 'Alī (A). Those who insist upon denying the veracity of *Nahj al-balāghah* are either suffering from a malady of deep-rooted prejudice spread through the propaganda of the supporters of Banū Umayyah, or their minds and spirits have been blinded by the propagation of falsehood by the Orientalists under the garb of high-sounding academic jargon. If our minds are cured of this jaundiced perception of our own past, *Nahj al-balāghah* can be paid the attention it deserves and its contents will be studied and its meanings will be fully explored and exploited for a better understanding of Islamic ideals and realities.

A look at the subjects discussed in *Nahj al-balāghah* will be helpful in ascertaining the wide scope of this invaluable treasure of wisdom. So far a few attempts to classify the subject matter of the book have been made, none of which has been comprehensive. A subject-wise index of the contents of *Nahj al-balāghah* has been prepared by 'Alī Anṣāriyān and published in Arabic under the title *al-Dalīl 'alā mawḍū'āt Nahj al-balāghah* in 1395/1975. It was translated and published three years ago in Persian with the sub-title *Nahj al-balāghah mawḍū'ī*. The compiler has divided the contents into eight categories, each dealing with a specific subject further divided into various issues pertaining to the main theme. The main divisions are as follows:

(1) *Ma'rifat Allāh*, (2) *Ma'rifat al-kawn*, (3) *Ma'rifat al-ḥujjah*, (4) *Ma'rifat nizām al-ḥukūmah wa al-mujtama'*, (5) *Ma'rifat al-'ahkām*, (6) *Ma'rifat al-'akhlāq*, (7) *Ma'rifat al-ta'rikh*, and (8) *Ma'rifat al-ma'ād*.

The major issues covered under the main categories can be summarized here:

1. *Ma'rifat Allāh* (knowledge about God)⁸³: The utterances and writings of Amīr al-Mu'minīn on God and His Attributes are divided into eighteen sub-headings in the following manner: (1) *tawḥīd* (the Unity of God); (2) *ṣifāt al-dhāt* (the Attributes of Essence); (3) *'ilm wa ḥikmah* (the Knowledge and Wisdom of God); (4) *'azamah wa qudrah* (Greatness and Power of God); (5) *baṣīr* (Seer); (6) *samī'* (Hearer); (7) *ḥayy* (Living); (8) *mutakallim* (Speaker); (9) *jabarūtiyyah* (Omnipotence); (10) *'adl* (Divine Justice); (11) *nuṣrah wa intiqām* (Help and Vengeance of God); (12) *al-tawakkul 'alayh* (dependence on God); (13) *al-taḥmīd lahu* (Praise to God); (14) *al-'isti'ānah bih* (seeking

assistance from God); (15) *al-razzāq wa al-rizq* (the Provider and the provision), divided into further sub-issues; (16) worship and worshippers, divided into sub-headings dealing with various forms and kinds of worship and worshippers, the worst and the best human beings, and worship of other than God; (17) manifestation of God and the Beatific Vision; (18) *al-qadā' wa al-qadar* (Divine Will and Intention).

2. *Ma'rifat al-kawn* (knowledge of the universe)⁸⁴: (1) heaven and the earth; (2) creation and the properties of living beings—under this topic al-'Imām 'Alī's descriptions of various animals such as the bat, the ant, the peacock and other birds are given; (3) man—various aspects of human nature; (4) angels, their worship and utterances with special reference to Jibra'īl and Mikā'īl; (5) Satan.

3. *Ma'rifat al-ḥujjah* (knowledge about the Proofs of God)⁸⁵: The first part of it is devoted to prophetology; that is, the characteristics and the aims of the prophets, their companions and families, their character, etc.; the next seven sections, from the second to the eighth, deal with the lives of Adam, Abel and Cain, Ṣāliḥ, Moses and Aaron, Banū Isrā'īl, David and Solomon, and Christ; the ninth section is devoted to the life and character of the Prophet Muḥammad (S), spread over 230 pages—further divided into sub-issues to discuss the pre-Islamic Arabs, the Family of the Prophet (S), the main objectives of the prophetic mission, miracles, wives of the Prophet (S), the finality of his prophethood, ḥadīth and the criteria of reliability and grades of authenticity, ḥadīth-interpretation, Companions, *jihād* and the battles of the Prophet, the demise of the Prophet (S) and its consequences; Ahl al-Bayt (A), Fāṭimah (A), al-Ḥasan (A) and al-Ḥusayn (A), Ahl al-Bayt and *zakāt*; the Quran: classification of verses, tafsīr by conjecture (*ra'y*), the role of the Imam in the interpretation of the Quran, the attributes of the Quran, teaching of the Quran, importance of correct understanding of the Quran, *qirā'ah* of the Quran, tafsīr of some verses. Under the life of the Prophet, the meaning and the conditions of Islam are also dealt with, with reference to the characteristics of the Muslims and their dignity. *Īmān* and *mu'min* form the theme of a separate section; at the end, infidelity (*kufr*) and its characteristics are discussed. The tenth issue under *ḥujjah* concerns the caliphate and the Imamate with specific reference to the leadership of Ahl al-Bayt (A) [the Imams of the Family of the Prophet (S)]. The eleventh part deals with the issues related to the oath of allegiance (*bay'ah*). The twelfth part contains the utterances of al-'Imām 'Alī (A) concerning his own Imamate and his own role in the advancement of the cause of Islam; some sections give autobiographical details about the Imam 'Alī's *zuhd*, justice, dress and food habits, humility and courage. The last section of this part is about Amir al-Mu'minin's sayings about al-'Imām al-Mahdī (A), his identity and his appearance.

4. *Ma'rifat nizām al-ḥukūmah wa al-mujtama'* (system of governance and society)⁸⁶: This part deals with the issues of society and politics, and is perhaps the most relevant to present-day Islam and the Muslim world. It spreads over more than four hundred pages. Such an in-depth treatment of the subject is indicative of the Imam's concern for socio-political life of the Ummah. The issues covered are: (1) Justice and oppression: forms of oppression and traits of oppressors; responsibilities of the just Imams; the duty of *al-mu'minūn* vis-a-vis justice and oppression. (2) Right and wrong (*ḥaqq* and *bāṭil*): distinction between right and wrong; criterion of right; reciprocal rights and duties; duty towards God; and mutual duties of parents and children. (3) Semblance of truth. (4) Poverty. (5) People and their kinds: causes of differences and their sources; role of various groups in social changes; people's inner transformation—a prerequisite for reform; role of healthy elements in society; characteristics of evil and anti-social elements in society; people's attitude towards social change. (6) Government and society; this part is divided into twenty-three *fuṣūl* (chapters).

(i) The most fundamental objectives and duties of Islamic government.

(ii) The characteristics of rulers.

(iii) The duties of rulers towards people.

(iv) Ministers and advisers.

(v) People's rights: social classes and their mutual dependence; the responsibilities of the army; and functions of rulers in fulfilling people's rights.

(vi) The Islamic army and choice of commanders.

(vii) The mutual rights of people and rulers.

(viii) Whom to refer to resolve differences?

(ix) Courts of justice and *qādis*.

(x) Officials and functionaries of government, their mode of selection; the ruler's duty towards them.

(xi) Information and intelligence of the State, and military intelligence.

(xii) Taxes, public treasury (*bayt al-māl*), and tax payers: means of levying taxes; protection and guarding of public treasury; heads of expenditure of public funds; equitable distribution of *bayt al-māl*; and problem of misappropriation of *bayt al-māl*.

(xiii) Secretaries and record-keepers of official matters (ministers and high officials).

(xiv) Businessmen and industrialists: administration of economic affairs, and government's supervision of economic matters of the State.

(xv) The oppressed and the deprived sections of society, and ruler's duties towards them.

(xvi) Governors' direct contact with people for listening to their grievances, and people's right to have access to rulers.

(xvii) Governors' personal responsibility in certain matters.

(xviii) Direct supervision by governors and government authorities of current affairs of the State.

(xix) Ruler, his family and relatives.

(xx) Duty of governors vis-a-vis charges levelled against them.

(xxi) Pacts and peace treaties with other States.

(xxii) Guidelines for performance of governors' individual and social functions.

(xxiii) Seeking God's help for being just.

5. *Ma'rifat al-'aḥkām* (religious laws)⁸⁷: This part is divided into eighteen sub-headings. The first section contains the Imam's views about the philosophy of laws. The second and the third sections deal with prayer (*ṣalāt*) and the virtue of congregation prayer, Friday prayer and midnight prayer. The fourth section is devoted to the Imam's sayings about fasting (*ṣawm*). The fifth one comprises Amir al-Mu'minin's interpretation of laws regarding women's obligation in compulsory matters. The remaining chapters deal with the following issues: the sixth about almsgiving (*zakāt*); the seventh about property laws; the eighth about Ḥajj pilgrimage and the Holy Ka'bah; the ninth about *al-'Amr bi al-ma'rūf wa al-nahy 'an al-munkar* (enjoining good and prohibiting evil)—one of the fundamentals of faith (*furū' al-Dīn*) that covers all forms of activities, social, political, economic, as well as individual duties. The tenth and the eleventh chapters deal with laws concerning *jihād*, a term with a very wide range of connotations, but its special meaning covers all forms of struggle against unbelief, which itself embraces various forms of injustice and oppression—denial of God is an atrocity against one's own self. In this section, emphasis is on the laws pertaining to war and military activity; the last two sub-headings deal with martyrdom and martyrs, and peace treaty with enemies. The twelfth chapter is about injunctions regarding the circumstances which necessitate hiding of faith with the purpose of defending individual as well as collective existence of the Muslims (*taqiyyah*). The thirteenth chapter is devoted to the laws of business transactions with special emphasis on usury (*ribā*) and loan. The fourteenth chapter covers laws about adultery (*zinā*). The next four chapters discuss issues involved in theft, murder, dyeing of the hair, and laws concerning human conduct in desperate situations (*aḥkām al-muḍṭarr*).

6. *Ma'rifat al-'akhlāq* (ethical laws)⁸⁸: This is the longest section of the book, spreading over six hundred pages. The first part of this section covers general issues of morality in the following order: (1) reason, its virtue, forms, effects, and functions; limitations of reason and evil consequences of its misuse; (2) contemplation and intellection;

(3) the heart as the inner faculty which is the source of moral virtues and evils; its general condition and relation with other organs of the body; its qualities and means of strength, weakness, hardening, and limitations; (4) knowledge: definition and scope; useful and useless forms of knowledge; relation between knowledge and practice; effects of knowledge; teaching and learning; limitations of human knowledge; (5) theologians and their duties; (6) misguided and misleading 'ulamā'; (7) wisdom and the role of learned persons in society; (8) the world and the Hereafter: salient features of worldly life; comparison and contrast between the world and the Hereafter; temporality of the world and eternity of the Hereafter; relation between the two; purpose of the creation of the world; deception and pride of the world; proper and improper utilization of the world; world-outlook of *awliyā'*, the Prophet of Islam (S), pious persons, and al-'Imām 'Alī (A); man's attitude to the world; (9) capital and its distribution; (10) good and evil.

The second part of ethical discussions deals with moral behaviour and conduct. This is itself divided into ten sections dealing with various modes of conduct: (1) repentance and seeking forgiveness (*tawbah* and *istighfār*); (2) piety (*taqwā*); (3) characteristics of *muttaqūn*; (4) *zuhd*; (5) patience and resignation (*ṣabr*); (6) the tongue, its function and its relation to other organs of the body; tongue-control; (7) friendship and friends: how to choose friends; reliance and dependence on friends; mutual duties of friends; (8) manners and courtesy; (9) forbearance and patience; (10) abstention from self-praise.

Moral vices are discussed under the following: lust and love (in its negative sense); miserliness; extravagance; envy; pride; hypocrisy and hypocrites (*nifāq* and *munāfiqūn*); deceit or self-indulgence (narcissism).

At the end of this section certain moral issues with reference to women are dealt with. The concluding part gives an account of supplication, its need, circumstances and effects, with some of the supplications of al-'Imām 'Alī (A) on different occasions.

7. *Ma'rifat al-ta'rikh* (history)⁸⁹: This section gives us an idea of al-'Imām 'Alī's view of history and historical events, divided into sixteen parts, and each part divided further into many sub-headings provides an intimate picture of the life and times of al-'Imām 'Alī (A), his contemporaries, and the Prophet (S):

(i) Analysis of history: main currents and traditions in history; causes of the rise and fall of nations; and lessons from history.

(ii) Life history of al-'Imām 'Alī (A); glimpses of an autobiographical account of the life of the Imam (A) with reference to his role in the unity of the *Ummah* by foregoing his right and snubbing divisive efforts of some opportunists.

(iii) *Saqīfat Banī Sā'idah*

(iv) Fadak

(v) Al-'Imām 'Alī (A) and the caliphs, Abū Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmān; the Imam's role as an adviser during the period of 'Umar's caliphate; the Shūrā's role in the election of 'Umar's successor; reasons of the Imam's allegiance to 'Uthmān, and the latter's deviations; 'Alī's counsel to 'Uthmān; 'Alī's innocence in the assassination of the third caliph and his stand after the assassination.

(vi) The caliphate of al-'Imām 'Alī (A): the Imam's reasons for being reluctant to accept the caliphate; people's pressure and insistence; declaration of the Imam's policies and programmes.

(vii) Parties and groups opposing the Imam.

(viii) The Battle of Jamal with special reference to the role of 'A'ishah, Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr; the Imam's attitude during and after the battle towards his opponents (the *Nākithūn*).

(ix) The Battle of Ṣiffīn: the role of the *Qāsiṭūn*; the Imam's reasons for fighting the *Qāsiṭūn*; his attempts to convince the *Qāsiṭūn* about the evil consequences of war.

(x) *Taḥkīm*: the evil of the *taḥkīm* and its roots; the Imam's reasons for rejecting the proposed arbitration; evil and far-reaching consequences of the arbitration.

(xi) The Khawārij: the Khawārij's role and their misleading notions; the Imam's repeated efforts to persuade the Khawārij from fighting before the Battle of Nahrawān; the Imam's anticipation of the fate of the Khawārij.

(xii) The last days of the Imam: the Imam's foreknowledge of his martyrdom; the last sermon; the Imam's words on the dawn of the nineteenth of Ramaḍān before being fatally injured; the last moments of the Imam (A) and his will.

(xiii) Praise and criticism of the Imam's companions: basic traits of the disheartened elements; comparison of the Imam's companions with those of the Prophet (S) and those of Mu'āwiyah; relations between the Imam (A) and his companions; their praise; evil consequences of disobeying the Imam (A).

(xiv) Opponents of the Imam 'Alī's rule and the reasons for their dissent.

(xv) Events of Egypt: the appointment of Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr and its abrogation; the appointment of Mālik al-'Ashtar; the Imam's letter to the people of Egypt; the assassination of Mālik al-'Ashtar; Mālik al-'Ashtar's great qualities; the martyrdom of Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr.

(xvi) Personages: Abū Dharr; al-'Ash'ath ibn Qays; the companions of al-Madā'in; Umru' al-Qays; Anas ibn Mālik; al-Burj ibn Mushir al-Ṭā'i; Banū Umayyah and their disruptive role in Islam; Ḥamzah and Ja'far al-Ṭayyār; Khabbāb ibn al-'Arat; Khadijah; Sa'id ibn Mālik; Sa'id ibn

Namrān; Abū Sufyān; Ṣaṣa'ah ibn Ṣawḥān; 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ; the Quraysh, their tribal background and their opposition to the Imam, and the Imam's attitude towards the Quraysh; Kumayl ibn Ziyād al-Nakha'i; Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam; Maṣqalah ibn Ḥubayrah; Mu'āwiyah ibn Abī Sufyān and the Imam's correspondence with him; al-Mughirah ibn Akhnas and al-Mughirah ibn Shu'bah.

(xvii) The Imam's historical and eschatological foresight: conditions of the last days of the world; destiny of Baṣrah and Kūfah; destiny of the Arabs; duties and responsibilities of the faithful (*mu'minūn*) in the last days.

8. *Ma'rifat al-Ma'ād* (Resurrection and the Hereafter)⁹⁰: death, its agonies and mysteries; the *mu'min*'s preparedness for death; the Angel of Death; what happens after death?; learning lesson from death and graveyard; the Day of Judgement: proof of Resurrection; symptoms of the Last Day; judgement of human deeds; *Ṣirāt*; human condition on the Day of Judgement; heaven and hell.

The above-quoted index of subjects in *Nahj al-balāghah* reveals a vast span of themes and issues. As it suggests, it can be used as a source and guide in the theory and practice of *ijtihād*. Shi'i 'ulamā' have been using *Nahj al-balāghah* as a guide in the matters of fiqh. How far is *Nahj al-balāghah* dependable and useful as a source book of fiqh? After the four major Shi'i compendiums of ḥadīth *Nahj al-balāghah* stands higher than all other collections of ḥadīth. Besides the traditions of the Prophet (S) this is surely the most authentic guide in theology, morality, fiqh, social administration, political theory and its practice, and many other matters which are vital for Muslim society and are relevant to our own predicament in the modern age.

Nāṣir Makārim Shirāzi, in one of his articles on the role of *Nahj al-balāghah* in fiqh, has discussed the question of the worth of the traditions contained in the book. Can we use these traditions as a secure foundation for deriving the *aḥkām* of fiqh? Do they fulfil the criteria of reliability laid down in *uṣūl al-fiqh*? Does a tradition relating to moral, social and political matters need not fulfil the conditions of *ḥujjiyyah* (proof) as required in the issues of fiqh? His answer is:

Whatever is contained in it regarding the issues of belief is supported by rational and philosophical arguments. And it ought to have been so; for, the principles of belief are established conclusively only through this method. They cannot be proved on the basis of a single tradition. This principle is applicable to most of the guidelines concerning politics and society. Therefore, dependence on tradition in such matters is not required (in the presence of rational arguments). In the sphere of moral problems, also, dependence on tradition is not of fundamental importance; because the fundamentals of morality are self-evident and are in harmony with nature. The role of a moral guide is to ingrain these principles in the souls of his followers, and to stimulate them to move in their direction; such a job does not depend on any

authority. Especially in moral matters that do not fall under the categories of the obligatory (*wājib*) and the prohibited (*ḥarām*), but come in the jurisdiction of the desirable (*mustaḥabb*), the application of this criterion is obvious; for they can be accepted on the well-known principle of *al-tasāmuḥ* 'an *adillat al-sunan*, that is non-essentiality of citing textual evidence for *mustaḥabbāt*, often practised by the authorities in *uṣūl*.

But in legal matters (*masā'il al-fiqh*) in general, and in matters of worship, *wājib* and *ḥarām* in particular, one is bound to refer to an authentic tradition. In such matters howsoever strong an argument may be, it will not stand on its own in the absence of a tradition. Though the importance of authority is not denied in other matters too, its vital role in the matters of *fiqh* is undeniable.

1) ... It is a matter of regret that al-Sayyid al-Raḍī, the compiler of *Nahj al-balāghah*, has not paid due attention to support most of the sermons, letters and stray sayings with *asnād*, the chain of narrators. As a result, *Nahj al-balāghah* comes down to us in the form of *ḥadīth mursal*.

However, we have access to many an early source of these traditions to prove their authenticity through chain of reliable narrators, and most probably al-Raḍī didn't pay attention to furnish their *asnād* due to their well-known availability in other sources. Or he had other stronger reasons for avoiding reference to *asnād*. He might have considered their contents to be above any doubt.

(2) Another means of proving the reliability of a tradition is its compatibility with the Quran.... We apply this criterion with regard to the traditions of the Infallible Imams (A). Employment of this method in the case of *Nahj al-balāghah* is of much value.

(3) The third way to ascertain the authority of a tradition is its fame and general acceptability among the 'ulamā'. If we accede to this criterion, *Nahj al-balāghah* is at the zenith of fame and is greatly respected by scholars of eminence, who support their ideas with quotations from this book and refer to its authority in various matters....

(4) Another means of arriving at the target, that is, establishing the authenticity of a tradition or a book, is the spiritual sublimity of its content. What is meant by sublimity of meaning is its higher level of spirituality and inspiration, which implicitly leads us to believe that it can't originate in a fallible mind. This criterion is acceptable to a number of great fuqahā' For instance al-Shaykh al-'A'zam al-'Allāmah al-'Anṣārī, in the *Rasā'il*, accepts a well-known tradition of al-'Imām al-Ḥasan al-'Askarī in the matter of undesirable (*madhmūm*) and desirable (*maṭlūb*) imitation (*taqlīd*).... or Āyatullāh Burūjardī refers to the words of *al-Ṣaḥīfat al-Sajjādiyyah* in the context of Friday prayer. Though *al-Ṣaḥīfat al-Sajjādiyyah* has not reached us through a chain of authorities, sublimity of its content reveals that it could not have been issued from the tongue of an ordinary mortal.⁹¹

On the basis of these various criteria, of which the first one can be applied only with reference to the early sources of the tradition that have occurred in *Nahj al-balāghah*, it is concluded that the book can be justifiably used as an authority in *ijtihādāt*. The writer of the above-mentioned article has furnished a long list of traditions which have been or can be used in *fiqh*.

Nahj al-balāghah is also of great value in construing the Islamic

approach to various issues of vital significance to the present world of Islam.

Commentaries, Translations and Books on Nahj al-Balāghah:

Since the times of al-Raḍī, *Nahj al-balāghah* has been a subject of study and interpretation. As reported earlier al-Sayyid al-Murtadā's daughter used to narrate her uncle's work, and the book had become a subject of study in academic circles. The *Kitāb-nāmeḥ-yi Nahj al-balāghah*, published in 1359 Sham./1980 in Persian from Iran, enlists 370 titles of various commentaries, translations, selections and books dealing with its *madārik* and *maṣādir* (sources) in Arabic, Persian, Urdu, Turkish, English, Gujrati and French. This bibliography cannot be considered to be complete in any way, for it is compiled in Iran and the compiler depended on secondary sources such as *al-Dhari'ah*, *Kākh-e dilāwiz*, *Nuqabā' al-bashar*, etc., as he had no access to the works in other languages, particularly Indian languages. A large number of titles could have been added to this list with some research in the languages unfamiliar to the Persians. A selected bibliography on the basis of this *Kitāb-nāmeḥ* and two other books was compiled and published in *al-Tawḥīd*, vol. II, no. 2.

Here we give a selected list of important commentaries on *Nahj al-balāghah*:

1. *A'lām Nahj al-balāghah* by al-Sayyid 'Alī ibn Nāṣir al-'Alawī, reportedly a contemporary of al-Raḍī. Firstly, this book refers to some other commentaries, which means it may not be the first. Secondly, its style is not that of the fifth century and the book may belong to a later period.

2. *Ma'ārij Nahj al-balāghah* by Shaykh Abū al-Ḥasan Abū al-Qāsim Zayd ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Alī al-Bayhaqī al-Nishābūrī, popularly known as Farīd-e Khurāsān (d. 565/1169). This *sharḥ* is supposed to be based on the copy of *Nahj al-balāghah* that was approved by al-Raḍī himself.

3. *Ḥadā'iq al-ḥaqā'iq: al-'iṣbāḥ fī Sharḥ Nahj al-balāghah* by Abū al-Ḥasan Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Bayhaqī al-Nishābūrī, known as Quṭb al-Dīn al-Kundarī, compiled in 576/1180. Its one manuscript is in Madrasah-ye Fādiliyyah, Mashhad.

4 and 5. *Al-Ma'ārij fī Sharḥ Nahj al-balāghah* (also called *al-Mi'rāj*) and *Minhāj al-barā'ah* (written in 556/1170) by Quṭb al-Dīn al-Rāwandī (d. 573/1177).

6. An incomplete commentary by Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (543 or 44-606/1149-50-1209), mentioned in *Ta'rikh al-ḥukamā'* by Jamāl al-Dīn al-Qiftī.

7. A commentary attributed to 'Abd al-Jabbār al-Mu'tazilī, and also three other scholars contemporary of al-Shaykh al-Ṭūsī (385-460/

995-1067-68)

8. *Sharḥ* by Diyā' al-Dīn Abū al-Riḍā Faḍl Allāh ibn 'Alī al-Rāwandī (d. after 458/1065-66).

9. *Sharḥ 'Izz al-Dīn ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd al-Mu'tazilī* (d. 656/1258). This is the most famous commentary on which several commentaries have been written. This has been translated into Persian, French and most probably in Urdu. Its selection *Ilṭiqāt al-durar al-nukhab* was compiled in 1283/1866-67. Commentaries written on it number at least fifteen, among the authors of which are such eminent names as Aḥmad ibn Ṭāwūs (d. 637/1239), Sayyid Hāshim al-Baḥrānī (d. 1107/1695-96), Shaykh Yūsuf al-Baḥrānī (1186/1772-3), Shaykh Muḥsin Karīm, 'Abd al-Ḥusayn ibn Mūsā, Maḥmūd Mallāḥ and others. Critiques of his commentary were mainly directed against his position regarding the caliphate. Though Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd recognized *al-Khuṭbat al-Shiqshiqiyyah* as genuinely attributed to al-'Imām 'Alī (A), he, however, tried to interpret it in accordance with Sunnī belief in the legitimacy of *al-Khilāfat al-Rāshidah*.

10. *Al-Sharḥ al-kabīr* by Ibn al-Maytham al-Baḥrānī (d. 679/1280). Ibn al-Maytham wrote other commentaries on the book also, viz. *Miṣbāḥ al-sālikīn* and its abridgement *Mukhtaṣar Miṣbāḥ al-sālikīn*, and *Minhāj al-'ārifīn*, a commentary on *Mi'at kalimah li-'Amīr al-Mu'minīn* by al-Jāhiz.

11. *Al-Dībāj al-mudī' fī sharḥ Nahj al-balāghah li al-Raḍī* by Imām al-Mu'ayyad bi Allāh Yaḥyā ibn Ḥamzah al-'Alawī al-Yamanī (d. 749/1348-9) which deals with the difficult words occurring in *Nahj al-balāghah*.

12. *Mulḥaq Nahj al-balāghah*, a commentary written around the beginning of the eighth/fourteenth century by Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyā, a manuscript of which copied in 729/1328-29 is in the Kitābkhāneh-yi Āstāneh-yi Quds Riḍawī, Mashhad.

13. *Sharḥ al-nafā'is* by an unknown Sunnī author written in 759/1357-58 available in the Kitābkhāneh-yi Āstāneh-yi Quds Riḍawī, Mashhad.

14. *Sharḥ* by Kamāl al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-'Atā'iqī al-Ḥillī compiled in 770/1368-69.

15. *Minhāj al-faṣāḥah* by Kamāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn ibn Khwājah Sharaf al-Dīn 'Abd al-Ḥaqq al-'Ardebilī Ilāhī (d. 950/1543-44).

16. *Minhāj al-wilāyah* by Mullā 'Abd al-Bāqī al-Ṣūfī al-Tabrizī al-Khaṭṭāt, known as Dānishmand (d. 1039/1629-30).

17. *Sharḥ* by Abū Ṭālib Tāj al-Dīn 'Alī ibn Anjab, known as Ibn Sa'id (d. 674/1275-6).

18. *Sharḥ* by al-Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Ṣāffāti (d. 650/1252-3).

19. *Al-Tuḥfat al-'Aliyyah fī sharḥ Nahj al-balāghat al-Ḥaydariyyah*

by Muḥammad ibn Ḥabīb Allāh, grandson of Khalifah Sulṭān, compiled in 881/1476.

20. *Al-Mawāhib al-'Ilāhiyyah* by al-Sayyid Afṣah al-Din Muḥammad al-Shirāzī (the 9th century H.).

In later centuries, numerous commentaries were written in Arabic and Persian, details of which can be found in the *Kitābnāmeḥ-yi Nahj al-balāghah* and *al-Tawḥīd* (English), vol. II, no. 2. In addition to these several other works were compiled with regard to the sources of the contents of *Nahj al-balāghah* in Arabic, Urdu and Persian, among which the following can be mentioned here:

Persian:

1. Ridā Ustādī, *Baḥthī kūtāh pīrāmūn-e Nahj al-balāghah wa madārik-e ān* (1396/1976).
2. *Kitābnāmeḥ-yi Nahj al-balāghah* by the above-mentioned author (1359 Sham./ 1980).
3. *Barrasī-yi Nahj al-balāghah wa asnād-e ān* by Sayyid Jawād Muṣṭafawī.
4. *Pizhūhishī dar asnād wa madārik-e Nahj al-balāghah* by Sayyid Muḥammad Ja'fari (1356 Sham./ 1977).

Arabic:

1. *Mustatrafāt Nahj al-balāghah* by Shaykh Fakhr al-Dīn al-Ṭurayḥī (d. 1085/1674).
2. *Maṣādir Nahj al-balāghah* by 'Abd al-Zahrā' al-Ḥusaynī al-Khaṭīb, in four volumes (1386/1966-67).
3. *Madārik Nahj al-balāghah* by al-Shaykh Hādī Kāshif al-Ghiṭā' (d. 1361/1942), printed in 1354/1935.
4. *Madārik Nahj al-balāghah* by al-Shaykh 'Abd Allāh Ni'mah, published from Beirut.
5. *Mustadrak Nahj al-balāghah* by Shaykh Kāshif al-Ghiṭā', printed in 1354/1935.
6. *Maṣādir Nahj al-balāghah* by Hibat al-Dīn al-Shahristānī (1301-1386/1883-84-1966-67),
7. *Mā huwa Nahj al-balāghah* by al-Sayyid Hibat al-Dīn al-Shahristānī, compiled in 1352/1933-34 and printed the same year. Also translated into Persian and published twice.

A number of translations and commentaries on the Imam's letter to Mālik al-'Ashtar have been written in Persian which number around fifty, of which some were in verse. The authors of some of these *shurūḥ* are persons of eminence like Mullā Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Rawghani, Muḥammad Ḥusayn Furūghī Dhakā' al-Mulk (d. 1325/1907-08), Mirzā

Muḥammad ‘Alī Furūghī (1257-1321 Sham./ 1878-1942), Aḥmad ibn Ḥāfiẓ Qatīl Kirmānī, known as Adīb (d. 1329/1911), Sharīf al-‘Āmīlī, and al-‘Allāmah al-Majlisī (d. 1111/1699-1700). The complete text of *Nahj al-balāghah* was also translated in verse many a time. In Arabic, too, the letter to Mālik al-‘Ashtar was commented upon by numerous scholars. *Al-Khuṭbat al-Shiqshiqiyyah* had been also attracting the attention of Arab commentators and Persian translators. *Nahj al-balāghah*’s Persian translations started to appear much earlier than the Ṣafawids came to power. Ḥusayn ibn Sharaf al-Dīn Ardebīlī, a contemporary of Shāh Ismā‘īl Ṣafawī, translated *Nahj al-balāghah* which was published in 1355/1936-37 with the Arabic text. Among the popular Persian translations we can name the ones by Sayyid ‘Alī Naqī Fayḍ al-‘Islām, Jawād Fāḍil, and Asad Allāh Mubashshirī. Among the early translations one was done by Niẓām al-Dīn ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥasan al-Gīlānī, which was completed in 1036/1626-27. The earliest Persian translation is by Mullā Faṭḥ Allāh al-Kāshānī (d. 988/1580-81) under the title *Tanbīh al-ghāfilīn*, a third printing of which came out of the press in 1313/1895-96. A popular revolutionary leader and scholar Āyatullāh Sayyid Maḥmūd Tāliqānī (d. 1399/1979) also translated *Nahj al-balāghah* and published it with his commentary in 1326 Sham./ 1947.

In Urdu six translations of *Nahj al-balāghah* have appeared so far: *al-‘Ishā‘ah* by Sayyid Awlād Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad Ḥasan Amrūhawī (d. 1338/1919-20), *Nayrang-e faṣāḥat* by Dhākir Ḥusayn Akhtar Dehlawī, and three other translations by Zafar Maḥdī ibn Sayyid Wārith Ḥusayn Jā‘isī, Ra‘īs Aḥmad Ja‘farī (a Sunnī author), and Muftī Ja‘far Ḥusayn. All these translations were accompanied by notes and comments. I‘jāz Ḥusayn Badāyūnī (d. 1350/1931-32) compiled a book to explain difficult words of the book under the name *Hall-e lughāt-e Nahj al-balāghah*. Imtiyāz ‘Alī Khān ‘Arshī’s *Istinād-e Nahj al-balāghah* has already been discussed. Āqā Buzurg al-Tehrānī, in *al-Dharī‘ah ilā taṣānīf al-Shī‘ah*, has referred to another *Tarjumah wa sharḥ* in Urdu by Sayyid ‘Alī Aẓhar Khājwī al-Hindī (d. 1352/1933-34). Sayyid Sibṭ al-Ḥasan al-Hanswī’s work *Minhāj Nahj al-balāghah* is rated among the best of its kind in Urdu. A few years ago Maḥmūd Ḥusayn Qayṣar Amrūhawī published a lengthy article in many parts in an Urdu journal on the sources of *Nahj al-balāghah* and the authenticity of the ascription of its contents to al-‘Imām ‘Alī (A). There are, of course, a number of articles and booklets compiled about *Nahj al-balāghah* in Urdu.

Recently a collection of articles presented at a conference on *Nahj al-balāghah* at Delhi (1985) was edited and published by Maḥdī Nazmī from Delhi. A Gujrāṭī translation was done by Mawlawī Ghulām ‘Alī ibn Ismā‘īl Bhāwnagarī (d. 1367/1947-48), only the first part of

which comprising two hundred pages has been published. Most probably some parts of *Nahj al-balāghah* might have been translated into Kashmiri, Sindhi, Punjābi, Bengāli, Hindī and some other languages. In some language even a complete translation may be available.

Unfortunately, most of the time, Shi'ah 'ulamā' of the Subcontinent are busy with *rawḍehkhwānī* and professional lecturing at ritualistic ceremonies, due to which they hardly find any time for writing useful books about their faith and rendering into their own languages the basic Shi'ah texts. It is the root cause of the paucity of literature on *Nahj al-balāghah* in other Indian languages.

However, some scholars well-versed in English translated *Nahj al-balāghah* into English. One English translation by Sayyid Muḥammad 'Askarī Ja'farī was published first from Karachi, and later it was reprinted in Iran. This translation indicates that the translator depended mostly on Urdu translations of *Nahj al-balāghah*, as his knowledge of Arabic was very meagre. The second translation by Sayyid 'Alī Riḍā is comparatively better. It, too, was reprinted with some additional prefaces and articles in Qum, Iran.

In recent times some good works in Arabic about the compiler of *Nahj al-balāghah* have been published, among which the most comprehensive one is '*Abqariyyat al-Sharīf al-Raḍī*' by Zakī Muḥābarak. So far the best literary appreciation of *Nahj al-balāghah* is George Jurdāq's *Rawā'i' Nahj al-balāghah*, of which two Persian translations have so far appeared: one by Fakhr al-Din Hījāzī under the title *Shigufthā-yi Nahj al-balāghah*, and the other by Muḥammad Riḍā al-'Anṣārī al-Qummi, entitled as *Bakhshī az zībā'ihā-yi Nahj al-balāghah*. The best editions of the Arabic text of *Nahj al-balāghah* have been edited by al-Shaykh Muḥammad 'Abduh and Dr. Ṣubḥī al-Ṣāliḥ. The former's worth is enhanced by short but very useful comments written by 'Abduh, while the latter's utility lies in the indices of the words and themes of the book, each one compiled separately.

In my view all the work done so far in the form of translations, commentaries and analyses of the themes of *Nahj al-balāghah* is just a spadework for the future research. What is required is more profound research in al-'Imām 'Alī's thought with a view to highlight its relevance to Islam in general and our age in particular. The Islamic Republic of Iran is in a position to provide a lead in this direction. The holding of annual seminars should not become merely a ceremonial occasion for international gatherings, but it ought to serve as a proper forum for serious discussions on the ideas contained in *Nahj al-balāghah*, which may be helpful in a better understanding of the Islamic teachings in the light of al-'Imām 'Alī's interpretation of the Quranic world-view.

Concluded; wal-ḥamdu lillāh

NOTES:

31. The list of al-Raḍī's works is given here on the basis of the information gathered by 'Alī Dawānī in *Sayyid Raḍī: mu'allif-e Nahj al-balāghah* (pp. 99-102). Some minor details are added with the help of other books and articles.

32. Muḥammad 'Alawī Muqaddam, *Muqāyaseh-ye Majāz al-Qur'ān Abū 'Ubaydah wa Talkhiṣ al-bayān Sayyid Sharif Raḍī*, (presented at the Sixth Nahj al-balāghah Conference held in Isfand 1364 Sham. at Tehran).

33. 'Alī Dawānī, *op. cit.*, p. 81; cf. *Yatimat al-dahr*, iii, 131.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 81.

35. *Ibid.*, p. 81; cf. *Ta'rikh Baghdād*, ii, 246.

36. *Ibid.*, pp. 81-82.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 83.

38. *Ibid.*, pp. 83-84.

39. *Ibid.*, pp. 84-85; cf. *Lisān al-Mizān*, v, 141.

40. Zaki Mubārak, *'Abqariyyat al-Sharif al-Raḍī*, vol. i; cf. 'Alī Dawānī, *op. cit.*, pp. 41-44.

41. 'Alī Dawānī, *op. cit.*, pp. 43-44.

42. *Ibid.*, p. 44.

43. *Ibid.*, p. 45.

The lectures of Prof. Zaki Mubārak were delivered at Baghdad University during the year 1357/1938, which were later published from Cairo in two volumes under the title *'Abqariyyat al-Sharif al-Raḍī* on the occasion of the Tenth Birth Centenary of al-Raḍī in the year 1359/1940.

44. *'Abqariyyat al-Sharif al-Raḍī*; cf. 'Alī Dawānī, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

45. Ḥannā al-Fākhūrī, *Tārikh-e adabiyyāt-e zabān-e 'Arab*, Persian trans. 'Abd al-Muḥammad Āyati, (Tehran: Intishārāt-e Tūs), p. 282.

46. *Ibid.*, p. 433.

47. *Ibid.*, p. 493.

48. J.M. 'Abd al-Jalīl, *Tārikh-e adabiyyāt-e 'Arab*, Persian trans. Dr. Ādhar-nūsh, (Tehran: Intishārāt-e Amir Kabīr, 1363 Sham.), p. 190.

49. 'Alī Dawānī, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

50. *Nahj al-balāghah*, trans. into English, Sayyid 'Alī Ridā, (Qum, Iran: Centre of Islamic Studies), pp. 113-14.

51. *Ibid.*, p. 115.

52. Imtiyāz 'Alī 'Arshī, *Istinād-e Nahj al-balāghah*, Persian trans. with notes by Sayyid Murtaḍā Āyatullāh Zādeh Shirāzī, (Tehran: 1363, Mu'assasah Intishārāt-e Amir Kabīr), pp. 103-108.

53. Hibat al-Dīn al-Shahristānī, "Mā huwa Nahj al-balāghah (Dar Pirāmūn-e Nahj al-balāghah)", Persian trans. Sayyid 'Abbās Mirzādeh-yi Ahri, *Nahj al-balāghah wa girdāwarandeh-ye ān* (Bunyād-e Nahj al-balāghah, 2nd ed.), p. 316.

54. *Ibid.*, p. 317.

55. These lists are prepared on the basis of the information collected from:

(i) Sayyid al-'ulamā' Sayyid 'Alī Naqī, "Preface to Nahj al-balāghah", English translation of the Urdu preface to Mufti Ja'far Ḥusayn's Urdu trans., *Nahjul Balāghah*, Centre of Islamic Studies, Qum, pp. 80-84.

(ii) 'Arshī, *Istinād-e Nahj al-balāghah*.

(iii) Hibat al-Dīn al-Shahristānī, "Dar Pirāmūn-e Nahj al-balāghah", Persian trans., *Nahj al-balāghah wa girdāwarandeh-ye ān*, pp. 308-11.

(iv) *Al-Mu'jam al-mufahras li alfāz Nahj al-balāghah*, pp. 1374-77.

(v) Ḥannā al-Fākhūrī, *Tārikh-e adabiyyāt-e 'Arab*.

56. Shaykh al-Tā'ifah Abū Ja'far Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Tūsī, *Rijāl al-*

Tūsī, (al-Najaf al-'Ashraf: 1380/1961, Manshūrāt al-maktabah wa al-maṭba'at al-Ḥay-dariyyah), p. 398. Imtiyāz 'Alī Khān 'Arshī, *Istinād-e Nahj al-balāghah*, pp. 143-44.

57. Sayyid 'Alī Naqī, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

58. 'Azīz Allāh 'Uṭarīdī, "Girdāwarandegān-e sukhanān-e Imām Amīr al-Mu'minin qabl az Sharīf Raḍī" *Yādnāmeḥ-ye Kungreh-ye hazāreh-ye Nahj al-balāghah* 1401/1360 Sham. (Tehran: Bunyād-e Nahj al-balāghah, 1360 Sham), pp. 291-320.

59. 'Arshī, *Istinād-e Nahj al-balāghah*, p. 18; cf. *Wafayāt al-'a'yān*.

60. *Ibid.*, p. 19; cf. *Mizān al-'i'tidāl*.

61. *Ibid.*, p. 20.

62. *Ibid.*, pp. 21-22.

63. *Ibid.*, pp. 22-23.

64. *Ibid.*, pp. 23-24.

65. *Ibid.*, pp. 37-40.

66. *Ibid.*, p. 38 (ft. notes).

67. *Ibid.*, p. 40.

68. Al-Mufīd, *Al-'Irshād*, (English trans.), *op. cit.*, p. 213.

69 & 70. *Ibid.*, p. 214.

Also refer to *Nahj al-balāghah*, ed. with comments by al-Shaykh Muḥammad 'Abduh, (Dimashq: Sifārat al-Jumhūriyyat al-'Islāmiyyah al-'Irāniyyah), pp. 84-91. In this edition, besides al-Shaykh Muḥammad 'Abduh's *muqaddamah*, there are introductions and articles by 'Abbās al-'Aqqād (pp. 43-66) and 'Abduh Hasan al-Zayyāt (pp. 23-41).

71. Sayyid Hibat al-Dīn al-Shahristānī, "Dar Pīrāmūn-e Nahj al-balāghah", *Nahj al-balāghah wa gird āwarandeh-ye ān*, pp. 297-307.

72. *Ibid.*, pp. 308-9; *Istinād-e Nahj al-balāghah*, pp. 17-18.

73. *Istinād-e Nahj al-balāghah*, p. 18.

74. *Nahjul Balāghah* (English trans., Qum) introduction by Sayyid 'Alī Naqī, p. 93; cf. *Sharḥ Nahj al-balāghah* by Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd.

75. *Nahj al-balāghah*, ed. Sh. 'Abduh, pp. 131-33.

76. *Ibid.*, pp. 133-34.

77. Hibat al-Dīn al-Shahristānī, "Dar Pīrāmūn-e Nahj al-balāghah", *Nahj al-balāghah wa girdāwarandeh-ye ān*, p. 117.

78. *Istinād-e Nahj al-balāghah*, p.13 (ft. note2).

79. Husayn 'Alawī Āwī, *Farmān-e Mālik Ashtar*, introd. Dānishpizhūh (Tehran: Bunyād-e Nahj al-balāghah, 1359).

80. Sayyid 'Abd al-Zahrā' al-Husaynī al-Khaṭīb, *Maṣādir Nahj al-balāghah wa asāniduh*, (Beirut: 1395 H.), vol. I, pp. 202, 255, 273.

81. *Istinād-e Nahj al-balāghah*, "Pishguftār" by translator, p. 11.

82. *Nahj al-balāghah wa girdāwarandeh-ye ān*, pp. 34 and 128.

83. 'Alī Anṣāriyān, *al-Dalīl 'alā mawḍū'āt Nahj al-balāghah*, Persian trans. Ismā'īl Tājbaksh, (Tehran: Intishārāt-e Yāsir, 1403/1983), pp. 20-213.

84. *Ibid.*, pp. 214-303.

85. *Ibid.*, pp. 304-749.

86. *Ibid.*, pp. 750-977.

87. *Ibid.*, pp. 978-1131.

88. *Ibid.*, pp. 1132-1731.

89. *Ibid.*, pp. 1732-2100.

90. *Ibid.*, pp. 2101-2217.

91. Nāṣir Makārim Shīrāzī, *Naqsh-e Nahj al-balāghah dar fiqh-e Islāmi*, (presented at the Sixth Nahj al-Balāghah Conference held in Isfand 1364 Shamsi at Tehran), pp. 1-2.

Iqbāl, the Poet-Philosopher of Islamic Resurgence*

by Sayyid 'Alī Khāmene'ī

translated from the Persian by Mahliqā Qarā'ī

I should admit candidly that today when I see that our country is holding a seminar for paying tribute to our beloved Iqbāl, I am obliged to feel that this day would prove to be one of the most memorable and exciting days of my life. That luminous spark that washed out from our hearts the darkness of the days of suffocation and repression (through his impressions, poetry, counsel and teachings) and projected a bright picture of the future before our eyes, is now transformed into a bright torch to have attracted the attention of our people.

Our people who were the first foreign addressees of Iqbāl were unfortunately very late to recognize him. The particular conditions in our country, especially the political domination of the colonialist powers during the last years of Iqbāl's life in his favourite country, Iran, never allowed Iqbāl to visit this country. This great poet of Persian language, who composed most of his poetry in Persian and not in his own mother tongue, could never breathe in his dear and desired climes. Not only that Iqbāl never came to Iran, but the same politics with which Iqbāl was at war throughout his life did not allow his ideas, his ideology and his teachings to reach the ears of the Iranian people, who were ever eager to receive his message. I have an answer to this question as to why Iqbāl did not come to Iran.

At that time, when Iqbāl was at the pinnacle of his fame and glory and was known all over the Subcontinent and all the renowned universities of the world recognized him as a great thinker, philosopher, scholar, humanist and sociologist (of course none of these titles corresponded to the title by which Iqbāl desired to be known), in our

* This is a translation of President Sayyid 'Alī Khāmene'ī's speech delivered at the opening session of the First International Conference on Iqbāl, held at Tehran, March 10–12, 1986, on the occasion of the 108th birth anniversary of the poet of the Subcontinent.

country the politicians who ruled the country could not tolerate Iqbāl and his ideas in any way. For this very reason he was never invited to Iran and the ground for his visit to this country was not prepared. Not only were none of his books published for years in Iran, even the titles of his books remained unknown to us. During the days when the literary works and culture alien to both the Iranians and Muslims were flooding this country like a devastating deluge, not a single poem or work of Iqbāl was allowed to catch the public eye. Today the Islamic Republic (i.e. the embodiment of Iqbāl's dream) has been established here. Iqbāl, whose heart ached to see the Muslim people having lost their human and Islamic personality, and who viewed their loss of identity and spiritual poverty as the greatest danger to their existence and tried with all the power at his disposal to uproot this vicious weed from the human soul in general and from the inner being of the people of the East in particular and especially the Muslims, had he been alive today, he could have seen a nation standing on its feet, infused with the rich Islamic spirit and drawing upon the inexhaustible reservoirs of Islamic heritage, a nation which has become self-sufficient and has discarded all the glittering Western ornaments and is marching ahead courageously, determining its own targets and moving to attain them, advancing with the frenzy of a lover, and has not imprisoned itself within the walls of nationalism and racialism. I am glad to have this opportunity (though for a brief time) to introduce to our people this great figure, a great thinker, a great reformer of our age, a revolutionary and an unrelenting warrior. I would, of course, be pleased if my presence in this function be free from all formalities, so that, firstly, I may enjoy with satisfaction this commemorative ceremony and, secondly, I may be given an opportunity to give vent to a fraction of my emotions about Iqbāl before the audience. I request the brothers and sisters to allow me to speak frankly like a person who for years had been a follower of Iqbāl and has lived emotionally in his company, so that to some extent I can give him what is due to him on behalf of myself. Iqbāl is one of the eminent personalities in the history of Islam. His is such a profound and sublime personality that it cannot be described and measured by only one dimension of his life. Iqbāl was a scholar and a philosopher, but at the same time other dimensions of his life are also so bright that if we consider him to be just a philosopher and a scholar, we feel that we have belittled him. Undoubtedly Iqbāl is a great poet and is reckoned among the greatest. Those who know Urdu very well and have written about Iqbāl's Urdu poetry maintain that Iqbāl's Urdu poems are among the best in Urdu. Of course this may not be a great tribute to him as the poetic tradition of Urdu is not so rich. But it cannot be disputed that his Urdu poetry made a great impact on large numbers of people, on Hindus and

Muslims equally, living in the Subcontinent during the early decades of the twentieth century, and motivated them to participate in the struggle (for freedom) that was reaching its climax. In his *mathnawī* (a long poem consisting of rhymed couplets) *Asrār-e khudī* (The Secrets of the Self), he refers to this point:

باغبان، زور کلام آزمود مصرعی کارید و شمشیری درود

*The gardener tested the force of my speech.
He sowed a verse of mine and could reap a sword from it.*

I infer from these lines that he had been composing his Urdu poetry for quite a long time and was known to all Urdu-knowing people of the Subcontinent. But in my view Iqbāl's Persian poetry is to be regarded as one of the miracles of poetry. We have a large number of non-Persian-speaking poets in the history of our literature, but I cannot point out any of them whose poetry possesses the qualities of Iqbāl's Persian poetry. Iqbāl was not acquainted with Persian idiom, as he spoke Urdu at home and talked to his friends in Urdu or English. He did not know the rules of Persian prose writing. A specimen of Iqbāl's Persian prose is available to us in his prefatory note to his *mathnawī*, *Rumūz-e bikhudī* (The Secrets of the Selflessness) and *Asrār-e khudī* (The Secrets of the Self). If you read them you will see that it is hard for the people whose mother tongue is Persian to understand it. Iqbāl never studied Persian at any stage in a school or college during the years of his childhood or youth. In his father's house he used to speak Urdu. Iqbāl chose the Persian language as his medium of literary expression only for the reason that he felt that his ideas and themes could not be effectively expressed in the Urdu language. As such he was attracted towards Persian and he studied the collections of the Persian poets like Sa'dī, Ḥāfiẓ and Mawlawī as well as the Persian poets who wrote in Indian style like 'Urfī, Naẓirī Nishābūrī and others. In spite of not having tasted the Persian way of life, never living in the cradle of Persian culture, and never having any direct association with it, he cast with great mastery the most delicate, the most subtle and radically new philosophical themes into the mould of Persian poetry, some of which are unsurpassable yet. In my view this is what can be explained as his poetic genius. When you compare his poetical works with those of other non-Iranian poets who wrote poetry in Persian, you will realize the greatness of Iqbāl. Some of the ideas that he has expressed with ease in one couplet, if one tries to render them into prose it will take a long time and great deal of effort to do so. It is not an easy job even for us whose mother tongue is Persian.

There can be no better introduction of Iqbāl than his poetry. In

no other way we can introduce Iqbāl more truly. Some of the Persian poems of Iqbāl are the most sublime pieces of Persian poetry. Iqbāl's verses are in different styles, in Indian style, in 'Irāqī style, in Khurāsānī style, and in various poetic forms, like *mathnawī* (poetry composed of distichs corresponding in measure, each consisting of a pair of rhymes), *ghazal* (sonnet), *qaṭ'ah*, *dobaytī* (couplets) and *rubā'ī* (quatrains). Their themes as well as their renderings are sublime; notwithstanding, he did not know how to speak and write Persian (prose), and this needs extraordinary genius. At the same time to commend Iqbāl as a poet is to belittle him, for he was a great reformer and a great freedom fighter as well. Though Iqbāl's position and status as a freedom fighter and social reformer is very high, he cannot be regarded as a mere social reformer either. In the Indian subcontinent several Hindu and Muslim contemporaries of Iqbāl were considered as social reformers, whose works are known and whose participation in the freedom struggle needs no introduction. Among the Muslims themselves there were great personalities like Mawlānā Abū al-Kalām Āzād, Mawlānā Muḥammad 'Alī, Mawlānā Shawkat 'Alī and the late Muḥammad 'Alī Jināh. They also belonged to the same period and to the same generation and were great freedom fighters; but the greatness of Iqbāl's work cannot be compared with any of them. It does not mean in any way to minimize the great importance and value that we attach to Mawlānā Abū al-Kalām Āzād, an eminent figure in his own right, or to Mawlānā Muḥammad 'Alī and Mawlānā Shawkat 'Alī (who were untiring Muslim freedom fighters who struggled for long years to drive out the British from their country), but Iqbāl's case is different from all of them. Iqbāl's problem was not the problem of India in particular, but his concern was for the whole Muslim world in general. In his *mathnawī*, *Pas chī bāyad kard ay aqwām-e Sharq*, he addresses himself to the Eastern nations and it indicates that his keen eyes had an all-inclusive view of the entire Muslim world. He was not concerned with the problems of India alone. Therefore, if I describe Iqbāl as a social reformer, I will fail to cover his entire personality. I cannot find a proper term that can describe him. You can see that his personality, his greatness, his mind rich with ideas and the totality of his being, elude the power of comprehension of people like us. To be true to ourselves we have to confess that we have been far away from Iqbāl. As such this conference is one of the most useful things we have done so far. Even this is not enough. I would ask the honoured Minister of Higher Education and Culture and my brothers in universities to think about the possibilities of establishing foundations in Iqbāl's memory, and to name university halls and cultural centres in our country after Iqbāl. Iqbāl belongs to this nation and this country, and one of his famous poems is dedicated to the people of Iran which begins with the

following verse:

چون چراغ لاله سوزم در خیابان شما ای جوانان عجم، جان من و جان شما

*I am burning like a tulip's lamp on your path,
O youth of Iran, I swear by my own life and yours.*

And he says:

میرسد مردی که زنجیر غلامان بشکند دیده ام از روزن دیوار زندان شما

*The man is coming who shall break the chains of the slaves,
I have seen him through the cracks in the walls of your prison.*

This poem also strengthens my belief as to why Iqbāl could not visit Iran. He considered Iran as a prison and addressed the people living here in the way the prisoners are addressed. There are plenty of poems in Iqbāl's collections which show his dissatisfaction with India—at least the India of his own time. It was for this reason that he turned his attention to Iran so that the flame that was burning inside his heart could be converted into a bright blaze in Iran. He was waiting for a miracle to occur here. This is Iqbāl's due that we owe to him, and we should always remember our indebtedness to him.

If we wish to understand Iqbāl and the significance of his message, it is necessary for us to know the conditions of the Subcontinent during Iqbāl's lifetime—an epoch that culminated in Iqbāl. Without this study we cannot understand the real meaning of Iqbāl's message, the melody of his tone and the inner fire that kept him restless. The Subcontinent went through the hardest phase of its history during Iqbāl's lifetime. Iqbāl was born in 1877, that is, twenty years after the quelling of the Muslims' revolt against the English in 1857, when they inflicted a final blow upon the Islamic rule in the Subcontinent. A great revolutionary upsurge overtook the whole country and continued for several years, but four months (the middle of 1857) marked its culmination. The British used this opportunity for making an assault on Islam, which they were contemplating to make for the last seventy or eighty years, and they imagined to have uprooted Islam from the Indian soil.

They put an end to the Muslim rule that was breathing its last breaths. The only obstacle in their way of the total colonialization of the Indian subcontinent was the existence of the same rule, which they had succeeded in weakening during the course of time. They liquidated its chief fighters and eminent personages in order to eradicate the deep-rooted Islamic civilization and to completely uproot this corpulent and old tree which was shorn of any power of resistance at that time,

and to make India a part of the British empire. The year 1857 was the year of absolute victory for the British in India. After having officially annexed India to Britain and named their country as the Empire of Britain and India, the colonizing of India did not pose any problem, for India was treated henceforward as one of the provinces of the Great Britain. After that they took all possible precautions to crush every revivalist, nationalist or religious movement in that country. Their aim was to wipe out completely the Muslim population, as they knew it well that it were the Muslims who resisted them in India. They already had tested this. The Muslims fought with the English and their mercenaries, the Sikhs, who were serving them since the early nineteenth century. This was known to the English very well and to those who were acquainted with the Indian affairs, who used to tell them that the Muslims were their real enemies in India and that they were to be eliminated. From the year 1857, which was the year of their victory, an extremely oppressive and tyrannical plan was chalked out to suppress the Muslims. If we go into its detail it will take a long time. Many books were written on this subject. The Muslims were subjected to economic pressures as well as to cultural and social discriminations. Collectively they were subjected to the worst kind of humiliations. As regard to the conditions of employment their declared policy was to recruit non-Muslims only.

The *awqāf* (endowments) that ran Islamic institutions and mosques were in large number and they were taken away. The Hindu merchants were motivated to lend money to the Muslims in order to seize their property in return for their debts. It was resolved that their relationship with the land be cut off and their sense of belonging to the land be uprooted.

This process continued for a long time. The Muslims were killed without reason and arrested for no fault of theirs. All such people who were suspected of carrying on any activities against the English were suppressed and eliminated ruthlessly. These conditions prevailed for several years. After one or two decades of this repression, which has no parallel anywhere in the world—not in any of the colonized countries were the people suppressed so severely as the Indian Muslims—ultimately some people began to think about the possible remedy for this situation; but of course the angry resistance against the English was not given up. India should never be forgetful of the fact that the Indian Muslims played the most vital part in the battle against the English. In fact it will be an act of thanklessness on the part of India to forget her indebtedness to the Muslims of India. The Muslims did never sit idle during the freedom struggle as well as during the great revolution that was brought about there.

During the years after the incident of 1857, when there was peace

and calm everywhere, the militant Muslim elements were active in every nook and cranny. There were two courses of action open to them, that is, either the politico-cultural movement, or a purely cultural movement to meet the challenge threatening the position of the Muslims. One of the movements was led by the 'ulamā' and the other was initiated under the leadership of Sayyid Aḥmad Khān. These two movements represented two cross-currents opposing each other, and this is not the occasion to go into detail concerning them.

The 'ulamā' believed in waging war against the English. They resolved to boycott the English and their educational institutions and not to accept any grant from them. The course followed by Sayyid Aḥmad Khān was in opposite direction. He believed in having good relations with the Englishmen, benefiting from their institutions and making a compromise with them. Unfortunately both of the two movements, though opposed to each other, ended in disastrous consequences for the Muslims. The first one that was led by the eminent Indian 'ulamā', many among whom were distinguished historical figures. Their struggle was rightly guided and their ideology was also based on right thinking, but they tried to keep away the Indian Muslim community from acquiring the first and foremost thing they required and which could enable them to master modern developments in science and technology; for example, they did not include teaching of the English language in their school syllabi. Perhaps they were justified in doing so at that time, as the English language was to replace the Persian language, which had been the favourite language of the Muslims for centuries as well as the official language of the Subcontinent. They viewed English as an intruder. Anyhow, their opposition to the English language and their lack of interest in modern civilization, which at any rate had to govern the modes of the life of the people, kept the Muslim *Ummah* out of modern sciences along with their benefits and advantages, which were ultimately essential for the development of a society.

Sayyid Aḥmad Khān's movement was more dangerous, and here I would like to express my considered opinion about him. (It is possible that some of the brothers may not agree with me.) Sayyid Aḥmad Khān did not do anything positive for Islam and Indian Muslims. In my view, the movement initiated by Iqbāl was a protest against the movement whose standard-bearer was Sayyid Aḥmad Khān in India. Sayyid Aḥmad Khān based his movement on friendly relations with the Englishmen under the pretext that after all the young generation of the Muslims had to be acquainted with the modern culture and that they could not afford to keep them alienated from and ignorant of the new currents. In his view it was essential to reconcile with the Englishmen so that the Muslims might not be mistreated by them and the Muslim men,

women and children might not suffer due to this antagonism. He was very naive to believe that he could win the sympathy of the English and could soften the hearts of those seasoned and villainous politicians by being friendly and humble towards them.

As a consequence, the English spared Sayyid Aḥmad Khān himself, his associates and the intellectuals around him whereas the Muslims in general remained exposed to all sorts of victimization till India won independence. Therefore, this policy of pleasing the Englishmen on the part of Sayyid Aḥmad Khān proved to be harmful for the Muslims and brought disgrace and humiliation to them.

More than anything what helps us to understand the significance and worth of Iqbāl is the knowledge of the general conditions of the Muslims in those days. For the Muslim masses, intellectuals, scholars and all those who entered the broader fields of social life could acquire knowledge, master modern science and gain degrees and positions, but were completely oblivious of their Islamic identity. Gradually the future hopes were lost for the colossal Muslim society of India that had the largest Muslim population in the world. (Even today we do not have a country that has such a big population of the Muslims as was at that time in Indian subcontinent.) A bleak future stared them in the face, they did not possess any awareness of their Islamic identity, and had lost all hope. They suffered to such an extent that in the existing world and all its occurrences they saw nothing but bitterness, frustration and darkness in store for themselves.

A sense of inferiority had gripped the being of the Indian Muslims, and a deep sense of humiliation and weakness had become a part and parcel of their personality. They could not think of any way out of this predicament. At that time, when Iqbāl returned from Europe, well-versed in modern Western culture, and while his contemporary intellectuals, his friends and even those who shared the same ideas with him always looked towards the West and Western culture, they were of the view that Westernization of their individual lives and the assimilation of Western culture and the Western value system would add to their prestige and credibility. To be in the service of the British government which ruled India with an iron hand was considered to be an honour for the Muslims. The Hindus, who were several years ahead of the Muslims regarding the adoption of the Western culture and manners, and who were quicker than them in winning the confidence of the Englishmen had gained an advantageous position.

The Muslims must have been insulted and exploited by the Hindus also. Even the Sikhs, who were a very slim minority and had no religious or cultural traditions, considered it justified to oppress and insult the Muslims. Such was the state of the Muslim society during Iqbāl's time.

The Lahore college where Iqbāl received his education and obtained his bachelor's degree was bereft of all the signs of Islamic thinking which could inspire any future hope. The most respected book on Islam in those days was Sir Thomas Arnold's work entitled in Arabic *al-Da'wah ilā al-'Islām* (An Invitation to Islam), which has been lately translated into Persian also. The book was written by Sir Thomas Arnold during his tenure at the Lahore college. It is of course a good book and I do not want to condemn it, but the thing which is remarkable about this book is that he has made every effort to lessen the importance of Islamic *jihād*. The main theme around which the book revolves is that Islam advanced through *da'wah* (invitation) and not by means of the sword. These words sound to be good, but this English thinker has gone to the extent of considering the concept of Islamic *jihād* as a secondary issue. Sir Thomas is the person who is regarded as a sincere pro-Islamic writer and he was Iqbāl's teacher also.

Here I would like to praise Iqbāl's judiciousness in this regard. Despite his intimate relations with Sir Arnold, he was not unmindful of the political motives of his academic work. This point has been also emphasized by Mr. Jāwīd Iqbāl in his biography of his father (one volume of which has been translated into Persian). He writes that Iqbāl challenged his friend Sayyid Nadhīr Niyāzī, who believed Sir Thomas Arnold to be an Islamist. Questioning Arnold's credentials, he asked, 'Do you judge him by *al-Da'wah ilā al-'Islām*?', and answered himself, 'He works for the British government.'

Iqbāl further told the same friend that when he was in England Arnold asked him to translate Edward Browne's '*Literary History of Persia*', but he declined to do it as he realized that it was written with political motives. Now you can see yourself how Iqbāl evaluated Browne's book and compare it with the attitude of our writers who were Browne's friends and were proud of their relations with him. You can see how simple, naive and ignorant these people were, having no inkling of their political objectives, whereas Iqbāl was perceptive and intelligent enough to understand the hidden implications of the colonialist politics in the works of Thomas Arnold and Edward Browne. This is an indication of Iqbāl's greatness.

At that time the Muslims were in a very precarious condition. The British administration and its main institutions were under the direct control of the British, and the secondary and less important positions were held by the Hindus. The freedom movement that was first launched by the Muslims was grabbed by the Congress party, and that too a prejudiced Congress party. Later on the Indian National Congress rendered great service to the freedom struggle, but during those days it was dominated by communal prejudices. It was predominantly an anti-Islamic, pro-Hindu and anti-Muslim communalist

organization. There were Westernized Muslim intellectuals who were infatuated with the Western values on the one hand, and on the other there were the poor Muslim masses, crushed under the burden of extreme poverty and drudgery.

The Muslim 'ulamā' and religious leaders were isolated from the freedom movement (after their initial defeat) and were alienated from it (except those who were in the vanguard of the movement, leaders like Mawlānā Muḥammad 'Alī). Political isolation and economic deprivation ruled supreme. The Muslims were reduced to the state of being a superfluous part of the Indian society, without any guiding star on the horizon. In such crucial moments Iqbāl kindled the torch of egohood. Of course, India was no exception; the above-mentioned conditions prevailed throughout the Muslim world. It was for the very same reason that Iqbāl speaks about the whole Islamic world. Iqbāl's day-to-day life in the city of Lahore in the colonized subcontinent of India led him to directly experience the pains and hardships of life. It was at this juncture that Iqbāl raised the banner of his revolt. His was a cultural, political and revolutionary movement. The first thing that was necessary for Iqbāl to do was to make the Indian society aware of its Islamic identity, Islamic ego and the Islamic personality, or rather the human dimension of its personality. He asks the people as to why they were complacent, why they were forgetful and why they had abandoned their real selves. He asks them to regain their Islamic and human identity. This was the first message delivered by Iqbāl. But, could he succeed in awakening the nation of several hundreds of millions that had been subjected to severe exploitation and humiliation for a long time. A nation that was divested of the capacity to understand, to know and to hope against hope was now asked to assert existence and recover its identity as soon as possible. It was almost an impossible task, very difficult to be realized. In my humble opinion no one could convey this message in a better way than Iqbāl did. With a view to attain this end Iqbāl evolved his philosophy of the self (*khudī*). The philosophy of egohood in the sense of subjective philosophical views is not the subject of our discussion. The conception of ego which has human and social implications, was presented philosophically so that it could fit in a philosophical tradition. As Iqbāl wished to make it the central theme of his poems, *ghazals*, and *mathnawīs*, this notion required to be based on a sound philosophical outlook. Iqbāl conceived ego as the source of feeling and knowing one's individuality through contemplation, introspection, self-cognition and self-realization. He explained this conception in philosophical terms.

In my view, in the beginning the idea of ego might have occurred to Iqbāl as a revolutionary idea, and afterwards he made an attempt to philosophize it. It may be argued that ego is the same thing that was the

most needed in the Indian society, and in general was missing in the entire Muslim world as well. In spite of having an Islamic value-system the Muslim peoples had become unmindful of it, and eagerly surrendered themselves to an alien system with full faith. It was, therefore, necessary for them to return to their own selves, that is, to the Islamic value-system. In this very sense Iqbāl was trying to pursue it as a goal. Such a sociological concept could not be impressed on the minds of people without being expressed in a philosophical manner. Iqbāl had to present it philosophically.

As said above, the idea of selfhood or ego at first was conceived by Iqbāl as a sociological and revolutionary notion. In due course, after having witnessed the signs of degeneration and loss of self-identity of the Eastern nations, especially the Muslims, and after examining its causes, this idea became permanent and deeply rooted in his being. Afterwards he sought to provide a philosophical and subjective ground to it, and based this notion on a general conception of the self, something similar to the conception of existence as evolved by our philosophers—an essence which is shared by all beings but needs to be interpreted philosophically. Of course, *wujūd* (existence) is something different from *khudī* (ego), and to interpret it as existence, as is done by some of the persons who have written commentaries on Iqbāl's poems, is a great blunder in my view. The notion of unity in plurality and plurality in unity, which has been recurrently used in his *Asrār-e khudī* (The Secrets of the Self), is different from the metaphysical conception of unity in plurality and plurality in unity as interpreted by Mullā Ṣadrā and others. It is altogether a different category. What Iqbāl meant to refer to by this notion had cent per cent human and social connotation. When I say it is social, I do not mean that it is not applicable to individual. Why not? Ego needs to be strengthened in an individual. But this very egohood of the ego of an individual and the strengthening of the personality of the ego have social implications in Islamic framework. Unless the personality of the (individual) ego is strengthened, a strong and stable society in its real sense cannot come into existence. The meaning of the ego is different from that of the existence. At the first instance he speaks in the manner of mystics about the generality and the extent of the concept of self. The world of being is actualized through the manifestations of the ego. Each one of the phenomena of the universe is a manifestation of a particular aspect of the self. Of course, some of the themes that I have described in my own words have been differently presented by Iqbāl in the headings of his poems. There are some other themes that are expressed far more beautifully in his poetry than their paraphrasing by Iqbāl himself in the headings of certain poems.

The ideas, themselves produced by the self-consciousness, are the

manifestations of the ego in every being. The affirmation of one's ego is also an affirmation of others. When the presence of the ego in a human being is posited, it automatically posits the presence of egos other than one's own. Therefore there is self as well as the non-self, that is, the existence of other is also posited. Hence it may be inferred that the whole universe is contained as a possibility in the self. The ego is the source of hostility also. There are various selves that are at war with one another. This struggle, this perpetual conflict brings the world into existence. It is the ego which is responsible for the selection of the fittest and its survival as well. So often thousands of selves are sacrificed for the sake of one higher self. The concept of ego is a graded one and its grades vary in intensity and weakness. The degree of intensity and weakness of the ego in each one of the beings is the factor which determines their strength and firmness. In this context he cites the examples of various entities such as the drop, the wine, the goblet, the cup-bearer, the mountain, the desert, the wave, the sea, the light, the eye, the verdure, the candle, the silence, the candle-bearer, the gem, the earth, the moon, the star, the sun, the tree, etc. Each one of them is measured by the intensity of its ego; for instance, a drop has a particular strength of ego, while a stream has a different strength of ego. Similarly a gem on which an image can be engraved possesses an ego-strength different from that of a stone on which no image can be engraved. Finite ego is never absolute. It always refers to a graded essence, which is present in things and human individuals, as well as in cosmic elements in diverse measures. He concludes this theme with the following verse:

چون خودی آرد بهم نیروی زیست می‌گشاید قلزمی از جوی زیست

*When ego embraces Elan Vital,
The stream of life is transformed into an ocean.*

Afterwards he expounds his views about the pursuit of ideals and aspirations, something which was most wanting in the Islamic world in those days. It means that the Muslims did not have any purpose in life. They did not have any high aspirations either. Their ambitions were confined to day-to-day life. He holds the view that the human life is nothing without purpose and aim. The ego attains self-hood through moving towards the desired ideals: *إِنَّمَا الْحَيَاةُ عَقِيدَةٌ وَجِهَادٌ* 'Verily the life is faith and *jihād*' (striving). He has expressed the same idea in a very comprehensive, profound, subtle and elegant way in his poetry. To desire for something and to strive unceasingly for attaining it is called purposiveness, without which life becomes synonymous with death.

It is desire that makes the universe throb with life. Nature is the shell and desire is the pearl. The heart which is incapable of cherishing desires is a bird with broken wings, unable to fly. It is aspiration which strengthens the life of the self, and transforms it into a restless sea eversurging. It is the joy of viewing that gives vision to the viewing eye. It is the fun of walking that gives feet to the pheasant. It is the effort to sing that is instrumental in endowing the nightingale's beak with melody. It is the piper's hands and the lips that breathe musical notes into reed, which was nothing but a mere straw in the reed-bed.

Science, culture, poetry, literature, law, everything is the product of human aspirations actualized through continuous struggle. Hence he says:

ما ز تخلیق مقاصد زنده ایم از شعاع آرزو تا بنده ایم

*Our lives are sustained by the ideals we create for ourselves,
Our being is illuminated by the rays of our aspirations.*

He reiterates the same theme in another verse:

گرم خون انسان ز داغ آرزو آتش این خاک از چراغ آرزو

*Man is hot-blooded due to his burning passions,
This clay glows with the light of aspirations.*

He considers love and passion essential for human society, and individual man, for it strengthens the individual as well as the social ego. He holds that the ego of an individual and the society cannot be strengthened without love. It is essential that the Islamic *millah* and all other human beings who desire to strengthen their selves should kindle the fire of love in their breasts. It is remarkable that he himself determines an object of love, a point around which the Muslim *Ummah* has to rally. It is at this juncture that one feels how intelligently this man of awareness and insight comprehended the necessity of the unity of the Muslim world. His quest for the rallying point led him to believe that the love of the Prophet Muḥammad al-Muṣṭafā (S) was the only passion that could motivate and rally the Muslim *Ummah* around a new consciousness:

نقطه نوری که نام او خودی است زیر خاک ما شرار زندگی است
از محبت میشود پاینده تر زنده تر، سوزنده تر، تابنده تر
از محبت اشتعال جوهرش ارتقاء مکنونات مضمورش
فطرت او آتش اندوزد ز عشق عالم افروزی بیاموزد ز عشق

آب حیوان تیغ جوهردار عشق
چشم نوحی، قلب ایوبی طلب
بوسه زن برآستان کاملی

در جهان هم صلح وهم پیکار عشق
عاشقی آموز و محبوبی طلب
کیمیا پیدا کن از مشت گلی

*The luminous point that is called the ego,
Keeps glowing the spark of life in our corporeal body.
Through love it becomes more lasting,
More alive, more fervent, and more luminous.
Through love its essence is blazed up,
And its hidden treasures are evolved.
The ego acquires fire from love,
And learns how to illuminate the universe with this fire.
It is love that brings peace as well as conflict to the world.
Love is the Water of life as well as the well-tempered sword.
Learn the art of being a lover and aspire for loveliness,
Strive to attain the eyes of Noah and aspire for Job's heart.
Discover alchemy in a handful of mud.
And kiss the threshold of sublimity.*

Subsequently he tells us as to who that beloved whom the Muslims should love devotedly is:

چشم اگر داری بیا بنمایمت
خوشترو زیباترو محبوبتر
خاک هم دوش ثریا میشود
آمد اندر وجد و بر افلاک شد
آبروی ما ز نام مصطفی است
کعبه را بیت الحرم کاشانه اش
طاق کسری زیر پای امتش
قوم و آئین و حکومت آفرید
تابه تخت خسروی خوابید قوم

هست معشوقی نهان اندر دلت
عاشقان او ز خوبان خوبتر
دل ز عشق او توانا میشود
خاک نجد از فیض او چالاک شد
در دل مسلم مقام مصطفی است
طور موجی از غبار خانه اش
بوریا ممنون خواب راحتش
در شبستان حراء خلوت گزید
ماند شبها چشم او محروم نوم

*The beloved is hidden in thy heart.
If thou art gifted with eyes, come, I will show thee his face.
His lovers are lovelier than all the beloveds of the world,
More beautiful, more elegant and more loveable.
Through his love the heart gains strength,
And the earth attains the exalted status of the Pleiades.
The land of Najd was made vigilant ingenious through his grace,
In a state of ecstasy it flew higher than the heavens.*

*The heart of the Muslim in the seat of al-Muṣṭafā.
 Whatever respect we command is due to his name.
 Mount Sinai is nothing but dust that arose from his House,
 His parlour is sacred even for the Ka'bah.
 The mat is grateful to him that he prefers to sleep on it,
 The Ṭāq-e Kisrā is trampled under the feet of his Ummah.
 He retired to the privacy of the Cave of Hirā',
 And brought forth a nation, a constitution and a government,
 Night after night passed by his bedside finding him awake,
 So that his people could rest on the throne of Khusrow.*

He gives an account of the Prophet (S) and his high qualities. Not only here alone, but throughout his poetical works we can see an unceasing stream of his love for the Prophet (S) gushing out wave after wave.

A contemporary Pakistani scholar has written a book about Iqbāl entitled *Iqbāl dar rāh-e Mawlawī* (Iqbāl on the Path of Mawlawī), in which he states that whenever a poem that contained the Prophet's sacred name was recited in Iqbāl's presence spontaneously tears flowed from his eyes. Indeed he passionately loved the Prophet (S). Iqbāl has made out a very important point. Where can the world of Islam find a personage more popular and dearer than the Prophet of Islam (S)? His personality is the focal point of the unity of the Islamic world. Iqbāl, while narrating the story of the daughter of Ḥātim al-Ṭā'ī, says that in one of the battles the daughter of Ḥātim al-Ṭā'ī was taken captive and brought in the presence of the Prophet (S). Her feet were chained and her head and body were bare. The disrespect showed to the daughter of a great and generous person like Ḥātim was so shocking that the Prophet (S) took out his cloak and flung it towards her so that she might cover herself. Iqbāl concludes this story with the following verses:

پیش اقوام جهان بی چادریم
 در جهان هم پرده دار ماست او
 چون نگه، نور دو چشمیم و یکیم
 شبنم یک صبح خندانیم ما
 در جهان مثل می و میناستیم
 اوست جان این نظام و او یکی است

ما از آن خاتون طی عربان تریم
 روز محشر اعتبار ماست او
 ما که از قید وطن بیگانه ایم
 از حجاز و مصر و ایرانیم ما
 مست چشم ساقی بطحاستیم
 چون گل صد برگ، ما را بویکی است

*We are more naked than the Lady of al-Ṭā'ī.
 We are stripped of our robe of honour before the nations.
 He is the source of our credibility on the Day of Judgement,*

*In this world, too, it is he whose love covers our faults.
We, who do not recognize any boundaries and nationalities,
Like vision from the two eyes, are one in reality.
We may belong to Hijāz, Egypt or Iran,
But we are the dew-drops of the same laughing dawn.
The eyes of the keeper of the tavern of Baṭḥā' have intoxicated us,
We are like the goblet full to the brim with this wine,
Like a hundred-leaf flower we smell alike,
For it is he who breathes life into this bouquet, and he is one.*

On so many occasions Iqbāl has composed verses expressing his deep love for the Prophet (S) that it is not possible to quote all of them here.

In *Asrār-e khudī* (The Secrets of the Self) he tries to awaken the sense of selfhood, that is, the sense of human identity in the individual as well as the society. A separate section in 'The Secrets of the Self' deals with the idea that the selfhood is weakened by entreating. When an individual or a nation stretches its hands in need before others, this act weakens the individuality of a person or the nation and consequently the process of deterioration sets in.

As a sequel to the problem of ego Iqbāl elucidates the problem of selflessness. While discussing the problem of the self, the notion of the strengthening an individual's identity should not be interpreted in the sense of imprisoning one's being within the walls constructed around the self and living in isolation, cut off from other human beings as independent egos. Neither it means that one should lose his identity among other selves in the society. Rather, an individual should live in close relationship with the society. This is the real meaning of the selflessness. The book *Rumūz-e bikhudī* (The Secrets of the Selflessness) is the second book of Iqbāl that was composed and printed after *Asrār-e khudī* and is illustrative of Iqbāl's ideas about the Islamic system. Iqbāl's ideas about establishing an Islamic order are more elaborate and clearer in *Rumūz-e bikhudī* than any other of his works. On the whole, the problems elucidated in *Rumūz-e bikhudī* are among the issues relevant to the establishment of an Islamic society and ought to be taken into consideration.

While going through the themes of the secrets of the selflessness, we notice that Iqbāl paid attention exactly to the same questions that are predominant in our Islamic society today. The foremost among the most exciting ideas of Iqbāl is his emphasis on the mission of the followers of *tawḥīd*. He believed that the Muslims and the Islamic *Ummah* are bound to spread the message of Islam and they should not rest unless they perform this duty.

It would be interesting, at this juncture, to quote a few selected

verses of Iqbāl in this regard. In these verses he says that the formation of an Islamic society and the emergence of an Islamic *Ummah* in this world have not been a simple matter. The world had to wait for ages and history had to undergo countless experiments in order to reach the conception of *tawhīd* and to arrive at a stage where an *Ummah* inspired with the ideal of *tawhīd* and a people faithfully following Islamic thought could have evolved:

زامتزاز امهات اندام اوست
صد چمن خون کرد تا یک لاله رست
تا به لوح زندگی نقش تو بست
تا نوای یک اذان بالیده است
با خداوندان باطل کار داشت
بازبانان کلمه توحید خواند
انتهای کار عالم لا اله
مهر را پایندگی، رخسندگی
موج در دریا طپید از تاب او
مشت پر از سوز او بلبل شود
خاک مینا تابناک از سوز او
جویدت ای زخمه و رساز وجود
خیز و مضرابی به تار اورسان
حفظ و نشر لا اله مقصود توست
گر مسلمانی نیاسائی دمی
امت عادل تورا آمد خطاب
در جهان شاهد علی الاقوام تو
از علوم امی ای پیغام ده
شرح رمز ما غوی گفتار او
پاک شست آلودگیهای کهن

این کهن پیکر که عالم نام اوست
صد نیستان کاشت تا یک ناله رست
نقشها آورد و افکند و شکست
ناله ها در کشت جان کاریده است
مدتی پیکار با احرار داشت
تخم ایمان آخر اندر گل نشانند
نقطه ادوار عالم لا اله
چرخ را از زور او گردندگی
بحر گوهر آفرید از تاب او
خاک از موج نسیمش گل شود
شعله در رگهای تاک از سوز او
نغمه هایش خفته در ساز وجود
صد نوا داری چو خون در تن روان
زان که در تکبیر راز بود توست
تا نخیزد بانگ حق از عالمی
می ندانی آیه ام الكتاب
آب و تاب چهره ایام تو
نکته سنجان را صلا ی عام ده
امی ای پاک از هوی گفتار او
از قبای لاله های این چمن

*This ancient body called the world
Is constituted by the intermixing of the mother elements.
A hundred reed-beds were cultivated to produce a single melody;
A hundred gardens bled for ages to make a tulip bloom;
Thousand and thousand images were conceived, carved, and erased
So that thine image could be engraved on the tablet of being.
Countless whimpers and tears were sown and nurtured in the soul*

*To let a prayer-call blossom out.
Since ages the world was at war with the noble souls,
And it favoured the worshippers of false gods.
At last the seed of faith was implanted in the earth,
And the word of tawhīd found expression through thy lips.
The centre of the cycles of the universe is lā ilāh;
The ultimate end of all action in the world is lā ilāh.
It is the force that keeps the heavens rotating,
It is what gives the sun its light and life,
It is the force that gives birth to pearls in the ocean's womb,
And keeps the waves surging and moving all the time.
Its morning breeze transforms the soil into flower,
Its fire breathes a nightingale's song into a handful of feathers;
Its flame runs through the veins of the vinegrape;
Its heat makes the goblet-clay to glow as a spark;
Its tunes are asleep within the strings of being
Waiting for thy plectrum to fill the air with music.
Thine existence shalt vibrate with a hundred songs—
Arise and strike thy plectrum at its strings.
As takbīr is the secret of thine existence,
The purpose of thy creation is to preserve and spread the mes-
sage of lā ilāh.
Unless the world echoes with the vibrations of the call of Truth,
If really a Muslim, thou shalt not rest.
Hast thou not read the verse in the Mother of books
That bestowed upon thee the title of the Just Ummah?
Thou art the lustre of the visage of time,
Thou art made witness to the deeds of all the nations;
Extend thine invitation to all who are punctilious.
Thou hast to disseminate the treasures of the knowledge of the
Ummī (S),
Whose words were not polluted with lust of any kind,
Whose words interpreted the meaning of the verse:
"Whose comrade erreth not, nor is deceived".
He washed the tunics of his garden's tulips clean
And purified them from all impurities.*

After elucidating the all-embracing nature of Islamic teachings (which has been done a hundred times in his work), Iqbāl addresses the *Ummah* of *tawhīd* declaring that they are the standard-bearers of Islam, and appeals to them to march forward with the purpose of delivering the message of Islam to the world. Subsequently he asks them to break into pieces the new idol carved by the swindlers of the West. What is this new idol?

تیز ترنه پا بمیدان عمل
هر زمان در جستجوی پیکری
تازه‌تر، پروردگاری ساخته است
نام او رنگست و هم ملک و نسب

ای که میداری کتابش در بغل
فکر انسان بت‌پرستی، بت‌گری
باز طرح آذری انداخته است
کاید از خون ریختن اندر طرب

*Thou who hast the Book under thine arms
Should step forward in the arena of action.
The human mind is always after carving a new idol;
Man's quest for a new image has not ceased in any age,
Again he has rebuilt the temple of Ādhar (the idol-maker),
And has moulded a god, newer than others,
Whose joy lies in shedding the blood of his worshippers.
His are numerous names: colour, country and race.*

It is implied in these verses that nationalism, racialism and narrow patriotism draw boundaries to isolate peoples and countries. These imprisoned loyalties cause wars between one nation and another in the name of nationality, community, race and colour:

پیش پای این بت نارجمند
گرمی خونت ز صهبای خلیل
تیغ لاموجود الا هوبزن
آنچه بر تو کامل آمد عام کن

آدمیت کشته شد چون گوسفند
ای که خوردستی زمینای خلیل
بر سر این باطل حق پیرهن
جلوه در تاریکی ایام کن

*Humanity is being sacrificed like a sheep
At the foot of the unholy idol.
Thou, who hast drunk from the goblet of Khalīl (the idol-breaker),
Thy veins are throbbing with the wine of the passion of Khalīl.
Thou hast to strike the sword of "nothing exists except Him"
Into falsehood disguised as truth.
Let thy face shine on the dark horizons of time,
And spread the perfect message that has been revealed to thee.*

Iqbāl's idea of propagating the message of Islam and breaking all the artificial boundaries drawn to divide nations leads him to expound certain other notions that are predominant in his philosophy of *bikhudī* (selflessness), that is, the unification of the individual with the society and his absorption therein. According to him *nubuwwah* (prophethood) is the principal source of the organization of the *Ummah*. It does not mean that a *millah* is formed by the merely gathering together of many individuals. A particular mode of thinking and an ideology is essential

in order to weave different threads together to form the fabric of a nation. For this purpose the most fundamental and the best of all the ideologies is the one that was propounded through *nubuwwah*, the prophetic mission, and it was propounded by the messengers of God. This is the best of all the foundation-stones upon which a nation is built. This mode of thinking imparts reasoning, faith, discipline and perfection to a nation.

Another concept upon which Iqbāl's system of thought rests is the negation of servitude—servitude to the demigods sitting on the throne and standing at the altar.

ناکس و نابودمند و زیر دست
بندها در دست و پا و گردنش
بهریک نخچیر ضد نخچیر گیر
باج برکشت خراب او نوشت

بود انسان در جهان انسان پرست
سطوت کسری و قیصر رهزنش
کاهن و پاپا و سلطان و امیر
صاحب اورنگ و هم پیر کنشت

Man worshipped man in the world.

*He lived as a non-entity, as a non-being and as a subordinate
Under the heavy yoke of the Khusrows and the Qaysars.*

And his neck, his hands and his feet were chained ;

The Popes and the priests and the kings and the lords—

A hundred hunters after a single prey!

Both the king and the priest

levied taxes on his devastated harvest.

Whatever was left after paying taxes to the King's officials was grabbed by the tax-collectors of the Pope. This had been a customary practice all over the world, as Iqbāl says:

بهر این صید زبون دامی بدوش
خرمنش مغزاده با آتش سپرد
نغمه‌ها اندر نی او خون شده
بندگان را مسند خاقان سپرد

در کلیسا اسقف رضوان فروش
برهمن گل از خیابانش ببرد
از غلامی فطرت او دون شده
تا امینی حق به حق داران سپرد

Bishop, in the name of allotting apartments in the Paradise,

Set a trap in the church to catch him;

The Brahmin plucked the best roses of his garden;

The Magi's children made up their fire by adding his harvest to it ;

His human qualities were debased by slavery.

At last came the Trustworthy, who restored the lost rights,

And entrusted the throne of the Khāqāns to the slaves.

Iqbāl's poetry and philosophy—aimed at humanizing the world—are very rich in the themes of human and social significance, such as the Divine mission of the Prophet (S) of Islam, the equality of man, the Quranic doctrine of judging a person according to his *taqwā* (piety): *إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَىكُمْ* (... The noblest of you in the sight of Allah is the best in *taqwā*), and many other similar issues that are indicative of his concern for higher values and the service of mankind. We cannot propagate these ideas in our country without making popular and public the works of Iqbāl. This is a task to be carried out in Iran and Pakistan as well as in the countries where people understand Persian and where people are prepared to learn the language.

The poetry of Iqbāl, the major part of which is in Persian, needs wider circulation. Out of the fifteen thousand couplets composed by him nine thousand are in the Persian language. This shows that his works in Urdu are fewer than those in Persian. Rather it can be said that the best and the finest part of his poetry is in our language, and, therefore, we are obliged to devote best of our energies to understand it. For the first time when I read Iqbāl's poetry I felt that many of his verses could be understood only with the help of detailed explanatory notes and comments, and regretfully I could find such commentaries nowhere. It is essential to compile such annotated editions. Even the Persian-speaking people are in need of such commentaries in order to fully grasp the ideas and themes dealt with by Iqbāl. Today the major part of Iqbāl's teaching directly concerns us, and some part of it is also relevant to the world that has not gone our way so far and has to understand it in the same manner as we did.

Our people have translated into action his doctrine of the selfhood. They have invigorated it and have brought it into action in the world of actuality. Now our people do not have to be asked to recover their selfhood. Today we are perfectly aware of being on our feet. We are proud of our culture and our cultural heritage, and are confident that we can develop it further on the basis of our ideology and thought. Of course for a long time we were made to depend upon others regarding the material aspect of our life, but we are trying to get rid of these foreign fetters gradually and this process is going on. The Muslim peoples are anyhow in need of comprehending the meaning of selfhood; especially the eminent Muslims, whether they are politically active or culturally creative, need to embrace Iqbāl's message. They have to realize that Islam in itself, in its essence and in its nature, possesses the richest potentialities of conducting the affairs of the individual lives and human societies, and does not need to look towards others. We do not advocate for summarily dismissing other cultures and close our doors to them. We should assimilate them, but in the manner as a living body absorbs the elements that are essential for its life, and

not like a dead and unconscious body which is injected by others whatever they desire to inject into it. We have the capacity of assimilating from other cultures whatever is relevant to us. As Iqbāl has said repeatedly, we can learn the modern science and philosophy from the West, but the ardour and zest for life can never be borrowed from others:

خردآموختم از درس حکیمان فرنگ سوزاندو ختم از صحبت صاحب نظران

*Wisdom we have learnt from the teachings of the Western thinkers.
Ardour for life we have acquired in the company of men of insight.*

It means that the Western society and culture is wanting in ardour and fervour, and Iqbāl was quicker than any other person in perceiving this phenomenon. He could anticipate the dangers inherent in the Western civilization and its materialistic culture, and warned the people in advance that it was devoid of the spiritual elements essential for human welfare. Fortunately, today the consciousness of selfhood and Islamic identity is abounding in our country among the people. Our policy based on the principle of "Neither the East nor the West" is in conformity with what Iqbāl advised and wished to be pursued. Our policy of self-reliance is identical with Iqbāl's views. We, in our love for the Prophet (S), in our commitment to the Quran, in our emphasis on learning the Quran, and in our conviction that the Quran and Islam are to be made the basis of all the revolutions and movements, are exactly following the path that was shown to us by Iqbāl. At that time, nobody was attentive enough to pay heed to Iqbāl's counsel. In those days there were not many people who could understand Iqbāl's message and his language. Iqbāl's books are replete with complaints and remonstrances—remonstrances as to why people do not understand his message and look towards the West for guidance. In his introduction to *Rumūz-e bikhudī* also he remonstrates with the Islamic *Ummah*.

برتوهرآغاز را انجام کرد
همگردلها جگر چاکان تو
ای ز راه کعبه دور افتاده ای
ای تماشاگاه عالم روی تو
تو کجا بهر تماشا میروی؟
در شررت عمیر کن کاشانه ای
تازه کن با مصطفی پیمان خویش
تا نقاب روی تو بالا گرفت

ای ترا حق خاتم اقوام کرد
ای مثال انبیاء پاکان تو
ای نظر بر حسن ترسازاده ای
ای فلک مشت غبار کوی تو
همچو موج، آتش ته پا میروی
رمز سوز آموز از پروانه ای
طرح عشق انداز اندر جان خویش
خاطر من از صحبت ترسا گرفت

داستان گیسو و رخسار گفت

هم نوا از جلوه اغیار گفت

*Thou wert appointed to be the seal of all nations;
Thou wert destined to be the end of all the beginnings;
Thine 'ulamā' were made equal to prophets;
Thy martyred comrades could breathe life into the hearts.
Why art thine eyes enchanted by the beauty of the church?
Why hast thou fallen away from the path of the Holy Ka'bah?
Believe me. The dust of thy street rises to form heavenly spheres;
O thy visage attracts the eyes of the entire world.
Why art thou rising and falling restlessly like a wave?
What is that spectacle thou art going to behold?
Learn the secret of living passionately on your own from the moth;
Build thy nest amidst the tongues of flames;
Kindle the fire of love from within thy soul;
Restore thy bond with the spirit of al-Muṣṭafā.
I have left the company of the church-goers,
To see to it that the veil is raised from thy face.
O my comrade, thou art bewitched by the charm of others
And singing odes to praise golden locks and rosy cheeks.*

Here, by the epithet *hamnawā* (comrade) Iqbāl means to refer to his contemporaries and those who were of late introduced to the Western culture and were intoxicated with the Western value-system. He compares their attitude with that of his own:

قصه مغزادگان پیمود او
خاکم و آسوده کوی توام
پیش هر دیوان فروناید سرم

بردر ساقی جبین فرسود او
من شهید تیغ ابروی توام
از ستایشگستری بالا ترم

*He rubs his forehead at the foot of the Sāqī,
He is lost in the story of the Magi's children,
While I bleed, struck by the crescent of thine eyebrows,
Happy that my blood is soaked in the dust of thy street.
My art has been over and above eulogizing worldly lords;
My head never bowed before imperial courts.*

He reminds the Muslim *Ummah* that it has never been his custom to sing praises, but he eulogized her so passionately because of his deep love for Islam:

وز سکندر بی نیازم کرده اند
در گلستان غنچه گردد دامنم

از سخن آئینه سازم کرده اند
بار احسان برنتابد گردنم

*Poetry bestowed upon me ability to make a mirror out of words,
And it has freed me from asking Alexander's favour.
I hate to be burdened by the favours of others.
My lips are pursed and hands shut like a bud in the garden.*

After giving free vent to his feeling of disdain and indifference to the worldly attainments, Iqbāl, who never humbled himself by prostrating before anybody, kneels down on his knees in front of the Muslim *Ummah*, and begs them to realize their own worth and pay heed to the words of the Quran:

هدیه سوز و گداز آورده است
بر دل گرم دمام می چکد
تا به صحن گلشنت اندازمش

بردت جانم نیاز آورده است
ز آسمان آبگونیم می چکد
من ز جو باریکتر می سازمش

*At thy door my soul is bleeding to beg a small favour of thee,
In return it offers thee all her ardour and pathos.
A river comes down trickling from the blue sky,
Its water is distilled through my burning heart,
And I direct its course through channels thinner than rivulets,
To make it steadily flow and water thine orchard.*

This was just a brief account and a short glimpse of our dear Iqbāl's personality, who was undoubtedly a bright star on the horizon of the East. We hope that we shall acknowledge our indebtedness to him and would be able to recompense for the delay made by our people in recognizing Iqbāl's worth during the span of last forty, fifty years. I request the researchers, poets, orators, writers, publishers, the government organizations, the Ministry of Culture and Advanced Learning, the Ministry of Education and Training and the Ministry of Islamic Guidance, each of them, to do their best to reintroduce and revive the spirit of Iqbāl in the manner befitting his memory. I propose that his poetry and his writings be reproduced and compiled in the form of books, and his poetical works like *Asrār-e khudī* (The Secrets of the Self), *Rumūz-e bikhudī* (The Mysteries of Selflessness), *Gulshān-e rāz* (Garden of Mystery), *Jāwid nāmeḥ* (Pilgrimage to Eternity), etc. be reprinted and each of them published separately. This work has been done in Pakistan to some extent, but the people of Pakistan cannot be fully benefited from those ideas as today the Persian language is not in currency there as in the past. I wish this gap also to be filled. It is further hoped that our Pakistani brothers present in this meeting as well as the writers of the Indian subcontinent realize their responsibility and rise to the occasion to resist the vicious policies of the past governments

regarding the Persian language, which possesses great treasures of Islamic culture and in which the major part of Islamic culture is preserved. They should give currency to this language in the Subcontinent where there are great numbers of Muslims; especially in Pakistan this work needs to be done with a sense of urgency.

In our own country also the publication of Iqbāl's books should be carried out on a large scale and the artists should illustrate Iqbāl's works with suitable paintings, the musicians should sing his poems set in popular tunes in order to render them effectively and bring to the tongues of the young and the old. I hope that God Almighty will enable us to repay the debt that the Muslim *Ummah* owes to him. *Wa al-salām 'alaykum wa raḥmat Allāh wa barakātuh.*

The Meaning and End of Religion: A Critical Analysis of W.C.Smith's Approach *Part 2*

by 'Alī Qulī Qarā' ī

The Special Case of Islam:

Taking up the case of Islam as an exception to the presumed general rule that religious traditions do not have an inbuilt name, Dr. Smith proposes to overcome the major obstacle to his argument. He begins with the term *dīn* and the history of its emergence. First he cites Mani's use of the term in the sense of 'religion', remarking that he was probably the first to use it in the plural. But the account he gives of its development is far from being clear or coherent. He remarks that "There is some evidence that Mani's systematization contributed to the crystallization of other traditions," though he admits that "the situation was immensely complex and fluid."

The Meaning of *Dīn*:

Dr. Smith observes that "the most important original element in the evolution was the Persian *daēnā*. This word was used by Zarathushtra and appears in the Avesta. Although its etymology is not clear, there is no question but that it begins by designating something inner and personal." (p. 99) Thereafter he says:

A development from this, of major consequences for our purposes, was a generic *daēnā*, where again there is both an earthly and a heavenly figure, the latter personifying 'Faith' as a divine being (god), the earthly typifying the community of the faithful. Over the centuries—illustrating once again perhaps the general tendency that we have noted in this field, towards gradual externalization—this latter sense becomes increasingly common, and perhaps predominant though it never ousts the personal quality. The two survive side by side; as in the Western case, probably without much self-consciousness. In the course of the centuries the word became *dēn* (modern Persian *dīn*), and designated a religious community, and/or its characteristic system, as well as continuing to express the notion of inner faith. (pp. 99-100)

In the period from the rise of the Christian Church to the rise of

Islam, when various religious communities and conceptual systems were crystallizing in the Middle East area, this is the term used to designate them. (p. 100) Gradually a similar development occurred in other languages of the Middle East:

In Jewish Aramaic, it was another, earlier, loanword from Persia, *dāth*,³² previously meaning 'law', that began to do duty for the new concept; and this is the word that has become the term for systematic religion in modern Hebrew. On the other hand, in several cases the Persian term *dēn* itself was apparently taken over in the new sense by groups speaking other languages. This was so not only in the case of those related to Persian, such as Parthian and Sogdian. It occurred also with some groups that, in this cosmopolitanism, rubbed shoulders with the Persians although they spoke languages less closely related—for instance, Armenian—or not related at all, such as those from the Semitic family, where it became acclimatized as *dīn*. From Mani's time, if not before, this word in this sense is found in Christian Aramaic, that is Syriac, and eventually, as we have remarked, also in Arabic. It had indeed become a fully international term.

The matter is complicated, however. For in some of the Semitic languages, a word of virtually this same form had been in use for millennia, meaning law... or system of lawWith the intermingling of peoples, languages, and concepts, we are hardly surprised to find, then, a transition at the end of which *dēn*, *dīn* signifies in some cases religious community, organized and definite, and in some cases systematic religion: the abstract pattern of beliefs and practices characterizing a particular tradition or group. By the sixth or seventh century A.D. this seems true of virtually all the languages of the Middle East where the phenomenon of these religious organizations was found (though a plural is not yet found in all of them). (pp. 100-101)

Dr. Smith with his characteristic Christian mentality of drawing a sharp distinction between 'law' and 'religion' does not pause at his own statement that "a word of virtually this same form (*dīn*) had been in use for millennia, meaning law or system of law in some of the Semitic languages, as far back as Akkadian" (2000 B.C.—Abraham might have used the same word, as quoted in the Quran?). In a related footnote he writes:

Dātā is an Old-Persian word, found in the Gathas, the rest of the Avesta, and subsequently. It meant Law—as a general ideal..., a system of law, and a particular law or regulation or legal decision....It was used both for the law of God (i.e. of Ahura Mazda) and for that of the state (the law of the Medes and the Persians). In the former sense it is found with the adjective 'Zarathushtrian' as the moral law that Zarathushtra proclaimed....It was taken over by the Jews after their contact with the Achaemenid Persian empire, and is found in the Hebrew of the late books of the Old Testament: once in Ezra, otherwise in Esther, in speaking of Persian law, ranging all the way from royal decrees to social conventions. In Biblical Aramaic it occurs fairly frequently, in the book of Daniel with its scene set, like that of Esther, in the Persian court, and again in Ezra; to designate the edicts of the King, and also (in the mouth of non-Jews) the law of the Jews' God.... The law

presently became so distinctive a characteristic and so central an element of Jewish faith, that those who were adherents of what we might call one religious community could be discriminated from those adhering to another, by one's speaking of which law they observed. Thus some authorities would translate the 'the *dāth* of his God [his god?]' in the Aramaic of Daniel 6:6 as 'his religion', which is all right provided one bears in mind that by 'religion' here one means 'law'. In later Aramaic it is used to designate the characteristics of various religious groups whether these were legal or not. (This was facilitated by the use of *dāth* to designate not only injunctions but social customs.) I have not ascertained when a plural in the sense of 'religions' was first used, though it presumably grew so naturally out of a plural for 'laws' that this would be difficult to trace.... Further inquiry in this field should bear in mind the possibility, which I have not investigated, that Mani and the subsequent Sāsani developments, which I see as so crucial, may have been themselves influenced by previous developments in Jewish thought as well as in Jewish life: that the process of crystallization in conceptualization as well as sociologically had already gone further among the Jews (and Christians?) by the third century than I have recognized.... At the other end of the Iranian world and in another religious context, it is noteworthy that in the language of the Saka people *dāta* (documented from Tumšūq in the form *dāda*) was used by the Central Asian Buddhists as a translation for their concept *dharma*. (pp. 289-290)

The distinction between 'Law' and 'religion', in the sense of a conceptual system indeed becomes very thin when we remember that almost all doctrines are also capable of being set forth as commands.³³ Consider the famous Islamic phrase *لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ* ('There is no god but God') which is a statement of monotheism and an indicative statement, but it can also be put as a command and an imperative statement, as in fact has been done in the Ten Commandments: "Worship no god but Me. Do not make for yourselves images of anything in heaven or on earth or in the water under the earth. Do not bow down to any idol or worship it, because I am the Lord your God and I tolerate no rivals." (Exodus 20)

The cardinal Islamic principle of *tawhīd* (monotheism) is also stated in the form of a command (*amr*) in the Quran. Let us first take note of the following verses of the Quran:

قُلْ إِنِّي أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَعْبُدَ اللَّهَ مُخْلِصًا لَهُ الدِّينَ *

Say (O Muhammad): 'I have been commanded (*umirtu*) to worship God, making *dīn* (allegiance, obedience) sincerely His.' (39:11)

قُلْ إِنِّي نُهِيتُ أَنْ أَعْبُدَ الَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ لَمَّا جَاءَنِيَ الْبَيِّنَاتُ مِنْ رَبِّي وَأُمِرْتُ أَنْ أُسْلِمَ لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ *

Say (O Muhammad): 'I am forbidden (nuhitu) to worship those unto whom ye cry besides God, since there have come unto me clear proofs from my Lord, and I am commanded (umirtu) to surrender to the Lord of the worlds.' (40:66)

قُلْ أَفَغَيْرَ اللَّهِ تَأْمُرُونِي أَعْبُدُ أَيُّهَا الْجَاهِلُونَ *

Say (O Muhammad, to the disbelievers): 'Do ye command me (ta'murūnni) to serve (worship) other than God, you ignorant ones?' (39:64)

اتَّخَذُوا أَحْبَابَهُمْ وَرُهْبَانَهُمْ أَرْبَابًا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَالْمَسِيحَ ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا إِلَهًا
وَاحِدًا لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ سُبْحَانَهُ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ * يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يُطْفِئُوا نُورَ اللَّهِ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَيَأْبَى اللَّهُ إِلَّا
أَنْ يُتِمَّ نُورَهُ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْكَافِرُونَ * هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَى وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى
الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ *

They have taken their rabbis, their monks and the Messiah, Mary's son, as lords apart from God, and they were commanded (umirū) to serve but One God; there is no god but He.... It is He who has sent His Messenger with the guidance and the true Din, that He may uplift it above every Din, though the polytheists be averse (9:31,33)

وَتِلْكَ عَادٌ جَحَدُوا بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ وَعَصَوْا رُسُلَهُ وَاتَّبَعُوا أَمْرَ كُلِّ جَبَّارٍ عَنِيدٍ *

And such were 'Ad. They denied the revelations (signs) of their Lord and flouted His messengers and followed the command (amr) of every froward tyrant. (11:59)

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا مُوسَىٰ بِآيَاتِنَا وَسُلْطَانٍ مُبِينٍ * إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَئِهِ فَاتَّبَعُوا أَمْرَ فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَا أَمْرُ
فِرْعَوْنَ بِرَشِيدٍ *

And verily We sent Moses with Our signs and a manifest authority to Pharaoh and his Council; but they followed Pharaoh's command (amr), and Pharaoh's command (amr) was no right guide. (11: 96-97)

فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا أَمْرَ الْمُسْرِفِينَ * وَلَا تُطِيعُوا أَمْرَ الْمُسْرِفِينَ * الَّذِينَ يُفْسِدُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا
يُصْلِحُونَ *

So fear you God, and obey you me, and obey not the commandment (amr) of the prodigal who do corruption in the earth, and set not things aright. (26: 150-152)

وَمَا كُنْتُمْ بِجَانِبِ الْغَرْبِيِّ إِذْ قَضَيْنَا إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰ الْأَمْرَ وَمَا كُنْتُمْ مِنَ الشَّاهِدِينَ *

Thou (O Muhammad) wast not upon the western side when We decreed to Moses the commandment (amr, i.e. the Law), nor wast thou of those witnessing. (28:44)

These examples are sufficient to elucidate the presence of the central element of command (*amr*) and law inherent in the term *Dîn*. *Dîn* in this sense is an objective entity, the Law. The subjective meaning of *Dîn* in the sense of personal allegiance and obedience *vis-a-vis* the objective *Dîn* is also closely related to it. We have pointed out similar objective and subjective meanings of the term *dharma* while discussing Brahmanism and Buddhism.

Dr. Smith's observations with regard to Zoroastrianism and classical Judaism, as well as what we said above about Buddhist and Brahmanical concepts, show that the notion of law lies at the core of *Dîn*, *Dāta*, *Dhāt*, or *Dharma*. Today most of us, not only those who live in the West but also those who live in Eastern countries, do not conceive 'religion' as having to do mainly with Law. Moreover, we regard 'religious' phenomena as something distinct from other aspects of life which are included under the category 'secular.' How did this outlook originate? We suggest that an answer must be sought in the history of the Jewish people, who in theory gave allegiance to a Divine Law but in practice lived according to the customs of other peoples, and who, after the end of the theocratic republic, since Alexander's campaigns, came to live under foreign rule, first Greek, then Graeco-Egyptian, then Graeco-Syrian, and afterwards Roman. While to the classical Jews 'the Law' signified not only the Divine Law prescribed for the Jewish society, State, and individual, but also the Law of God as it operated in nature and history. However, by the time of Paul it seems to have signified merely ritual and religious rules. As a result of centuries of foreign rule over Palestine, the teachings of the Law of Moses had not only come to play a limited role in the life of the ordinary Jew, his very perception of what 'the Law' signified was altered. In his letter to the Galatians, Paul proudly reports how he reproached Peter publicly in front of Gentile converts. "I said to Peter in front of them all", he says, "You are a Jew, yet you have been living like a Gentile, not like a Jew. How, then can you try to force Gentiles to live like Jews." (Galatians 2. 14) A clear dissociation had taken place in the minds of the Jews living under Roman rule, which was pushed to its extreme point by Paul, who not only separates Law from faith but also puts it in opposition to faith: "But the Law has nothing to do with faith" (Galatians 3. 12); "Now that the time for faith is here, the Law is no longer in charge of us" (Galatians 3. 25). Through this dissociation, the term 'Law' lost its original composite meaning. Mani as a Christian had inherited this conception of faith divorced from

Divine Law, which he continued to refer as '*Dîn*'. Conceptually, *Dîn* becomes 'religion' when it loses its all-inclusiveness and when a great many aspects of individual and social existence lie outside the sphere of its authority and applicability. By rejecting the Law, Paul made a great many aspects of social and individual existence to become irrelevant to what he called 'faith'. There was a fallacy involved in his rejection of the 'Law' on the one hand and his emphasis on 'faith' on the other. Faith is subjective and dependent on persons; the Law of Moses represented something objective and independent of individuals. It would have been more correct for him to repudiate *obedience* to the Law, not the Law *per se*, in favour of faith. But he did not appear to be repudiating obedience to God; hence the sophistry: faith *versus* the Law. To negate the Law of Moses was to give free licence to the believer to regulate his life according to the laws and customs of his immediate social environment whatever that may be. For the first time in the history of mankind there was a 'Religion' which left largely open the questions of canon, at least in principle. This 'Religion' was so narrowly defined that matters that were not covered by it had to be characterized as 'secular'. Concepts and terms may develop gradually after a reality which they seek to conceptualize and represent has come into existence. Dr. Smith, in his study of the emergence of the concept of 'religion' as something distinct from the 'secular', should also have traced the origins of the concept of its inverse complementary 'secular', and without it his study about the meaning and end of religion is incomplete. In fact, this concept of religion is a characteristically Christian notion; to challenge it is to negate the entire 'Christian' tradition since Paul.

Mani's concept of '*dîn*' in this sense was something different from *Dîn* in the sense of the Mosaic Law; it was as much devoid of law as Christianity was made devoid of it by Paul (nor did Mani's teaching include anything that would replace the law of Sassanid kings). Accordingly it is absolutely wrong to relate the Arabic term *Dîn*, which included the principal element of law, to '*dîn*' as used by Mani or as became current in the post-Pauline era in the Middle East and which was devoid of the element of law. Mani's '*dîn*' is neither the Jewish *dāth*, neither Persian *dēn*, nor Arabic *dîn*. It is a characteristically Pauline conception.

Dîn and Divine Sovereignty:

The idea of sovereignty of God is central to Religion, which was properly called Law, *Dîn*, or *Dāth*. This idea has been gradually eroded in the Muslim countries through Christian influence. The first influence of Christianity was apparent in the thought of some *Şūfis* who

assigned a secondary place to the Law of the Shari'ah. As a result the term Shari'ah itself, which originally designated the totality of Islamic teachings came to mean 'religious' rules and ritual. The concept of Divine Sovereignty was blurred in the minds of Muslims when the Shari'ah was made to play a restricted role in the Muslim society with the emergence of monarchies and arbitrary rule. The sphere of politics was the first one to evade the control of the Shari'ah. From the nineteenth century, the spheres of civil and penal legislation were also gradually lost when European legal codes replaced Islamic law in the Muslim countries. The lesser the role of the Shari'ah in the social, political, and economic life of the Muslim community, the narrower has the concept of *Din* become in the Muslim world; it came to signify merely a creed with some rituals and rules for marriage and inheritance.

We have said above that the term *Din* (Law) originally included not only law but also included doctrine, creed, rituals, observances, etc. which were stated as commands (imperative statements) rather than as principles (indicative statements) in the Mosaic Law, for instance. Even in the Quran, the basic Islamic doctrines are frequently stated as commands to the believers. We referred above to the doctrine of monotheism ('There is no god except God') which is stated as an indicative statement more than seventy-five times in the Quran. Another Islamic doctrine is that of the authority of the Prophet Muhammad (S) as a legislator and ruler. In the same way as God is not only to be worshipped but obeyed, the Prophet (S) is not only to be recognized as a God-sent emissary but also to be obeyed. This principle that it is compulsory to obey the Prophet (S) is usually stated as a command by the Quran, a command which is repeated in the Quran 37 times with the imperative verbs *آمِنُوا* (believe) and *أَطِيعُوا* (obey):

وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ فَإِن تَوَلَّيْتُمْ فَإِنَّمَا عَلَىٰ رَسُولِنَا الْبَلَاغُ الْمُبِينُ *

And obey God, and obey the Messenger; but if you turn your backs, it is only for the Messenger to convey (the message) explicitly. (64:12)

فَآمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَالنُّورِ الَّذِي أَنْزَلْنَا وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ *

So believe in God and His Messenger and the Light which We have sent down. And God is informed of what you do. (64:8)

The Quran reports that the command to obey God and His prophets was central to the teaching of every prophet. The command *فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا* (So keep your duty to God and obey me.) was communicated by Noah (26:108), Hūd (26:126), Ṣāliḥ (26:144), Lot (26:163), Shu'ayb (26:179), and others. Ṣāliḥ (A) is reported to have

said to the people of Thamūd:

فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا أَمْرَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ * الَّذِينَ يَفْسِدُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا يُصْلِحُونَ *

So keep your duty to God and obey me. And obey not the command (amr) of the prodigal, who spread corruption in the earth, and reform not. (26: 150-152)

Jesus is reported to make the following plea to the Jews:

وَمُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ وَلَا حِجْلَ لَكُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي حُرِّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَجِئْتُكُمْ بِآيَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا *

...And (I come) confirming that which was before me of the Torah, and to make lawful some of that which was forbidden unto you. I come unto you with a sign from your Lord, so keep your duty to God and obey me. (3:50)

Jesus is reported as making a similar statement in 43:63. The Quran declares the general law that *وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا لِيُطَاعَ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ* ('And We did not send a prophet but to be obeyed by the permission of God' [4:64]. The phrase 'by the permission of God' is significant). The obedience to God is defined, hence, in terms of obedience to the Prophet Muhammad (S): *مَنْ يُطِيعِ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ* ('Whoever obeys the Messenger obeys God.' [4:80]). In the light of this it may be said that the ideas of *Dîn*, Law, and obedience are inextricably linked. In fact it is not possible to understand the religious history of mankind by dissociating the element of law and obedience to it from *Dîn*, *Dēn*, *Dhāt*, *Dharma*, *Dāta*, or whatever. Obviously obedience to God in this sense is not an undefined and unobservable commitment towards the unseen, transcendent God, but an observable and well-defined attitude vis-a-vis an objective entity, the *Dîn* (Law). As Dr. Smith observes, the term and the concept of *dîn* in the sense of law, is very ancient. Also, in Islam, the concept of *'ibādah*, the Islamic equivalent of 'worship', also contains the element of obedience. We noticed above the qualifying phrase *بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ* ('with the permission of God') in relation to obedience to the commands of the prophets. If God had not permitted obedience to the prophets, obeying (*iṭā'ah*) the prophets would have become equal to *shirk*, or equivalent to considering them 'gods'. This is what is implied in the following verse when the Quran reproaches the Jews and the Christians for obeying their religious figures in violation of Divine commands:

اتَّخَذُوا أَحْبَارَهُمْ وَرُهْبَانَهُمْ أَرْبَابًا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ...

*They have taken their rabbis and their monks as lords apart from God ...
(9:31)*

In a later chapter Dr. Smith compares faith and its expressions to those of love. The following ḥadīth of the Prophet, relates personal faith to justice, religiosity to the love of God, and the love of God to obedience to the laws of God and the commands of the Prophet (S), suggesting that faith, religiosity, and love of God are related to transcendence through the objective criteria of duty, law, and justice:

الشِّرْكُ أَخْفَى فِي أُمَّتِي مِنْ دَبِيبِ النَّمْلِ عَلَى الصَّفَا فِي اللَّيْلَةِ الظُّلْمَاءِ وَأَذْنَاهُ أَنْ تُحِبَّ
عَلَى شَيْءٍ مِنْ الْجَوْرِ أَوْ تُبْغِضَ عَلَى شَيْءٍ مِنَ الْعَدْلِ وَهَلِ الْدِينُ إِلَّا الْحُبُّ فِي اللَّهِ وَالْبُغْضُ
فِي اللَّهِ؟ قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ....

Shirk is more concealed in my Ummah than the crawling of an ant amidst rocks in the dark of night. The lowest degree of *shirk* is to like something unjust and to detest something just. Is the *Dīn* anything except (the command) to love and hate for the sake of God? And God has said: "Say (O Muhammad): If you love God, then follow me so that God too shall love you." (3:31)

The Meaning of *Dīn* in the Quran and Ḥadīth:

(1) First of all, it is used in the sense of a composite objective entity, which is virtually the same as the one conveyed by the term 'Law' in the 'Law of Moses.' It includes doctrines, laws, norms, ethical teachings, rituals, etc. Examples are 2:132, 2:256, 3:83, 9:11 (إخوانكُم في الدين literally 'your brethren-in-Law'), 9:29, 9:33, 9:36, 12:40, 42:13, 48:28, etc. It may be said that the element of law is always present in such instances, and it becomes predominant as in 12:76 (about the law of the king of Egypt), 22:78 (about the negation of *ḥaraj* with regard to Islamic laws), 42:13 (with the verb *shara'a*), 42:21 (with the verb *shara'ū*). The following verse is another relevant example:

الزَّانِيَةُ وَالزَّانِي فَاجْلِدُوا كُلَّ وَاحِدٍ مِنْهُمَا مِائَةَ جَلْدَةٍ وَلَا تَأْخُذْكُمْ بِهِمَا رَأْفَةٌ فِي دِينِ اللَّهِ
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ...

The fornicatress and the fornicator—scourge each of them a hundred stripes, and let not tenderness for them seize you in (executing) the Dīn of God, if you believe in God and the Last Day; ... (24:2)

Sometimes the meaning of the term gravitates specifically towards

the doctrine of *tawhīd*. In this sense *al-Dīn* means *tawhīd* as in the following verses :

مَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ إِلَّا أَسْمَاءٌ سَمَّيْتُمُوهَا أَنْتُمْ وَآبَاؤُكُمْ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ بِهَا مِنْ سُلْطَانٍ إِنْ الْحُكْمُ
إِلَّا لِلَّهِ أَمَرَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ ذَلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ *

(Quoting Joseph) That which you serve, apart from Him, is nothing but names yourselves have named, you and your fathers; God has sent down no authority touching them. Sovereignty (*al-hukm*) belongs to God; He has commanded (*amara*) that you shall not serve any but Him. That is the right *Dīn*; but most men know not. (12: 40)

فَاقِمِ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا فِطْرَتَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ ذَلِكَ الدِّينُ
الْقَيِّمُ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ *

So set thy purpose firmly for the *Dīn*—the nature (framed) of Allah, in which He hath created mankind. There is no altering (the laws of) Allah's creation. That is the right *Dīn*, but most men know not. (30:30)

The commentators almost invariably explain this verse as relating to *tawhīd* or the worship of the One God and its being ingrained in the human nature.

Dīn when used for Law seems to apply to a range of meanings: at one end it means law alone; at the other, creed alone; and most of the times both law and creed. Following is an example from *ḥadīth* of the usage of this term in this composite sense:

التَّوْحِيدُ نِصْفُ الدِّينِ

(The Prophet [S] said :) "Tawhīd is half of the *Dīn*." (*Tafsīr Nūr al-Tha-qalayn*, vol. IV, p. 565)

The foremost referent of *Dīn* in this sense is God Almighty Himself.

(2) The term *Dīn* above is used in the sense of an objective systematic entity independent of individuals, but it is also used in the sense of a social and historical phenomenon which is a manifestation of that entity. To explain by an imperfect analogy, we speak of the Arabic language as an entity with a vocabulary, grammar, and syntax of its own. We also talk about Arabic in another sense in which we refer to a certain linguistic phenomenon existing within certain geographical and temporal limits and which is a manifestation, however imperfect, of the literary Arabic language. Also in the case of *Dīn*, in the second sense, it is a social, historical and institutional manifestation of the systematic ideal. Although this usage does not seem to have occurred

in the Quran, following are three examples of this usage from ḥadīth:

لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عِمَادٌ وَعِمَادُ الدِّينِ الْفِقْهُ

(The Prophet [S] said:) “Everything has a support, and the support of the *Dīn* is expert knowledge (of the *Dīn*)”. (*Bihār al-'anwār*, vol. I, p. 216)

وَأَمَّا عِمَادُ الدِّينِ، وَجَمَاعُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ، وَالْعِدَّةُ لِلْأَعْدَاءِ، الْعَامَّةُ مِنَ الْأُمَّةِ؛ فَلْيَكُنْ صِغُوكَ لَهُمْ، وَمَيْلَكَ مَعَهُمْ.

(Imam 'Alī [A] in the letter to Mālik al-'Ashtar): It is the common people of the Muslim community who are the support of the *Dīn*, the base of the unity of Muslims, and the defence against the enemies. (All) your leanings should therefore be directed towards them and your sympathies aligned with them. (*Nahj al-balāghah*, Kutub, No. 53)

فَإِنَّ هَذَا الدِّينَ قَدْ كَانَ أُسِيرًا فِي أَيْدِي الْأَشْرَارِ، يُعْمَلُ فِيهِ بِالْهَوَى، وَتُظَلَبُ بِهِ الدُّنْيَا.

(Imam 'Alī [A], in his letter to Mālik al-'Ashtar): Indeed this *Dīn* was a hostage in the hands of wicked men; they acted upon it according to their whims and caprices and made it a means of satisfying their worldly ends. (*Nahj al-balāghah*, Kutub, No. 53)

In the first ḥadīth, the *Dīn* referred to is obviously not the same as the one whose expert knowledge is enjoined in accordance with the Quranic verse 9:122.

(3) The third meaning is a subjective one and means obedience, allegiance, attachment, adherence, loyalty, and worship. The following is an example from the Quran:

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ فَاعْبُدِ اللَّهَ مُخْلِصًا لَهُ الدِّينَ *

We have revealed to you the Book with the truth: therefore worship Allah, making *dīn* (obedience, allegiance and worship) sincerely to Him. (39:2)

In this sense the verb *dāna* means to follow, obey, worship, etc. as in the following example from ḥadīth.

مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ يَحْيَى، عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ الْحُسَيْنِ، عَنْ صَفْوَانَ بْنِ يَحْيَى، عَنِ الْعَلَاءِ بْنِ رَزِينِ، عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ مُسْلِمٍ قَالَ سَمِعْتُ أَبَا جَعْفَرٍ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ يَقُولُ: كُلُّ مَنْ دَانَ اللَّهَ بَعَادَةً يَجْهَدُ فِيهَا نَفْسَهُ وَلَا إِمَامَ لَهُ مِنَ اللَّهِ فَسَعِيَهُ غَيْرُ مَقْبُولٍ...

... Muḥammad ibn Muslim says, “I heard Abū Ja'far (al-'Imām al-Bāqir [A]) as saying: “Whoever offers devotion to God, endeavouring in this worship

without (the guidance of) an Imam appointed by God, his endeavour is not accepted....” (*Uṣūl al-Kāfī*, vol. II, p. 204)

Evidently, when used in the Islamic context, *dīn* is not just obedience and allegiance in general but is the profound and determining kind which is offered to the Deity and which definitively determines a man’s identity.

عَلِيُّ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ عِيسَى، عَنْ يُونُسَ، عَنْ مُعَاوِيَةَ بْنِ وَهَبٍ قَالَ: قَالَ أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ (ع) آفَةُ
الدِّينِ الْحَسَدُ وَالْعُجْبُ وَالْفَخْرُ.

... Abū ‘Abd Allāh (al-‘Imām al-Ṣādiq [A]) said: “Envy, *ujb*, and vainglory are baneful to *dīn*.” (*Uṣūl al-Kāfī*, vol. III, p. 418)

In the above ḥadīth, pride and envy are seen as obstacles in the way of obedience to God. The preparedness to obey God and to abide by His commands and laws is reified, and *dīn*, which embodies this obedience and devotion, is set in contrast to *dunyā*, the ‘world,’ i.e. attitudes, activities, and involvements which aim solely at sensual pleasure and worldly gain and do not carry the spark of obedience or devotion to God. Thus *dīn* and *dunyā* are hypostatizations of two different kinds of attitudes, and the dichotomy between the two is very different from the one between ‘secular’ and ‘religious’ as commonly understood in the Western culture, which is a dichotomy between two institutions rather than between two attitudes. Such a dichotomy is alien to Islam. Following are three examples from ḥadīth to illustrate this usage of the term *dīn*:

عَلِيُّ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ عِيسَى، عَنْ يُونُسَ، عَنْ أَبِي أَيُّوبَ الْخَزَّازِ، عَنْ أَبِي
حَمْرَةَ، عَنْ أَبِي جَعْفَرٍ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ: قَالَ أَمِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ (ع) إِنَّ مِنْ أَعْوَنِ الْأَخْلَاقِ عَلَى
الدِّينِ الرَّهْدَ فِي الدُّنْيَا.

... Amīr al-Mu’minīn (A) said: “The most helpful of moral qualities to *dīn* is detachment (*zuhd*) from the world.” (*Uṣūl al-Kāfī*, vol. III, p. 194)

عَلِيُّ عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ حَمَّادِ بْنِ عِيسَى، عَنْ رَبِيعِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، عَنْ فَضِيلِ بْنِ يَسَارٍ، عَنْ أَبِي
جَعْفَرٍ (ع) قَالَ: سَلَامَةُ الدِّينِ وَصِحَّةُ الْبَدَنِ خَيْرٌ مِنَ الْمَالِ، ...

... Abū Ja’far (A) said: “The soundness of *dīn* and the health of the body are better than wealth....” (*Uṣūl al-Kāfī*, vol. III, p. 306)

Contrary to Dr. Smith’s claim that “the plural ‘religions’... is impossible so long as one is thinking of something in men’s hearts, such

as piety, obedience, reverence, worship... (None of these words has a plural)" (p. 43), *dīn* in the subjective sense, also, has a plural, in the same way as the word 'loyalty' has a plural. Following is an example from the *Nahj al-balāghah*:

...، وَنَسَأَلُهُ الْمُعَافَاةَ فِي الْأَدْيَانِ، كَمَا نَسَأَلُهُ الْمُعَافَاةَ فِي الْأَبْدَانِ.

We beseech Him to grant us the wholesomeness of our allegiances (*adyān*) in the same way as we implore Him to give health to our bodies (*abdān*). (*Nahj al-balāghah*, *Khuṭab*, No. 99)

(4) Another sense of the word *dīn* is closely related to the first and the third pointed out above. It resembles the first one in that it also consists of beliefs to which one subscribes and the practices that one adopts, and like it can be stated and set forth without reference to individuals who subscribe to them, although it cannot be referred to God as a Divine prescription. It is similar to the third sense in that it is subjective and personal and primarily dependent on individuals. Following are two examples from the Quran and ḥadīth:

قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْكَافِرُونَ * لَا أَعْبُدُ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ * وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ * وَلَا أَنَا عَابِدٌ مَا
عَبَدْتُمْ * وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ * لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَلِيَ دِينِ *

Say: 'O disbelievers! I serve not what you serve, nor you serve What I serve, neither shall I serve what you serve, nor are you serving What I serve. Unto you your allegiance (*dīn*) and unto me my allegiance (*dīn*).' (109:1-6)

تَمَّ إِنَّ هَذَا الْأَسْلَامَ دِينَ اللَّهِ الَّذِي آصْطَفَاهُ لِنَفْسِهِ،... وَأَقَامَ دَعَائِمَهُ عَلَى مَحَبَّتِهِ. أَذَلَّ
الْأَدْيَانَ بِعِزَّتِهِ، وَوَضَعَ الْمِلَلَ بِرَفْعِهِ،...

Indeed this Islam is the *Dīn* of Allah, which He chose for Himself.... He based its foundations on the Love of Him, subdued other *adyān* through its power and humbled other creeds (*milal*) by raising it high (*Nahj al-balāghah*, *Khuṭab*, No. 198)

The plural *adyān* is used in the above ḥadīth. This plural does not occur in the Quran but a substitute *الدين كله* occurs in the verse 9:33. Similar usages in the Quran are *الكتاب كله* (3:154, 11:123), *الأمر كله* (3:119), and also *كل نفس* (40:17, etc.), *كل شيء* (48:21), *كل قلب* (40:35), etc.

This is the sense of *dīn* which comes closest to 'religion' in the sense of creed and system of tenets and practices. Its referent may be an individual or a group, and it may or may not involve devotion to any god or God, as can be seen from the following tradition of al-'Imām

al-Ṣādiq in which he explains the five different senses in which the word *kufr* is used in the Quran. In the course of his explanation, he makes the following remark about the *dahriyyah*:

الدَّهْرِيَّةُ وَهُمْ الَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ «وَمَا يُهْلِكُنَا إِلَّا الدَّهْرُ»، وَهُوَ دِينٌ وَضَعُوهُ لِأَنْفُسِهِمْ
بِالْأَسْتِحْسَانِ عَلَى غَيْرِ تَبَيُّنٍ مِنْهُمْ وَلَا تَحْقِيقٍ لِشَيْءٍ مِمَّا يَقُولُونَ،...

The *dahriyyah*... are those who say, "Nothing but Time destroys us"; it is a *dīn* that they have made up for themselves on the basis of speculation, without offering any grounds and without doing any research to substantiate what they say.... (*Uṣūl al-Kāfī*, vol. IV, p. 102)

(5) Three other closely related meanings of the word *dīn* are: *jazā'* (retribution), *ḥukm* (judgement), and *mulk* (sovereignty). It seems that all these meanings are related to the Quranic usage of the word for the Day of Judgement (2:133, 4:141, 16:124, 45:17, 22:69), which is also the day of retribution (6:93, 36:54, 40:17), when all men and the day would be absolutely subject to God's Sovereignty (22:56, 25:26, 40:16).³⁴ It may be said that all these different meanings are present when this word is used in combination with *yawm* (*yawm al-dīn*) as in 51:12, 26:82, 1:14, etc., or alone as in 107:1, 95:7, 51:6.

The readers will notice that except for the fourth sense of the word, all other different meanings of the term *dīn* (Law, obedience, judgement, retribution, and sovereignty) are closely related.

Divine Sovereignty, 'Islam', and 'Muslim':

Let us first see what Dr. Smith has to say about the meaning of the term *Islam* in the Quran. Here are some remarks which give an idea of his argument:

If we look carefully at the Quran, we find, first of all, that the term *islām* there is relatively much less used than are other related but more dynamic and personal terms, and secondly, that when it is used it can be, and on many grounds almost must be, interpreted not as the name of a religious system but as the designation of a decisive personal act. First of all, the fundamental fact is that in the Quran the word 'God' appears 2697 times; the word *islām*, eight times....

Secondly, in this scripture, and in classical Muslim religious literature later, even for the manward side of the relationship the great term and concept is 'faith'.... The Quran is concerned, and presents God as being concerned, with something that persons do, and the persons who do it, rather than with an abstract entity.... 'Islam' is obedience or commitment, the willingness to take on oneself the responsibility of living henceforth according to God's proclaimed purpose; and submission, the recognition not in theory but in overpowering act of one's littleness and worthlessness before the awe and majesty of God. It is a verbal noun: the name of an action, not of an insti-

tution: of a personal decision, not a social system. ...If we turn, also, to the classical verses that in modern times have been used as proof-texts for reification, these too yield a universal and prophetic, a dynamic and personal, summons, rather than systematized and impersonal statement. What in modern times has become 'Verily *the* religion in the eyes of God is *Islam*' originally meant (was taken to mean; for instance, by the most respected and authoritative of the early commentators, al-Ṭabarī) rather than to conduct oneself duly before God is to accept His commands; the proper way to worship Him is to obey Him—or, simply, true religion (*not* 'the true religion') is obeisance. ...Vivid and dynamic—and personal: these are the qualities of the term *islām* in the Quran. What was proclaimed was a challenge, not a religion (pp. 110-113) On scrutiny it appears that the almost universal Muslim use of the term *islām* in a reified sense in modern times is a direct consequence of apologetics.... The impulse to defend what is attacked would seem a powerful force toward reifying. This process has clearly been at work in the Islamic case, as in the European; only, more relentlessly. Once this factor was added to the internal secular tendencies towards institutionalizing, these seem to have become virtually irresistible. The modern situation, then, is strictly modern. We have noted above that the term '*nizām*, 'system,' is commonplace in the twentieth century in relation to Islam. This term, however, does not occur in the Quran, nor indeed does any word from this root; *and there is some reason for wondering whether any Muslim ever used this concept religiously before modern times.* (pp. 115-117, italics mine)

The above statements outline if not describe Dr. Smith's argument. First of all, numerical statistics are not always good clues to the understanding of any system of thought or the role of an idea in it. For example, the name of the Prophet (S), 'Muḥammad', occurs only four times in the Quran, and once as 'Aḥmad'. This should not make us discount his role as the communicator of revelation and a God-authorized legislator in Islam, although he is referred to by the terms *rasūl* and *nabī* in a great number of verses. The same is true of '*al-ʿIslām*', which is referred to by the term *al-Dīn*, *Dīn Allāh*, *Dīn al-ḥaqq*, *Dīnukum*, *Dīnuhu*, etc. in a great number of places. Moreover, the Quran discusses the detailed topics of creed, law, and morality, there being little need for frequent reference to the totality called 'Islam'. This is also true of other books and documents on various subjects. For example, there are very few occurrences of the phrases 'The Islamic Republic' or 'the Constitution' in the text of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The Constitution is concerned with setting forth the laws of Iran and its system of government called 'Islamic republic'. The need to refer to such totalities does not arise frequently. To give another example, an Indian, or an Iranian, or a Canadian, will seldom mention 'India', 'Iran', or 'Canada' when talking about the internal affairs of his country or of a region, province, or city or an individual, family, or a group. The need to mention such totalities arises more frequently when we discuss, for example, foreign relations,

foreign trade, or international affairs. Actually, the fact that Islam occurs in the Quran only eight times may be taken to suggest that it is because it refers to an institutionalized totality called 'Islam', the sum total of the doctrines, principles, laws, and precepts communicated to mankind through the Prophet (S), and which they are commanded to adopt and follow. Contrarily, the greater frequency of the occurrence of a term in a text or book does not prove its importance in the context of that work. For example, the phrase 'the Law of Moses' or 'the Law' occurs perhaps more frequently in the Acts and the letters of Paul than it does in all the books of the Old Testament or the Gospels, although its mention in the former is solely for the sake of repudiating the Law of Moses and rejecting its significance.

Like the term *dīn*, *islām* has also different meanings in the Quran and ḥadīth, both subjective and objective.

First of all, there is the subjective and personal sense of submission to God, His prophets, and His commands. In this sense *al-'islām* is the personal surrender of one to God, and the one who surrenders is called a *muslim*. This is the most frequent sense of the verb *aslama* in the Quran and its various derivatives including *al-'islām* and *muslim*. The following is an example:

قُولُوا آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطِ وَمَا أُوتِيَ مُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰ وَمَا أُوتِيَ النَّبِيُّونَ مِن رَّبِّهِمْ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِّنْهُمْ وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ *

Say: 'We believe in God, and that which is revealed unto us and that which was revealed unto Abraham, and Ishmael, and Isaac, and Jacob, and the tribes, and that which Moses and Jesus received, and that which the prophets received from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and unto Him we have surrendered (*nahnu lahu muslimūn*).'(2:136)

This surrender is not just "the ability to see the transcendent, and to respond to it; to hear God's voice, and to act accordingly", as Dr. Smith says, but also includes the recognition of God's prophets and submission to His commands communicated by them; it is related to the Eternal through a historical referent. To explain by an example, a law-abiding citizen of the United Kingdom, is not just a man who adores the king or the queen of the U.K. yet does not recognize the authority of the parliament or the government and its officials nor the laws of the country. Neither a law-abiding citizen is one who recognizes only those laws which were enacted, say, two hundred years ago, but who refuses to observe all laws enacted thereafter. By analogy, a *muslim* is one who recognizes God's sole Sovereignty, recognizes all His officials (i.e. the prophets), and abides by all those laws which apply to him. *Al-'islām* in this sense can be translated 'law-abidingness', and

muslim is one who is law-abiding. In this sense all the prophets and those who *followed* them, were *muslims*. Thus *al-'islām*, in this sense, is not just an act (it is an act so far as one decides to abide by the laws of God and recognizes His sovereignty and the authority of *all* of His prophets), but is also a state, the state of remaining law-abiding to the end of one's life.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ *

O believers, observe your duty to God as is His due, and die not save as in the state of surrender (wa antum muslimūn). (3:102)

The Quran makes it clear that the law-abiding and the outlaws are not equal:

أَفَنَجْعَلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ كَالْمُجْرِمِينَ * مَا لَكُمْ كَيْفَ تَحْكُمُونَ *

Shall We treat then those who have surrendered (muslimūn) as the law-breakers (mujrimūn)? What ails you, how you judge? (68:35-36)

In a verse revealed at al-Madinah, the Quran quotes the words of those Jews and Christians who recognized the Prophet (S) and embraced his message:

الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ هُمْ بِهِ يُؤْمِنُونَ * وَإِذَا يُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ قَالُوا آمَنَّا بِهِ إِنَّهُ الْحَقُّ
مِنْ رَبِّنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا مِنْ قَبْلِهِ مُسْلِمِينَ *

Those to whom We gave the Book before this believe in it (the Quran) and, when it is recited to them, they say, 'We believe in it; surely it is the truth from our Lord. Indeed, even before (we heard) it we were muslims (had surrendered). (28: 52-53)

So far what we have said corroborates Dr. Smith's position, with one difference: *islām* is not just an act but is a state. In the same way as to recognize the sovereignty of a State and to consider oneself a subject of that State are two different things, also, to accept the laws of a State as a loyal subject and to remain obedient to those laws as a law-abiding citizen are two different things again. Moreover, to have been law-abiding ten years ago is different from being law-abiding today. One who recognizes the sovereignty of a State but is not subject to its laws is considered a foreigner. One who recognizes the sovereignty of a State and considers its law as being applicable to him is considered a loyal subject. A loyal subject who abides by all the laws of his State is considered a law-abiding citizen. A loyal subject who breaks the law is considered an offender but his citizenship or loyalty is not questioned.

A citizen who recognizes the sovereignty of the State but does not recognize the legitimacy of the acting ruler is considered a rebel and outlaw. Let us read the following verse in this light:

مَا كَانَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ يَهُودِيًّا وَلَا نَصْرَانِيًّا وَلَكِنْ كَانَ حَنِيفًا مُسْلِمًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ *

Abraham was not a Jew, neither a Christian; but a muslim and one pure of faith; certainly he was not of the polytheists. (3: 67)

That is, 'Jew' and 'Christian' are just names of members of certain communities with different creeds and loyalties, membership in which is not a criterion of law-abidingness. Abraham was a law-abiding 'citizen' of God's Kingdom, which not all Jews or Christians are. Moreover, he was a pure monotheist, that is, recognized God as the sole Sovereign, while the Jews and Christians have divided loyalties and have not been free from overt and covert types of *shirk* (associating others with God, and recognizing the sovereignty of others). Is this a subjective interpretation of the term *al-'islām*? Not at all. In the same way as law-abidingness is not a subjective matter in any State whatsoever of the world, so also *al-'islām* involves as much inner condition as outward behaviour.

If before the advent of the Prophet (S) *al-'islām* was to recognize God as the sole Sovereign of the universe and Lawgiver, and to obey Him according to the Law of Moses (A) and the modifications made in it by Jesus (A), with the advent of the Prophet (S) it was automatically redefined as one who recognized the Prophet (S) as a God-sent Messenger and accepted the commands delivered by him. A similar criterion of loyalty and rebelliousness is usual throughout all human societies. A loyal citizen of the U.K. today, for instance, on the 1st of January 1986 is one who recognizes the legitimacy of the present government and its sovereignty over all regions under its control and recognizes the present laws of the country, not the person who neither recognizes the legitimacy of the present government nor its laws and insists on following the law of the country as it stood six hundred years ago and according to his own understanding of it. A similar criterion applies to *Dīn*. After the advent of the Prophet (S) a *muslim* was necessarily defined as one who recognized his authority as a God-sent apostle and emissary, and accepted in principle all the commands communicated and enacted by him. This is how the concept becomes institutionalized. The phrase 'loyal citizen' by itself is devoid of content. It becomes meaningful only when referred to a particular sovereign State and its system of law, which is an objective reality and an institution. Dr. Smith says:

I cannot say, *Lastu bi-muslimin*—for that would mean that I do not submit to God, which of course is not true and would be certainly obstreperous and indeed blasphemous. For a reverent person it is a quite absurd combination of words. I am a submitter (in Arabic, *muslim*) in accord with the truest apprehension as to what God's Will is of which I am capable. I am not a Muslim with a capital M in the technical sense of belonging to the institutionalized Islamic community system, partly by accident of birth and partly because the chief tradition of those who are members of that community system and I differ as to how best one knows what God's Will is; but we do not disagree in our acceptance, our *islām*, of such commands as we do apprehend. (p. 114)

As can be observed, Dr. Smith has a totally subjective perception of *islām* which borders on solipsism. It is equivalent, somewhat, to saying—from the Islamic viewpoint that is—that 'I am a loyal and law-abiding citizen of the United States, though I differ with all the Congresses and governments right from George Washington to the present as to how best the laws legislated by them and decisions made by governments represent the law of his majesty the king of England.'

A Muslim, with a capital M, is one who has accepted the ruling authority and its laws in principle and declared himself to be a loyal citizen of the Kingdom of God. If his declaration of loyalty is not sincere, he is a *munāfiq* (a 'hypocrite', according to the Quranic terminology). If his declaration of loyalty to the ruling authority and respect for its laws is merely perfunctory, he is a 'Muslim' though not necessarily a *muslim* or *mu'min* (i.e. a loyal, law-abiding citizen). The distinction between a 'Muslim' and a *muslim* is significant for God, Who knows about the reality of all things, manifest and hidden, and nothing is hidden from Him. But since men are not in a position to judge, all are *legally* treated as *muslimūn* or, *mu'minūn*. For human beings, the distinction, though real, is of theoretical importance. In this connection, let us examine a remark of Dr. Smith which he makes in a related footnote. He says:

Although I have not made a systematic investigation, I find some evidence to suggest that the practice of the members of this community calling themselves (and still later, their being called) 'Muslim' is an historical development that was preceded by a phase, lasting perhaps some centuries, in which it was more customary to use the term *mu'min* for this purpose. (Perhaps the adoption of *muslim* followed upon the theological-cum-political discussions as to the true nature of faith [*īmān*], originally the prime distinguishing characteristic. In these discussions there was a tendency for *islām* to come to mean outward conformity, *īmān* personal faith, so that gradually the distinction between the *mu'minūn* and the *muslimūn* came to be accepted in a sense roughly corresponding to the distinction in Christendom between the true and the visible church? ...) (p. 295)

If Dr. Smith had looked at the Quran carefully, he would have

known that the distinction between *islām* and *imān* is not a product of the discussions of Muslim theologians; the distinction is there in the Quran itself:

قَالَتِ الْأَعْرَابُ آمَنَّا قُلْنَا لَمْ تُؤْمِنُوا وَلَكِنْ قُولُوا أَسْلَمْنَا وَلَمَّا يَدْخُلِ الْإِيمَانُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ
وَأَنْ تُطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ لَا يَلِتْكُمْ مِنْ أَعْمَالِكُمْ شَيْئًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ * إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ
الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَرْتَابُوا وَجَاهَدُوا بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أُولَئِكَ
هُمُ الصَّادِقُونَ * قُلْ أَتَعْلَمُونَ اللَّهَ بِدِينِكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَاللَّهُ
بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ *

The Bedouins say, 'Āmannā' ('we believe', or 'we have become believers,' *mu'minūn*), Say: 'You do not believe (*lam tu'minū*), rather say, 'Aslamnā' ('we have surrendered', or 'we have become Muslims'); for *imān* (belief) has not yet entered your hearts. If you obey God and His Messenger, He will not diminish you anything of your works. God is All-forgiving, All-compassionate', The *mu'minūn* (believers) are those who believe in God and His Messenger, then have not doubted, and have struggled with their possessions and their lives in the way of God: those—they are the truthful ones (in their profession of faith in God, this is also a definition of *Mu'minūn*). Say: 'What, would you inform God about your *imān* (faith), and God knows what is in the heavens and what is in the earth? And God has knowledge of everything'. (49:14-16)

Thus we see that the distinction between outward conformity and inner faith is one which is drawn in the Quran itself. Dr. Smith, if he had read the Quran more carefully, would not have advanced this conjecture. In fact the terms *muslim* and *mu'min* are used in distinctly different senses in the *aḥādīth* of the Prophet (S) and the Imams (A) of the Shī'ah, where a careful distinction is made between *imān* and *islām*, between *mu'min* and *muslim*. We cannot go here into further details. The outward legal sense of *islām* and *muslim* can also be understood from the following words of the Prophet (S) which he uttered in the course of his famous farewell address delivered during the *Hijjat al-wadā'* (the last Hajj pilgrimage undertaken by the Prophet (S) about three months before his demise):

أَلَا إِنِّي إِنَّمَا أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَقَاتِلَ النَّاسَ حَتَّى يَقُولُوا: لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَآتَيْتِ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ، وَإِذَا
قَالُوهَا عَصَمُوا مِنِّي دِمَاءَهُمْ وَأَمْوَالَهُمْ إِلَّا بِحَقِّ وَحِسَابُهُمْ عَلَى اللَّهِ، ...

Indeed I have been commanded to fight against people until they say 'There is no god except Allah,' and (recognize) that I am the Messenger of Allah. When they have said it, their life and property are inviolate for me except with a sanction (of the Law), and their judgement rests with Allah.³⁵

One may advance innumerable examples from the ḥadīth literature of the usage of the term *muslim* in the outward community sense. Here is one example from the same address:

إِنَّ الْمُسْلِمَ أَخُو الْمُسْلِمِ لَا يَغْشَى وَلَا يَخُونُهُ وَلَا يَفْتَابُهُ وَلَا يُجِلُّ لَهُ دَمَهُ وَلَا شَيْءَ مِنْ مَالِهِ
إِلَّا بِطَيْبِ نَفْسِهِ،

The Muslim is Muslim's brother. He should neither deceive him, nor betray, nor backbite. His blood is inviolate, and so is his property except what he may voluntarily bequeath.³⁶

Dr. Smith's conjecture to the effect that 'Muslim' as a term for calling members of the Muslim community is a later development is absolutely baseless. The ḥadīth literature, both Shī'i, and Sunni, as well as early works on history, *tafsīr*, and jurisprudence, completely falsify such a guess. Dr. Smith shows a strong tendency to see 'facts' and 'evidence' which tend to support his analysis. In several places he advances irresponsible conjectures with a 'perhaps', which does not absolve him, especially since he is dealing with an important topic, and does not do sufficient justice to his own profession that "I feel it important that one enter on this study with a due sense of trepidation." (p. 8). The term *Muslim* is not merely the *definition* of one who surrenders—albeit perfunctorily—to the Sovereignty of God and recognizes the authority of the prophets (A) in general and that of the Prophet Muḥammad (S) in particular, it is also a *name*. This is not a conjecture but the declaration of God Almighty Himself in the Holy Quran:

وَجَاهِدُوا فِي اللَّهِ حَقَّ جِهَادِهِ هُوَ اجْتَبَاكُمْ وَمَا جَعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ مِنْ حَرَجٍ مِلَّةَ
آبَائِكُمْ إِبْرَاهِيمَ هُوَ سَمَّاكُمُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَفِي هَذَا لِيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ شَهِيدًا عَلَيْكُمْ وَتَكُونُوا
شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ...

(O believers) struggle for God as is His due, for He has chosen you, and has laid on you no impediment in the Dīn, being the creed (*millah*) of your father Abraham. He named you 'Muslims' (*sammākum muslimīn*) aforetime and in this (era), that the Messenger might be a witness over you, and that you might be witnesses over mankind.... (22:78)

The verb *sammā* means 'to give a name', 'to give a title', and 'to designate'. This specific meaning given to words of a general significance by Islam is called *al-ḥaqīqat al-shar'īyyah* by Muslim scholars. Such words as *ṣalāt* (originally, 'prayer'), *ḥajj* (originally, 'to set out on a journey'), *zakāt* (originally, 'increase') *ṣawm* (originally,

'abstinence'), *jannah* (originally, 'garden'), *nār* (originally, 'fire'), etc., were given new meanings and came to be used as technical terms in the Islamic context with new specific meanings which they did not possess before in the pre-Islamic era. The terms *islām*, *imān*, *muslim*, and *mu'min* also belong to this category.

The Meaning of 'Islām' in the Quran and Ḥadīth:

While discussing the meaning of *dīn*, we said that the term has, in the sense of 'religion', two meanings, one is objective (the Law) and the other personal if not entirely subjective (subjection, allegiance). If we deliberate over the meanings of the word *islām* in the Quran, we shall see that it is not only the description of the subjective *dīn* but also the name of the objective entity called the *Dīn* or the Shari'ah. Here also the case is similar to that of *dīn* with the difference that whereas the subjective *dīn* (allegiance) is derived from the objective *Dīn* (the Law), in the case of *islām*, a subjective and personal term is applied to an objective system of teachings. If we study the occurrences of the term *islām* in the Quran, we shall see that it is used in three different senses. The term is used in a fourth additional sense in ḥadīth literature, which is not found in the Quran.

(1) In the first sense, the term used is always *al-'islām*, not *islām*. In this sense the term occurs six times in the Quran. Consider one of the verses in which it occurs:

... الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا...

... Today I have perfected your *Dīn* for you, and I have completed My blessings upon you, and I have approved *al-'Islām* for your *Dīn*.... (5:3)

God Almighty, in this verse, speaks about the perfection and completion of something which is an objective entity. The *Dīn* whose perfection is declared by God is the Law, the Shari'ah, not the subjective *dīn* (personal allegiance) of every individual Muslim with respect to God. In a footnote, Dr. Smith makes the following remark in connection with this verse:

Nowadays this is usually taken as meaning, 'Today I have completed your religion for you', and as having been revealed, accordingly, at the very end of the Prophet's career, closing the exposition of Islam as a now completed system. This interpretation was apparently unknown in the third century to al-Ṭabarī and to those of the Companions whose views he reports, if one may argue *e silentio*. They did not know when this verse was revealed, and among their various suggestions did not proffer this one. (p. 297)

It seems that Dr. Smith wrote these lines without any knowledge of the Shi'i tradition, and without inquiring into the Sunni ḥadith and *tafsir* literature.³⁷ otherwise he would have found a satisfactory explanation of this verse in the exegesis of 'Ali ibn Ibrāhīm al-Qummi (d. circa 307/919), a contemporary of al-Ṭabari (d. 310/922). Al-Ṭabari, as a historian and an exegete of the Quran is regarded by the Shi'ah as being a highly biased, Sunni. It is highly improbable that Al-Ṭabari did not know about the Shi'i stand that this verse was revealed after the Prophet (S) formally declared 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib (A) as his successor at a place called Ghadir Khumm on his returning journey from Mecca, after performing his last Hajj. However, al-Ṭabari's preference is understandable; Dr. Smith's singling out of al-Ṭabari's interpretations is also understandable, because he is more than ready to overlook any evidence which might throw doubt on his analysis.

According to the Shi'i interpretation, or rather Shi'i history, the revelation of the above verse was preceded by that of the following one:

يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ فَمَا بَلَّغْتَ رِسَالَتَهُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْصِمُكَ
مِنَ النَّاسِ...

O Messenger, communicate that which has been sent down to thee from thy Lord; for if thou dost not, thou wilt not have delivered His Message. And God will protect thee from men.... (5:67)

The above message delivered to the Prophet (S) in the last months of his life was related to the issue of the continuity of the leadership of the Muslim community after the Prophet (S)—an issue of so great importance that completion of *al-Islām* rested upon its announcement. 'Ali ibn Ibrāhīm gives the following account in his commentary under the above verse:

فَخَرَجَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ مِنْ مَكَّةَ يُرِيدُ الْمَدِينَةَ حَتَّى نَزَلَ مَنْزِلًا يُقَالُ لَهُ
غَدِيرُ حُمٍّ... إِذْ نَزَلَتْ عَلَيْهِ هَذِهِ الْآيَةُ «يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ وَإِنْ لَمْ
تَفْعَلْ فَمَا بَلَّغْتَ رِسَالَتَهُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْصِمُكَ مِنَ النَّاسِ...» فَقَامَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (ص) فَقَالَ بَعْدَ أَنْ
حَمِدَ اللَّهَ وَأَتَى عَلَيْهِ: أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ هَلْ تَعْلَمُونَ مَنْ وَلِيُّكُمْ؟ فَقَالُوا نَعَمْ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ، ثُمَّ قَالَ
أَلَسْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ أَنِّي أُولَى بِكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ؟ قَالُوا بَلَى، قَالَ اللَّهُمَّ أَشْهَدُ، فَأَعَادَ ذَلِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ
ثَلَاثًا كُلُّ ذَلِكَ يَقُولُ مِثْلَ قَوْلِهِ الْأَوَّلِ وَيَقُولُ النَّاسُ كَذَلِكَ وَيَقُولُ اللَّهُمَّ أَشْهَدُ، ثُمَّ أَخَذَ بِيَدِ
أَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ (ع) فَرَفَعَهَا حَتَّى بَدَأَ لِلنَّاسِ بَيَاضَ أُبْطُنَيْهِمَا ثُمَّ قَالَ «أَلَا مَنْ كُنْتُ مَوْلَاهُ فَهَذَا
عَلِيِّ مَوْلَاهُ، اللَّهُمَّ وَالِ مَنْ وَالَاهُ وَعَادِ مَنْ عَادَاهُ وَأَنْصُرْ مَنْ نَصَرَهُ وَأَخْذُلْ مَنْ خَذَلَهُ وَأَحِبَّ

مَنْ أَحَبَّهُ، ثُمَّ رَفَعَ رَأْسَهُ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ فَقَالَ: اللَّهُمَّ أَشْهَدْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَنَا مِنَ الشَّاهِدِينَ، فَاسْتَفْهَمَهُ
عُمَرُ فَقَامَ مِنْ بَيْنِ أَصْحَابِهِ فَقَالَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ هَذَا مِنَ اللَّهِ وَمِنْ رَسُولِهِ؟ فَقَالَ رَسُولُ
اللَّهِ (ص) نَعَمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ....

... Then the Prophet (S) left Makkah bound for al-Madīnah, until he reached a place called Ghadīr Khumm.... Here the verse "O Messenger, communicate that which has been sent down..." was revealed. The Prophet (S) stood up and after praising God said, "O people, do you know who is your *walī* (guardian, lord)?" They said, "Yes, Allah and His Messenger." Then the Prophet said: "Don't you know that I am *awlā* (comparative degree of *walī*) to you than yourselves?" They said, "Yes". The Prophet said, "O God, be witness." Then he repeated his question three times and the people answered three times in the same way, and each time the Prophet said, "O God, be witness." Then he took Amīr al-Mu'mīnīn ('Alī) by his hand and raised it until the white of their armpits was visible to the people. Then he said, "Indeed, of whoever I am *mawlā* (lord), this 'Alī is also his *mawlā*. O God, befriend whoever befriends him and be enemy of him who treats him with enmity; help whoever assists him and abase whoever degrades him, and love whoever loves him." Then the Prophet (S) raised his face towards heaven and said, "O God, be witness over them, and I am (also) of the witnesses." Then 'Umar stood up from among the Companions and asked the Prophet (S), "O Messenger of Allah, is this (a command) from God and His Messenger?" The Prophet (S) replied, "Yes, it is from God and His Messenger...." ³⁸

According to the Shī'ī tradition the verse "Today I have perfected your *Dīn* for you, and I have completed My blessings upon you, and I have approved *al-'Islām* for your *Dīn*", revealed on this occasion, pertains to the *wilāyah* of 'Alī (A) as the last duty to be revealed. Al-Shaykh al-Ṣadūq (d. 381/991), who lived a generation after al-Ṭabarī, entitled his famous work *Ikmāl al-Dīn wa itmām al-ni'mah* ('Perfection of Religion and Completion of Blessings') under the inspiration of this verse. The Shī'ī position about *khilāfah* and *imāmah* was too well known to be unknown to the highly learned al-Ṭabarī.

As to the ḥadīth literature, many examples of the use of *al-'Islām* in this sense could be cited. Following are three examples:

عَلِيُّ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ وَعَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ الصَّلْتِ جَمِيعاً، عَنْ حَمَادِ بْنِ عِيسَى، عَنْ حَرِزِ بْنِ
عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، عَنْ زُرَّارَةَ عَنْ أَبِي جَعْفَرٍ (ع) قَالَ: بُنِيَ الْإِسْلَامُ عَلَى خَمْسَةِ أَشْيَاءَ: عَلَى الصَّلَاةِ
وَالزَّكَاةِ وَالْحَجِّ وَالصَّوْمِ وَالْوِلَايَةِ. قَالَ زُرَّارَةُ: فَقُلْتُ: وَأَيُّ شَيْءٍ مِنْ ذَلِكَ أَفْضَلُ؟ فَقَالَ الْوِلَايَةُ
أَفْضَلُ لِأَنَّهَا مِفْتَاحُ حُجَّتِ وَالْوَالِي هُوَ الدَّلِيلُ عَلَيْهِنَّ.

'Alī ibn Ibrāhīm, from his father, and 'Abd Allāh ibn al-Ṣalt, both of them from Ḥammād ibn 'Isā, from Ḥarīz ibn 'Abd Allāh, from Zurārah, who reports that Abū Ja'far (A) said: "Islam is based on five things: *ṣalāt*, *zakāt*, *hajj*, *ṣawm*, and *wilāyah*." Zurārah says, "I asked him, 'Which of them is

superior to the others?' He said: 'Wilāyah is superior, because it is the key to all the rest of them and the Wālī is the guide with respect to them' ..."³⁹

إِنَّ الْأِسْلَامَ بَدَأَ غَرِيبًا وَسَيَعُودُ غَرِيبًا كَمَا بَدَأَ، فَطُوبَى لِلْغُرَبَاءِ.

Islam began in estrangement and would become a stranger as it was in the beginning. (When that happens), blessed be the strangers.⁴⁰

فَرَضَ اللَّهُ... الْجِهَادَ عِزًّا لِلْإِسْلَامِ

God Almighty has made *jihād* a duty for the sake of (ensuring the power and) the honour of *al-'Islām*. (*Nahj al-balāghah*, *Hikām*, No. 252)

Here also, as in the case of *Dīn*, we may distinguish between two closely related meanings: the one in the sense of the systematic ideal (the Law), and the other in the sense of its existence as a cultural-institutional entity in history and society. The first sense is observable in the Quranic verse 5:3 and the ḥadīth of al-'Imām al-Ṣādiq narrated by al-Kulaynī from Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Khālid quoted below (pp. 180-81). The second sense is present in the first of the above three aḥādīth which bases the existence of Islam in history and time on such observances and institutions as *ṣalāt*, *zakāt*, *ṣawm*, *ḥajj*, and *wilāyah*; the second and the third aḥādīth also seem to refer to the second meaning of *al-'Islām*.

To take up a related issue, the use of the concept *nizām*, system, for Islam grew naturally out of the teachings of the Quran and those of the Prophet (S) regarding Islam being a perfect, complete, and comprehensive body of teachings. The Quran considers itself all-inclusive in its coverage and scope, (6:38, 6:59). Consider the following ḥadīth:

مَا أَعْلَمُ مِنْ عَمَلٍ يُقَرِّبُكُمْ إِلَى اللَّهِ إِلَّا وَقَدْ أَمَرْتُكُمْ بِهِ، وَلَا أَعْلَمُ مِنْ عَمَلٍ يُقَرِّبُكُمْ إِلَى التَّارِ إِلَّا وَقَدْ نَهَيْتُكُمْ عَنْهُ.

I don't know of any deed which brings you closer to God but that I commanded you to do it, and I don't know of any act which draws you towards hell but that I forbade you from it.⁴¹

And according to Islamic teachings the Prophet (S) inherited the combined knowledge of all the prophets (A). The idea of Islam as a complete and perfect system of Law recurs throughout the ḥadīth literature. See, for instance, the *Khuṭbah* 18 of the *Nahj al-balāghah* which condemns the practice of basing legal judgement on personal opinion (*ra'y*), a practice which questions the perfection of the Quran

and the teachings of the Prophet (S). The command to refer all disagreements and disputes among Muslims to the Quran and the Sunnah of the Prophet (S) is also based on such an outlook (4:59). Montgomery Watt, in his *Islam and Christianity Today*, after citing the false story of the Caliph Umar's ordering of the burning of the library of Alexandria, says, "This story is probably not factually true, but it expresses exactly a belief still common among Muslims, namely that all the religious and moral guidance required by the human race from now to the end of time is to be found in the Quran (coupled with the example of Muhammad)." (p. 3) Whereas M. Watt is of the opinion that "this belief may go back to the feeling of the nomadic Arab that he was superior to all peasants and city-dwellers and had nothing to learn from them," Dr. Smith says, "The explicit notion that life should be, or can be ordered according to a system, even an ideal one, and that it is the business of Islam to provide such a system, seems to be a modern idea (and perhaps a rather questionable one)." (p. 117) This is an example of the kind of intrepid opinions and conjectures advanced by two modern 'authorities' on Islam in the West. Dr. Smith's statement that 'the notion that life should be ordered, according to a system is a modern idea' is surprising indeed. Wasn't the Mosaic Law, as laid out in the Torah, a complete system? Weren't all civilizations of the ancient world and societies of the medieval ages organized according to some systematic pattern. Moreover, what is 'questionable' about the notion? Aren't the different activities of life in the modern world organized in some kind of systematic way? Basically what is science but the endeavour to discern systematic patterns in nature, society, and history? Absence of a system means lawlessness and disorder, and negation of order means not only negation of law and science but of civilized life. In fact it is Dr. Smith's Christian mentality which speaks out here. What is questionable for him is that there should exist some kind of Divine Law; otherwise as an intelligent man living in the highly organized Western society he would hardly make such a statement about man-designed systems. The idea that things should be according to some system is a fundamental category of the human mind. The very fact that terms such as Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, etc., have been coined presumes that men expect everything to fall into a systematic pattern and are baffled when they notice that such a pattern does not emerge; what emerges is a confusing disorder called Hinduism or Christianity, not a clear-cut system. The inclination to systematize is so deeply rooted that almost all great philosophers have tended to conceive a complete philosophical system, an enterprise abandoned by modern philosophy only since the nineteenth century.

According to Dr. Smith, 'there is some reason for wondering whether any Muslim ever used the concept *nizām* (system) religiously

before modern times.' (p. 117) The word *nizām* and its various derivatives are found in ḥadīth literature, though not in the Quran; although the idea of order and harmony in the Islamic teachings is expressly stated there (4:82). In the *Nahj al-balāghah*, the word *nizām* and its derivatives are used in 11 places: 'the *nizām* (order) of the Ummah is based on trust';⁴² 'God has made the reciprocal duties of the ruler and the subjects the ordering principle (*nizāman*) of the solidarity of the people and the strength of their Dīn;⁴³ 'If the Aṣḥāb al-Jamal were to succeed despite the hollowness of their claims, it would have resulted in the disruption of the system (*nizām*) of the Muslim community,'⁴⁴ 'the head of the State is like the string (*nizām*) which keeps together the beads of a rosary,'⁴⁵ etc. As can be seen, the concept of system as a harmonious order is used to refer to the social, political, and legal aspects of the Islamic *Dīn* and community, and the concept is used here, a Muslim would insist, 'religiously', because there is no separation between 'religious' and 'secular' in Islam.

(2) The second sense in which the term *islām* is used in the Quran is a personal and legal conception. It is used in this sense in the Quran to refer to the perfunctory conversion of the Bedouins whose sincerity of surrender and depth of commitment to God and His commands are only partially accepted (49:17, 9:74). *Islām*, here, means the personal act of conversion by which one declares one's allegiance to *al-'Islām*; in this sense it means 'conversion to Islam' or 'the condition of being a Muslim (with a capital M).' The following ḥadīth refers to such a meaning of *islām*.

الْإِسْلَامُ عَمَلِيَّةٌ وَالْإِيمَانُ فِي الْقَلْبِ

(The Prophet [S]:) *Islām* is an outward, public (act), whereas *imān* is (inward and hidden) inside the heart.⁴⁶

مَنْ أَسْلَمَ عَلَيَّ يَدِيهِ رَجُلٌ وَجَبَتْ لَهُ الْجَنَّةُ.

(The Prophet [S]:) Paradise is obligatory upon one through whom another man embraces Islam.⁴⁷

The following ḥadīth of al-Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) defines *al-'Islām* as an objective entity independent of individuals, and also distinguishes between *Muslim* and *mu'min*:

عِدَّةٌ مِنْ أَصْحَابِنَا، عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ خَالِدٍ، عَنْ عُثْمَانَ بْنِ عِيسَى، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ مُسْكَانٍ، عَنْ بَعْضِ أَصْحَابِهِ، عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ: قُلْتُ لَهُ مَا الْإِسْلَامُ؟ فَقَالَ: دِينُ اللَّهِ اسْمُهُ الْإِسْلَامُ وَهُوَ دِينُ اللَّهِ قَبْلَ أَنْ تَكُونُوا حَيْثُ كُنْتُمْ وَبَعْدَ أَنْ تَكُونُوا فَمَنْ أَقَرَّ

بِدِينِ اللَّهِ فَهُوَ مُسْلِمٌ وَمَنْ عَمِلَ بِمَا أَمَرَ اللَّهُ عَزَّوَجَلَّ بِهِ فَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ.

... One of the companions of 'Abd Allāh ibn Muskān asked al-Imām al-Ṣādiq, "What is *al-'Islām*?" The Imam said, "(It is) the *Dīn* of Allah, and its name is *al-'Islām*. It was the *Dīn* of Allah before you came into existence and so will it be after you have been. So one who acknowledges the *Dīn* of God is a Muslim, and one who acts according to that which God Almighty has commanded is a *mu'min*. (*Uṣūl al-Kāfi*, "Bāb fī anna al-'imān mabthūth li-jawāriḥ al-badan kullihā", vol. 3, p. 63)

Another tradition of al-Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) explains the difference between *islām* (in the personal sense) and *imān*:

عَلِيُّ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ: عَنِ الْعَبَّاسِ بْنِ مَعْرُوفٍ، عَنْ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنِ أَبِي نَجْرَانَ عَنْ حَمَّادِ بْنِ عُمَانَ
عَنْ عَبْدِ الرَّحِيمِ الْقَاصِرِ قَالَ: كَتَبْتُ مَعَ عَبْدِ الْمَلِكِ بْنِ أَعْيَنَ إِلَى أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ (ع) أَسْأَلُهُ عَنِ
الْإِيمَانِ مَا هُوَ؟ فَكَتَبَ إِلَيَّ مَعَ عَبْدِ الْمَلِكِ بْنِ أَعْيَنَ: سَأَلْتَ رَحِمَكَ اللَّهُ عَنِ الْإِيمَانِ،
وَالْإِيمَانُ هُوَ الْفِرَارُ بِاللِّسَانِ وَعَقْدُ فِي الْقَلْبِ وَعَمَلٌ بِالْأَرْكَانِ وَالْإِيمَانُ بَعْضُهُ مِنْ بَعْضٍ وَهُوَ دَارٌ
وَكَذَلِكَ الْأَسْلَامُ دَارٌ وَالْكَفْرُ دَارٌ فَقَدْ يَكُونُ الْعَبْدُ مُسْلِمًا قَبْلَ أَنْ يَكُونَ مُؤْمِنًا وَلَا يَكُونُ مُؤْمِنًا
حَتَّى يَكُونَ مُسْلِمًا، فَالْأَسْلَامُ قَبْلَ الْإِيمَانِ وَهُوَ يَشَارِكُ الْإِيمَانَ، فَإِذَا أَتَى الْعَبْدُ كَبِيرَةً مِنْ كَبَائِرِ
الْمَعَاصِي أَوْ صَغِيرَةً مِنْ صَغَائِرِ الْمَعَاصِي الَّتِي نَهَى اللَّهُ عَزَّوَجَلَّ عَنْهَا كَانَ خَارِجًا مِنَ
الْإِيمَانِ، سَاقِطًا عَنْهُ اسْمُ الْإِيمَانِ وَتَابِتًا عَلَيْهِ اسْمُ الْأَسْلَامِ فَإِنْ تَابَ وَاسْتَغْفَرَ عَادَ إِلَى دَارِ
الْإِيمَانِ وَلَا يُخْرِجُهُ إِلَى الْكُفْرِ إِلَّا الْجُحُودُ وَالْأَسْتِحْلَالُ: أَنْ يَقُولَ لِلْحَلَالِ هَذَا حَرَامٌ وَلِلْحَرَامِ
هَذَا حَلَالٌ وَدَانَ بِذَلِكَ، فَعِنْدَهَا يَكُونُ خَارِجًا مِنَ الْأَسْلَامِ وَالْإِيمَانِ، دَاخِلًا فِي الْكُفْرِ...

... 'Abd al-Rahīm al-Qasīr says, "I and 'Abd al-Malik ibn A'yan wrote a letter to Abū 'Abd Allāh (A) asking him as to what is *imān*. He wrote to me and 'Abd al-Malik ibn A'yan: 'You, God bless you, have asked about *imān*. *Imān* means acknowledgement made by the tongue, covenant made in the heart, and action performed by bodily members. *Imān* has a zone (*dār*) of its own, so also *islām* and *kufr* have their own zones. A man is a *Muslim* before he becomes a *mu'min*, and he does not become a *mu'min* before being a *Muslim* at first. Therefore, *islām* precedes *imān* and includes it. So when someone commits a major or a minor sin from which God Almighty has forbidden, he goes out of the zone of *imān* and loses his title to *imān*, although the title of *islām* remains with him. And when he turns away from his sin and repents, he returns into the zone of *imān*. One is not driven out into the zone of *kufr* (apostasy) unless he repudiates (God's commands) or is guilty of *istiḥlāl*, that is if he regards something forbidden as permissible and something permissible as forbidden. So when he does it, he is expelled from (the zones of) *islām* and *imān* and made to enter into the (zone of) *kufr*... (*Uṣūl al-Kāfi*, "Bāb ākharu minhu wa fīhi anna al-'islām qabl al-'imān", vol. 3, p. 44)

The following aḥādith explain *islām* as an outward legal status in the Islamic Law, and *īmān* as an inner spiritual condition:

عَلِيُّ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ أَبِي عُمَيْرٍ، عَنِ الْحَكَمِ بْنِ أَيْمَنَ، عَنِ الْقَاسِمِ الصَّيْرَفِيِّ شَرِيكَ الْمَفْضَلِ قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ أَبَا عَبْدِ اللَّهِ (ع) يَقُولُ: الْأَسْلَامُ يُحَقِّنُ بِهِ الدَّمُ وَتُؤَدَّى بِهِ الْأَمَانَةُ، وَتُسْتَحَلُّ بِهِ الْفُرُوجُ، وَالثَّوَابُ عَلَى الْإِيمَانِ.

... Al-Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) said: “*Islām* is something by which the blood (of a Muslim) becomes inviolate, the trusts are fulfilled, and marriages become legitimate, but the (Divine) reward is given in virtue of *īmān*. (*Uṣūl al-Kāfi*, “*Bāb anna al-islām yuḥqanu bihi al-dam wa anna al-thawāb ‘alā al-īmān*”, vol. 3, p. 38)

الْحُسَيْنُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ، عَنْ مُعَلَّى بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ، وَعِدَّةٌ مِنْ أَصْحَابِنَا، عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ جَمِيعاً عَنِ الْوَسَّاءِ، عَنْ أَبَانَ، عَنْ أَبِي بَصِيرٍ، عَنْ أَبِي جَعْفَرٍ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ: سَمِعْتُهُ يَقُولُ: «قَالَتِ الْأَعْرَابُ آمَنَّا قُلْ لَمْ تُؤْمِنُوا وَلَكِنْ قُولُوا أَسْلَمْنَا» فَمَنْ زَعَمَ أَنَّهُمْ آمَنُوا فَقَدْ كَذَبَ وَمَنْ زَعَمَ أَنَّهُمْ لَمْ يُسَلِمُوا فَقَدْ كَذَبَ.

... Al-Imām al-Bāqir recited the verse, “The Bedouins say, ‘We believe’. Say: ‘You believe not’, but say, ‘We have embraced *Islam*’. Therefore, whoever that says that they (the Bedouins) are believers (*annahum āmanū*), lies, and whoever that denies that they are Muslims also lies. (*Uṣūl al-Kāfi*, “*Bāb anna al-islām yuḥqanu bihi al-dam wa anna al-thawāb ‘alā al-īmān*,” vol. 3, p. 40)

(3) The third meaning of *islām* is also a personal one and subjective, in the sense of absolute and complete surrender to God. While a ‘Muslim’ is one who has taken the first step of declaring his allegiance to God and to His commands, a *muslim* is one who has overcome all distractions which keep one from obeying God in all aspects of his life, inward and outward. The Quran tells us about the supplication of Abraham (A) and Ishmael (A) to God, as they raised the walls of the Holy Ka‘bah:

رَبَّنَا وَاجْعَلْنَا مُسْلِمِينَ لَكَ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِنَا أُمَّةً مُسْلِمَةً لَكَ....

Our Lord, make us muslims to Thee, and of our seed a nation muslim to Thee;... (2:128)

It is this meaning of *islām* which Imam ‘Ali (A) explains in the following ḥadith from the *Nahj al-balāghah*:

لَا نُسَبِّنَ الْأِسْلَامَ نِسْبَةً لَمْ يَنْسُبْهَا أَحَدٌ قَبْلِي. الْأِسْلَامُ هُوَ التَّسْلِيمُ، وَالتَّسْلِيمُ هُوَ الْيَقِينُ، وَالْيَقِينُ هُوَ التَّصَدِيقُ، وَالتَّصَدِيقُ هُوَ الْإِقْرَارُ، وَالْإِقْرَارُ هُوَ الْأَدَاءُ، وَالْأَدَاءُ هُوَ الْعَمَلُ.

Amir al-Mu'minin 'Alī (A) said: "I will give a definition of *islām* as no one has given before me; *islām* is submission (*taslīm*); submission is conviction (*yaqīn*); conviction is affirmation (*taṣdīq*); affirmation is acknowledgement (*iqrār*); acknowledgement is fulfilment (*adā*), and fulfilling is action (*'amal*)." (*Hikam*, 125)

In this ḥadīth, Imam 'Alī is not speaking of *islām* in the sense of conversion, a mere legality. Neither is he speaking of a psycho-spiritual process in time. He speaks of an existential state of absolute absorption of the entire being of a *muslim* in the Will of Allah, *subḥānahu wa ta'ālā*. He means that the will and the intellect, the heart and the mind of the *muslim*—all are in the state of complete surrender to God. The Prophet (S) was not only such a man, he was the foremost of them (6: 163; 39: 12). His will was so much absorbed in the Will of God that his entire speech was *wahy* (revelation) (53:4). His actions were so free of the contaminations of the selfish will that God considers his actions as His Own (8:17). God Himself is witness to his absolute *islām*;

قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ *

Say (O Muḥammad): 'My prayer and my observances, my living and my dying—all are for Allah, the Lord of all Being.' (6:162)

(4) The fourth sense in which the word *islām* is used is that of 'Islamic era'. The term in this sense does not occur in the Quran, but is used much in ḥadīth and works on history. Following are two examples from the *Nahj al-balāghah*:

... فَإِنَّ مِنْهُمْ الَّذِي قَدْ شَرِبَ فِيكُمْ الْحَرَامَ وَجُلِدَ حَدًّا فِي الْأِسْلَامِ.

(Imam 'Alī (A) in a letter to the people of Egypt:) 'Amongst them (Mu'āwiyah's companions) is he (Walid ibn 'Uqbah) who drank that which is forbidden (i.e. wine) and was flogged in the Islamic era.' (*Kutub*, No. 62)

فَإِسْلَامُنَا قَدْ سُمِعَ، وَجَاهِلِيَّتُنَا لَا تُدْفَعُ.

(Imam 'Alī, in a letter to Mu'āwiyah): 'Our station in the Islamic era is well known and our position in the era of the Jāhiliyyah cannot be denied. (*Kutub*, No. 28)

Is the concept 'Religion' Adequate?

In the fifth chapter of the book, Dr. Smith argues against the

adequacy of the concept of 'religion' as a systematic entity, but his argument, though brilliant, is not free from equivocation because of the confusion he sometimes makes between 'religion' as a systematic entity and 'religion' as designating one aspect of life among others.

His contention is that the old concepts are not meaningless but "imprecise and liable to distort what they are asked to represent." (p. 125) Following are the main points that Dr. Smith makes in the course of his argument:

1. He points out that he is "not alone in modern times in a dissatisfaction with them," and cites the views of a number of writers—Christian, Jewish, Hindu, Buddhist, and Muslim—to the effect that 'religion', apparently in the sense of one aspect of life among others, is insufficient. Dr. Smith, equivocating on the term 'religion', persuades the reader that the opinions quoted share his dissatisfaction with the term in the sense of a systematic entity.

2. The concept 'religion' in the sense of a systematic entity is insufficient for the man of faith, for "God does not reveal religions, He reveals Himself." The equivocation is also present here:

... "Historically, no great religious leader (except Mani?) has 'founded a religion', or preached one. Almost to a man, religious reformers, prophets, eponymous geniuses have severely criticized or attacked the religious environment in which they found themselves, calling men away from a concern with mundane institutions and systems to a transcendent reality, behind and beyond these. A religious reformer does not seek to reform religion [note the sense of an aspect of life], but seeks to reform men's awareness of their total environment, and men's lives; and in the process reified religion [the word appears to be used here in the systematic sense] has often to be shattered, in order that that awareness and those lives may be restored to wholeness. (p. 128)

It may be noted that Dr. Smith has a characteristically Christian notion of revelation. Moreover, his statement about God's revealing Himself would not apply to the system of teachings called Buddhism in which the very concept of God is absent and gods are irrelevant. Also his thesis that religious leaders neither founded nor preached a religion (if the word is taken to mean a systematic entity) is not historically correct. Moses not only gave the Law (doctrines and laws), he converted the 'ethnic' identity of the Children of Israel into a 'religious' one. Buddha and Mahavira founded new religious orders on the basis of the *Dharma* or Law which they preached. The Prophet Muhammad (S) taught the *Din* (doctrines and laws) and forged a new community or ummah out of the diverse tribes of Arabia, and Islam gave a new identity to peoples of diverse linguistic and ethnic backgrounds. The prophets of Israel called men to God not by calling them to some

transcendent reality, but by calling them to the obedience of His laws and the teachings of His prophets:

The earth dries up and withers; the whole world grows weak; both earth and sky decay. The people have defiled the earth by breaking God's laws and by violating the covenant He made to last for ever. (Isaiah 24.4-5)

And they called men to God and godly life by condemning unjust laws and corrupt morals:

You are doomed! You make unjust laws that oppress My people. That is how you prevent the poor from having their rights and from getting justice. That is how you take the property that belongs to widows and orphans. What will you do when God punishes you? (Isaiah 10. 1-3)

You are doomed! You call evil good and call good evil. You turn darkness into light and light into darkness. You make what is bitter sweet, and what is sweet you make bitter.... You are doomed! Heroes of the wine bottle! Brave and fearless when it comes to mixing drinks! But for just a bribe you let guilty men go free, and you prevent the innocent from getting justice. So now, just as straw and dry grass shrivel and burn in the fire, your roots will rot and your blossoms will dry up and blow away, because you have rejected what the Lord Almighty, Israel's holy God, has taught us. (Isaiah 5. 22-24)

God teaches men not by calling their attention to one of the aspects of life called 'religion' but by instructing and legislating with respect to all the various aspects of human life. It is difficult to see what can prevent such a system of instructions and laws from being seen as a systematic entity. Here Dr. Smith's argument is not free of equivocation. When he says, "A religious reformer does not seek to reform religion..." he is speaking of religion as one of the aspects of life; but when he says, "and in the process reified religion has often to be shattered..." he is probably referring to 'religion' as a systematic entity.

3. The concept 'religion' or named religions are insufficient for the observer, because the concepts 'the religion' or 'the religions' omit the transcendent dimension from what they seek to represent. "The participant can see very clearly that the outsider may know *all about* a religious system, and yet may totally miss the point." (p. 134) "To know 'a religion' is not yet to know the religious life of him whom one observes." (p. 135)

Although it is true as Dr. Smith says that mere knowledge of a religious system is "inherently and necessarily inadequate for interpreting men's religious life", it is difficult to see how the observer's abandoning of the concept of religion as a systematic entity will enable him to come to grips with the religious quality of the life of the participant. The inadequacy, it seems, lies in being an outsider, not in

conceptualizing religions as systematic entities. The outsider has to put his observations into some kind of general pattern (as in the case of Christianity or Buddhism) or into a series of closely or loosely connected patterns (as in the case of what is called 'Hinduism'). To discourage him from it is equivalent to depriving him of the only tool of understanding at his disposal.

4. The systematic concept of religion is based on essentialism. But:

Neither the believer nor the observer can hold that there is anything on earth that can legitimately be called 'Christianity' or 'Shintoism' or 'religion' without recognizing that if such a thing existed yesterday, it existed in a somewhat different form the day before. If it exists in one country (or village), it exists in somewhat different form in the next. The concepts were formed before the ruthlessness of historical change was recognized, in all its disintegrating sweep. (p. 142)

Essences do not have a history. Essences do not change. Yet it is an observable and important fact that what have been called the religions do, in history, change. (p. 143-144)

Moreover, no historian can understand the rise of any of the great religious movements "who does not give at least as much importance to the creative response of the followers as to the activity or ideas of its 'founder'." (p. 123) Dr. Smith's argument against essentialism in the realm of the study of religion is put in these words:

What exists cannot be defined. What obstructs a definition of Hinduism, for instance, is precisely the richness of what exists; in all its extravagant variety from century to century and from village to village. The empirical religious tradition of the Hindus developing historically in the minds and hearts and institutions and literatures and societies of untold millions of actual people is not a form, but a growing congeries of living realities. It is not to be compressed within or eviscerated into or confused with any systematic intellectual pattern....

I do not mean merely that to define Hinduism, or Taoism, or Protestantism is difficult. That, everyone knows. My point rather is that it is in principle impossible, and almost perverse. One has radically misunderstood our world if one imagines that things can be defined, and specially living things, and especially human involvements. Not to have recognized that mundane reality—in its complexity, its particularity, and its givenness—outspaced our conceptualizations of it is not yet to have adopted that humility before facts that normatively characterizes modern study.

Obviously, I am not suggesting that what men have called the religions do not exist. The point is rather that, as every historian of them knows almost to his bewilderment, they exist all too copiously. It is the richness, the radical diversity, the unceasing shift and change, the ramification and complex involvement, of the historical phenomena of 'religion' or of any one 'religion' that create the difficulty. What has been called Christianity is, so far as history is concerned, not one thing but millions of things, and hundreds of millions of persons. 'Islam' could perhaps fairly be understood if only it had

not existed in such abundant actuality, at differing times and in differing areas in the minds and hearts of differing persons, in the institutions and forms of differing societies, in the evolving of differing stages. (pp. 144-145) ... Whatever exists mundanely cannot be defined; whatever can be defined does not exist. (p. 146)

We shall deal with this argument of Dr. Smith against conceptualizing religion as a systematic entity after mentioning his another, following, argument against it.

5. Similar to the view which regards 'religion' as an ideal or essence is what is called 'nature and origin' theory, according to which the "earliest form of religion or of a particular religion is somehow the true form, with all subsequent development an aberration." Dr. Smith puts his argument against this view "perhaps hardly worth serious consideration any more though popular at the turn of the century," in these words:

To equate Buddhism starkly with the Buddha's teachings or the first decades of the Sangha's life is to dismiss with scant justice the rich elaboration of the Mahayana tradition in China and Japan. This is virtually to posit something called a religion and then to assert that it has had no history; to leave unexplained and unnoticed almost the whole religious history of man.... (p. 148) It is rather surprising that this view should still find the support that it does, so little tenable does it appear under scrutiny. Indeed, in any realm at all involving historical development, this surely quite breaks down. In the first place, there is no *a priori* reason, and perhaps no historical evidence, for believing that all instances of 'Hinduism', for example, or 'Taoism' or 'Buddhism' must have something in common. It is both logically and historically possible that two quite different things can both be Hindu. Two very different things indeed, or a hundred different things, have all been Buddhist. Secondly, even if there were a least common denominator, it does violence to such religious faith as men have historically had to discount as unessential and irrelevant whatever is particular or special or unique in any case There are serious difficulties, thirdly, in attempts to intellectualize the phenomena by postulating a transcendent ideal of which the historical actualities are a succession of mundane and therefore imperfect, compromised manifestations. (pp. 149-150)

... A Muslim might believe that true Islam is an idea in the mind of God, with earthly Islam an historical series of shadowy reflections. An agnostic or a Jew or a Christian, however, cannot see it so. How are they to interpret the rich development of Islamic religious life?.... If religion or a religion is anything at all, it is not only in fact but in theory something in which actual living persons are involved.

A modification of this idealistic essentialism is for the historian to define Islam as an ideal not in heaven but in the minds of Muslims. 'Islam', then, becomes what Muslims conceive it to be. More accurately, the historian posits an Islam that has been the ideal (the series of ideals) that Muslims have held of Islam. This is somewhat attractive. It is for working purposes a considerable improvement over less personalist essentialisms, chiefly because it induces a careful attention to what has been going on not only overtly but

in the Muslims' head and heart. Yet again there are serious difficulties. It omits the imperfections that the believer does not choose to see. (pp. 150-151)

Dr. Smith seems to be quite justified in emphasizing the significance of change and historical development in the sphere of religion. He is also right in stressing the significance of diversity in this sphere. But it would be absurd to suggest that it is the business of the comparative study of religion to study this diversity and variations at the level of individuals because of the sheer impossibility in the task. Moreover, no science is devoted, with the possible exception of astronomy and geology, to the study of individuals. Dr. Smith also does not make such a suggestion. His emphasis on the diversity is mainly aimed at rejecting 'the religions' as valid objects of study. In the sixth chapter of the book he suggests what he calls 'cumulative tradition' as the valid object of the study of religion.

Dr. Smith's argument, as described in (4) and (5) above, suffers from certain major flaws. Firstly, he is not always adequately clear about the concepts whose adequacy he is contesting. This is shown by his frequent equivocation on the term 'religion.' Secondly, it is too general, lacking attention to the particular cases involved. Thirdly, he seems to have framed his argument with mainly Hinduism and Christianity in his mind, although he makes passing references to other traditions.

Dr. Smith, in pointing out the diversity in the religious sphere on the one hand, and by rejecting the concept 'the religion' as a systematic entity on the other, seems to imply that the diversity is not only just an empirical fact but something necessary, unavoidable, and perhaps ordained by God. It is not to be deplored as a plague afflicting man's religious life, but to be treated as a fact of healthy existence. In this, his philosophy of religion is basically Hindu, not Christian. This view remains tacit throughout Dr. Smith's analysis. Another pre-eminent doctrine implicit in this view is that what is called 'religion' is something evolved and developed exclusively, by men, the founders as well as the followers. God does not reveal anything. To this view, on which Dr. Smith's entire analysis is based and which would be unacceptable to any Muslim, the Quran replies in these words:

وَمَا قَدَرُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ إِذْ قَالُوا مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْنَا بَشِيرًا مِنْ شَيْءٍ...

They did not make a true estimate of God (i.e. His Greatness and His love for His creatures) when they said, 'God has not sent down aught on any mortal'.... (6:91)

Neither can the Muslim share Dr. Smith's attitude towards diversity in the sphere of religion, when the Quran says:

... أَنْ أَقِيمُوا الدِّينَ وَلَا تَتَفَرَّقُوا فِيهِ...

... Establish the Din, and do not be divided therein.... (42:13)

وَمَا اخْتَلَفْتُمْ فِيهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَحُكْمُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ...

And in whatsoever you differ, the judgement therein belongs to Allah.... (42:10).

The Quran lays great emphasis on unity in the matter of the *Din* and warns against difference and diversity:

وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ تَفَرَّقُوا وَاخْتَلَفُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْبَيِّنَاتُ وَأُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ

عَظِيمٌ *

And be not as those who separated (from one another) and disputed after the clear proofs had come unto them. For such there is an awful chastisement. (3:105)

According to the Quran, the Jews and the Christians divided into sects not because of any deficiency in the *Din* of God, but because of their internal rivalries:

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحُكْمَ وَالنُّبُوَّةَ وَرَزَقْنَاهُمْ مِنَ الظَّيْبَاتِ وَقَضَّيْنَاهُمْ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ * وَأَتَيْنَاهُمْ بَيِّنَاتٍ مِنَ الْأَمْرِ فَمَا اخْتَلَفُوا إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْعِلْمُ بَغْيًا بَيْنَهُمْ...

Indeed, We gave the Children of Israel the Book, the Judgement, and the Prophethood, and We favoured them above all peoples. And gave them clear laws. And they differed not until after the knowledge had come unto them, through mutual rivalries.... (45:16-17)

Some other verses relevant in this regard are 4:98, 6:153 and 3:103.

According to the Quran, the *Din* of God—which is an entity independent of the believers and their behaviour—is the Path of Allah. Those who believe in its doctrines and follow its laws are those that are on the Straight Path, and they live in accordance with the Truth (*haqq*). There are others who follow the doctrines and laws invented by human fancy (*hawā*; pl. *ahwā*) which make them deviate from the right path (see verses 38:26, 53:3, 79:40, 7:176, 18:28, 20:16, 25:43, 28:50, 45:23, 45:18, 6:150, 6:56, 2:120, 2:145, 5:49, 13:37, 28:50, 30:29,

42:15, 47:14, 47:16, etc). The *Din*, as revealed by God and proclaimed by all the prophets, is one. The path of Allah is one, although there are innumerable deviate paths. Those who claim that God does not reveal any *Din* reject Divine guidance, not knowing that it is in accordance with God's Grace and Beneficence that He should guide mankind after creating them.

According to the Quran, the diversity in the religious sphere is because men have not followed Divine guidance (*al-hudā*) but the dictates of their *ahwā'* which may vary from one sect to another, from one generation to another, and from one individual to another. If there is diversity in the Islamic tradition, it is because of the various fabrications of *ahwā'* which have been sanctified as part of the religious faith by various Muslim sects, each rejoicing in its tenets and laws:

وَإِنَّ هَذِهِ أُمَّتُكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَأَنَا رَبُّكُمْ فَاتَّقُونِ * فَتَقَطَّعُوا أَمْرَهُمْ بَيْنَهُمْ زُبُرًا كُلُّ حِزْبٍ
بِمَا لَدَيْهِمْ فَرِحُونَ *

(God said to the prophets). And lo! this your religion is one religion and I am your Lord, so keep your duty unto Me. But they (mankind) have broken their religion among them into sects, each party rejoicing in its tenets. (23: 52-53).

If religion is Law, Dr. Smith would agree with us in affirming that Lawlessness has been most rampant in this sphere, although he would call it "the richness, the radical diversity, the unceasing shift and change, the ramification and complex involvement." To deny the existence of *Din* on the basis of the diverse manifestations of religiosity is equal to denying the existence of the law of a country for the reason of the rampancy of crime and diversity of illegal behaviour. It is not Islam which has existed in abundant actuality, at different times and in different areas, but the behaviour of Muslims and their understanding of it. To say, as Dr. Smith says, "If religion or a religion is anything at all, it is not only in fact but in theory something in which actual living persons are involved," is like saying, for instance, that 'if the physical laws of nature are anything at all, they are not only in fact but in theory something in which the physicists' minds are involved'. In addition, as we said earlier, it is not the business of the study of religion, nor is it a possibility, to study something in which actual living persons are involved. That which *can* be studied is a broad pattern which is common to the religious behaviour of individuals in a recognizable group or community. And that would be of interest to a sociologist studying what is called religious behaviour, but it would be only of marginal interest for the student of religion. Such a study has the same relation to the study of religion as the study of law to that of

the actual legal behaviour of citizens.

Moreover, from the Shi'ah viewpoint, it is not right to define Islam as a transcendent ideal in the mind of God. According to the Shi'ah belief, the complete *Dīn* (doctrines and laws) is contained in the Quran and ḥadīth of the Prophet (S) and the Imams (A). It is up to the 'ulamā' and the *mujtahids* to acquire as complete an understanding of the *Dīn* as is possible by studying and scrutinizing the texts of the Quran and ḥadīth. The *mujtahids* are authorities and *marāji'* (those to whom reference is made) in the matters of the *Dīn*. They may not be infallible, but their authority is valid because the Lawgiver has sanctioned reference to them during the period of the Occultation in which recourse to the Imam is not possible. Above all 'ulamā' and *marāji'*, is the Imam himself, who is present and possesses perfect and complete knowledge of the *Dīn*, his knowledge being identical with the revealed *Dīn*. The *Dīn* as known to the Imam is the ultimate criterion and standard for all Muslims. He embodies perfect Islam. According to the Shi'ah belief, the world is never without an Imam, manifest or hidden, who is God's deputy on the earth, being the representative of His Law and Sovereignty. He is infallible and free from sin and error. He knows not only the standing laws of God but also the previous laws given to the former prophets throughout human history. He possesses all the scriptures of the past prophets and is the reservoir of all Divine knowledge given to mankind since Adam.

He is the *ḥujjah* (proof, testimony) of God upon all human beings of his time. He knows perfectly all the true meanings of the Quran and is its interpreter *par excellence*. Without an Imam, the world would perish. His existence is so necessary that if only two human beings were to survive upon the face of the earth, one of them would have to be the *ḥujjah* of God.

The relation of the personal Islam of every Muslim to that of an 'ālim is, for instance, that of rough means of weighing and measuring to more precise standards. The Islam as known to the Imam is the most perfect standard and criterion of all. This relation is not the one between real and ideal, but the one between two things which are equally real; one of them is a rough approximation, while the other is a perfect criterion. Without the Imam, who is a Divine standard and criterion, the realm of religion becomes susceptible to absolute chaos and absolute relativism, a chaos in which there is no standard or criterion, like a country where in the absence of a supreme legitimate authority every citizen were to set himself up as a lawgiver. Without the presence of an Imam, Religion becomes an inaccessible, hypothetical ideal beyond time and history, and in other words, something mundanely non-existent. Without the presence of the Imam, Islam is reduced to a chaotic bulk, 'cumulative tradition,' a "mass of overt

objective data that constitute the historical deposit ... of the past religious life of the community": mosques, "theological systems, legal and other social institutions, conventions, moral codes, myths," legends, "anything that can be and is transmitted from one person, one generation, to another."

Without the Imam, even the Quran loses its function of being an anchor of Islam against disintegrative change and becomes a prey to fancies and *ahwā'*; it becomes, as Dr. Smith says, "a victim both of the flux and the imperfections of history". Without the Imam, we would be forced to accept Dr. Smith's analysis as being valid even in the case of Islam, and "give at least as much importance to the creative response of the followers as to the activity or ideas of its 'founder'," (p. 123) Without the Imam, even Islam practically, if not theoretically, loses its status as the *Dīn*, an objective system of doctrines and laws independent of individuals, and is reduced to a religious tradition, an amorphous mass of contradictory interpretation and diverse realities. It is only when we accept the existence of the Imam that we can posit an objective entity, *Dīn*, always present as a living criterion and standard and a witness upon all mankind. Without the Imam, the realm of religion becomes a dark ocean of *ahwā'* into which the sun of truth does not shine. It is this truth which is stressed in the following traditions of the Prophet (S) and the Imams (A):

قَالَ النَّبِيُّ (ص): مَنْ مَاتَ وَهُوَ لَا يَعْرِفُ إِمَامَهُ، مَاتَ مِيتَةً جَاهِلِيَّةً.

(The Prophet [S] said): Whoever dies without recognizing his Imam, dies a death of *Jāhiliyyah* (an era in which the ignorance of the *Dīn* was prevalent). (*Bihār al-'anwār*, vol. 23, p. 77.)

قَالَ الْأَمَامُ الْبَاقِرُ (ع): كُلُّ مَنْ دَانَ اللَّهَ عَزَّوَجَلَّ بِعِبَادَةٍ يَجْهَدُ فِيهَا نَفْسَهُ وَلَا إِمَامَ لَهُ مِنَ اللَّهِ، فَسَعِيَّهُ غَيْرُ مَقْبُولٍ وَهُوَ ضَالٌّ مُتَحَيِّرٌ وَاللَّهُ شَانِيٌّ لِأَعْمَالِهِ وَمَثَلُهُ كَمَثَلِ شَاةٍ ضَلَّتْ عَنْ رَاعِيهَا وَقَطِيعِهَا

(Al-'Imām al-Bāqir [A] said:) Anyone who strives to serve God Almighty and worships Him on one's own, without following an Imam from God, his labour is dismissed. Such a man is misguided and lost, and his acts are regarded as loathsome by God. He is like a sheep which has lost its shepherd and flock." (*Uṣūl al-Kāfi*, "Kitāb al-ḥujjah," "Bāb ma'rifat al-'Imām wa al-radd ilayh, vol. I, p. 255)

قَالَ الْأَمَامُ الْبَاقِرُ (ع): فِي قَوْلِهِ تَعَالَى «فَأْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَالنُّورَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلْنَا» النُّورُ وَاللَّهُ الْأَيْمَةُ مِنْ آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ، وَهُمْ وَاللَّهُ نُورُ اللَّهِ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ، وَهُمْ وَاللَّهُ نُورُ اللَّهِ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ، وَاللَّهُ ... لِنُورِ الْأَمَامِ فِي قَلْبِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَنْوَرُ مِنَ الشَّمْسِ

المُضِيَّةِ بِالنَّهَارِ...

Al-'Imām al-Bāqir [A], explaining the verse 64:8 of the Quran : 'So believe in Allah and His Messenger and the Light which We have sent down,' said, "By God, 'the Light' is the Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt of Muhammad (S) until the day of Resurrection. They are, by God, 'the Light that God has sent down'. They are, by God, the Light of God in the heavens and upon the earth.... The light of the Imam in the hearts of the believers shines brighter than the sun during the day." (*Tafsir Nūr al-thaqalayn*, vol. V, p. 341)

... عَنْ إِسْحَاقَ بْنِ عَمَّارٍ عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ (ع) قَالَ : سَمِعْتُهُ يَقُولُ : إِنَّ الْأَرْضَ لَا تَخْلُو إِلَّا وَفِيهَا إِمَامٌ، كَيْمَا إِنْ زَادَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ شَيْئًا رَدَّهْمُ وَإِنْ نَقَصُوا شَيْئًا أَتَمَّهُ لَهُمْ.

... Ishāq ibn 'Ammār says, "I heard Abū 'Abd Allāh (A) as saying, 'Indeed, the earth is never without an Imam, so that whenever the believers add anything [to the *Dīn*], he holds them back, and when they detract something [from it], he completes it for them.' " (*Uṣūl al-Kāfī*, "Kitāb al-hujjah," "Bāb anna al-hujjat lā taqūmu li-Allāh 'alā Khelqih illā bi al-'Imām," vol. I, p. 251)

Without the Imam, it isn't order but absolute chaos which rules the world. He is the vital link which connects mankind with its Lord and aligns them with His Will. If ever all mankind is to constitute a single world community that would be possible when they submit to the Sovereignty of God, by submitting to His *Dīn* and to the Leadership of the Imam. There can be no global order based on the present state of chaos. However, the global order that Dr. Smith envisions is based on such a chaos. "One of our modern problems", he says, "is to construct a world-wide community even though it be composed of a diversity of religious traditions". Since he denies the existence of a systematic entity called *Dīn*, he is forced to uphold a view of faith which is absolutely individualistic and relativistic. After denying that there can be any ideal of faith (in all religious traditions including Islam), he writes:

Is the worshipper also to be content with no ideal of faith? The historian and even the philosopher may accept faith for what it has been, and look no further for some final essence. But can it be reckoned an ultimately personal matter not only for others but also for oneself? I believe it can, and must.... My faith is an act that I make, myself, naked before God. Just as there is no such thing as Christianity (or Islam or Buddhism), I have urged, behind which the Christian (the Muslim, the Buddhist) may shelter, which he may set between himself and the terror and splendour and living concern of God, so there is no generic Christian faith; no 'Buddhist faith', no 'Hindu faith', no 'Jewish faith'. There is only my faith, and yours, and that of my Shinto friend, of my particular Jewish neighbour. We are all persons clustered in mundane communities, no doubt, and labelled with mundane labels but, so

far as transcendence is concerned, encountering it each directly, personally, if at all. In the eyes of God each of us is a person, not a type.

There is nothing in heaven or on earth that can be legitimately called the Christian faith. There have been and are the faiths of individual Christians, each personal, specific, each immediate. Besides, there have been now and then some generalized statements by theologians, intellectual systematizations of what they as persons conceived that that faith ought to be, though these generalized statements have differed among themselves and no one of them has been or could be free of the humanity (particularity, fallibility, historicity) of the man or men who composed it.... Neither for the outside observer nor for the believer is there in heaven a generalized prototype of Christians' faith. Faith not only is but ought to be mundane, man's response. There is no ideal faith that I ought to have. There is God Whom I ought to see, and a neighbour whom I ought to love....

The ideal towards which I move is not an ideal of my own faith but is God Himself, and my neighbour himself. Faith is not part of eternity; it is my present awareness of eternity....

I certainly do not deny, then, that Christians in their religious life have something in common—or Muslims, or any group, or all men together. What I rather am asserting (conformably both to the historian, who cannot see that common element, and to the man of faith, who therein can) is that what they have in common lies not in the tradition that introduces them to transcendence, not in their faith by which they personally respond, but in that to which they respond, the transcendent itself. (pp. 191-192)

Dr. Smith's outlook of faith is also inspired by Hindu thought, and as such it conflicts with the Islamic view of it. Faith (*īmān*), according to the Islamic teachings is a mode of human existence in which the human being is in harmony with the Divine Being. God is transcendent as well as immanent, and nearer to one than his jugular vein (50:16). He is Sovereign and Guide; neither human freedom annuls His Sovereignty, nor human intelligence can do without His Guidance. Dr. Smith is right in pointing out that there is no such thing as a generic 'Christian faith' or 'Buddhist faith', but he is wrong in denying that there exists an objective criterion of the faiths of persons independent of individuals. Here also, according to Islam, the criterion is *Dīn* and conformity to it, as stated in the following tradition from *al-Kāfī*:

عَلِيُّ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ عِيسَى، عَنْ يُونُسَ، عَنْ سَلَامِ الْجُفَيْيِّ قَالَ: سَأَلْتُ أَبَا عَبْدِ اللَّهِ (ع) عَنِ الْإِيمَانِ، فَقَالَ: الْإِيمَانُ أَنْ يُطَاعَ اللَّهُ فَلَا يُعْصَى.

...Salām al-Ju'fī says, "I asked Abū 'Abd Allāh (al-'Imām al-Ṣādiq) (A) about faith. He said, 'Faith means to obey God and not to disobey Him.'" (*Uṣūl al-Kāfī* (Tehran, Intishārāt 'Ilmiyyah Islāmiyyah) "*Kitāb al-'īmān wa al-kufr*", vol. III, p. 55)

Since Dr. Smith denies that there is an ideal objective system of

teachings, in all religious traditions, he is forced to accept a relativistic view of faith. On this view, the various religious traditions are, for instance, like different traditions of cooking, all of which have a common aim, nourishment, with the difference that even in cooking certain norms of taste particular to a tradition and certain scientific criteria from the viewpoint of nutrition are applicable. He denies that even such criteria exist in the realm of religion.

As we said before, the major flaw in Dr. Smith's analysis is that it takes all religions, including Islam, in its generalizing sweep. To us it appears to be more valid in some cases and less so in others. It is perhaps completely valid in the case of what is called 'Hinduism' and 'Christianity' in which "the ruthlessness of historical change in its disintegrating sweep" is all too apparent. Dr. Smith has Hinduism and Christianity before his mind when he says, "Any attempt to conceptualize a religion is a contradiction in terms." (p. 141) It is less applicable in the case of Buddhism and Judaism, which are relatively more secure against the waves of time due to their more homogeneous scriptures. It is still less valid in the case of Sunnī Islam, which after losing the great anchor of the Imamate of the Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (A) somehow managed to check further disintegrative changes by closing the door of *ijtihād* and by stressing on consensus (*ijmā'*). The analysis is least applicable to the Imāmiyyah religion which has been firmly anchored against drift by the dual and complementary anchors of the Quran (*Kitāb Allāh*) and the Imamate of the Ahl al-Bayt. It is this immunity of the *Dīn* to the disintegrating forces of history which is highlighted in the following *mutawātir* tradition of the Prophet Muḥammad (S), which has been extensively narrated both by Shī'i and Sunni sources:

حَدَّثَنَا عَلِيُّ بْنُ مُنْذِرٍ الْكُوفِيُّ، نَا: مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ فَضِيلٍ، نَا: الْأَعْمَشُ عَنْ عَطِيَّةَ، عَنْ أَبِي سَعِيدٍ،
وَالْأَعْمَشُ عَنْ حَبِيبِ بْنِ أَبِي ثَابِتٍ، عَنْ زَيْدِ بْنِ أَرْقَمٍ: قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ
وَسَلَّمَ: إِنِّي تَارِكٌ فِيكُمْ مَا إِنْ تَمَسَّكْتُمْ بِهِ لَنْ تَضِلُّوا بَعْدِي، أَحَدُهُمَا أَعْظَمُ مِنَ الْآخَرِ، كِتَابُ
اللَّهِ، حَبْلٌ مَمْدُودٌ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ، وَعَسْرَتِي أَهْلُ بَيْتِي، وَلَنْ يَتَفَرَّقَا حَتَّى يَرِدَا عَلَيَّ
الْحَوْضَ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ تُخَلِّفُونِي فِيهِمَا.

On the authority of 'Alī ibn Mundhir al-Kūfī, from Muḥammad ibn Fuḍayl, from al-'A'mash, from 'Aṭiyyah, from Abū Sa'id (al-Khudrī), and (according to another chain of narrators) al-'A'mash, from Ḥabīb ibn Abī Thābit, from Zayd ibn Arqam, who said that the Prophet (S) said: "I am leaving (two things) behind to which if you hold fast you will never be misguided after me, one of them being greater than the other: the Book of Allah, which is like a cable extending from the heaven to the earth, and my Family, my Ahl al-

Bayt. They will never separate from one another until they return to me at the Pond (of al-Kawthar). Now watch out how you go about them after me." (*Ṣaḥīḥ al-Tirmidhī*, vol. II, p. 220; see also *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, vol. II, p. 238; *Musnad Aḥmad*, vol. V, pp. 181-182, vol. III, p. 26.

Concluded; wal-ḥamdu lillāh

NOTES:

32. It still survives in modern Persian in such words as *dād* (justice), *dādgar* (just), *dādkhwāhī* (pleading for justice), *dādgāh* (court of justice), etc.

33. Plato makes the moral basis of his laws also a part of the legal code (*The Laws*, Books 4 & 5), and puts it in its preamble. The Athenian is referring to the inclusion of those ethical doctrines in his code when he says, "There are a number of other topics which a legislator who thinks as I do simply must mention, but they are not easily expressed in the form of a law." (p. 179)

34. See, for instance, al-Zamakhshari, *Asās al-balāghah*, under *dīn*.

35. Al-Ya'qūbi, *Tārikh-e Ya'qūbi* (Tehran 1362 H.S.), Persian trans. by Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Āyati, p. 507.

36. *Ibid.*, p. 506.

37. See al-'Allāmah al-'Amini's *al-Ghadīr* for a comprehensive study of the Ghadīr Tradition related to the verse 5:3. Sayyid Ḥāmid Ḥusayn Lakhnawī, also, has dealt with this tradition in his *'Abaqāt al-'anwār*.

38. 'Alī Ibn Ibrāhīm al-Qummi, *Tafsīr al-Qummi* (Beirut 1968), ed. by al-Sayyid Tayyib al-Mūsawī al-Jazā'iri, pp. 173-174.

39. *Uṣūl al-Kāfi*, Vol. III (Tehran, Arabic text with Persian translation by Ḥājj Sayyid Jawād Muṣṭafawī), p. 30.

40. *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, kitāb No. 1, ḥadīth No. 232; *Sūnan al-Tirmidhī*, kitāb No. 38, bāb No. 13; *Sūnan al-Dārimī*, kitāb No. 20, bāb No. 42; *Sūnan Ibn Mājjah*, kitāb No. 36, bāb No. 15.

41. Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ Nahj al-balāghah*.

42. *Nahj al-balāghah* (Beirut, 1387), ed. by Ṣubḥī al-Ṣāliḥ, *Ḥikam*, No. 252, p. 512.

43. *Ibid.*, *Khuṭab*, No. 216, p. 333.

44. *Ibid.*, *Khuṭab*, No. 169, p. 244.

45. *Ibid.*, *Khuṭab*, No. 146, p. 203.

46. *Musnad Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal*, Vol. III, p. 135

47. Qāḍī Quzā'i, *Sharḥ-e Fārsī-ye Shihāb al-'Akhbār* (Tehran 1361), ed. by Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusaynī Urmawī, p. 194.

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