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Original Research Paper

Gerechtigkeit als Grundlage des Weltfriedens: John Rawls und die Idee einer anständigen muslimischen Gesellschaft

Hossein Houshmand

Research Associate, The Institute for the Humanities, Simon Fraser University, Canada

Empfangen: 13.12.2024; Akzeptiert: 15.01.2025

Zusammenfassung:

Traditionell prägen drei dominante Perspektiven die Rolle der Gerechtigkeit in Theorien der internationalen Beziehungen. Der Realismus lehnt die Relevanz normativer Prinzipien ab und betont Machtpolitik und das anarchische internationale System. Der kosmopolitische Egalitarismus entwirft eine globale Ordnung, in der Individuen und nicht Staaten die primären moralischen Akteure sind, und befürwortet universelle Prinzipien der Gerechtigkeit. Im Gegensatz dazu steht der kulturelle Relativismus, der skeptisch gegenüber universellen moralischen Standards ist und argumentiert, dass kulturelle Überzeugungen in ihren spezifischen Kontexten verstanden werden sollten. In "The Law of Peoples" bietet John Rawls einen Mittelweg zwischen Realismus und kosmopolitischem Egalitarismus und vermeidet gleichzeitig kulturellen Relativismus. Er betont Gerechtigkeit zwischen Gesellschaften und respektiert gleichzeitig ihre unterschiedlichen Identitäten und politische Autonomie. Rawls schlägt einen prinzipiengeleiteten Rahmen vor, der auf Gerechtigkeit, Zusammenarbeit und gemeinsamen moralischen Verpflichtungen basiert und der Machtdynamiken mit universellen Normen in Einklang bringt, während er kulturellen Pluralismus anerkennt. Dieser Artikel untersucht zuerst Rawls' politische Konzeption internationaler Gerechtigkeit als Grundlage für globalen Frieden und erforscht dann seine Vision einer anständigen muslimischen Gesellschaft als wichtiger Partner bei der Förderung internationaler Gerechtigkeit und des Friedens.


Schlüsselwörter: John Rawls, Internationale Gerechtigkeit, Globaler Frieden, Kultureller Pluralismus, Normative Prinzipien, Anständige muslimische Gesellschaft

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عدالت به مثابه بنیاد صلح جهانی: تحلیلی بر نظریه جان رالز و ایده یک جامعه موجه مسلمان

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چکیده:

درباره فلسفه سیاسی معاصر، سه دیدگاه رایج در باب ماهیت و نقش عدالت در روابط بین الملل مطرح شده است که عبارتند از نخست، رئالیسم که اهمیت اصول هنجاری (مانند عدالت) در این زمینه را انکار می کند و - در غیاب یک مرجعیت نهایی - بر سیاست قدرت و نظام بین الملل آنارشیست تأکید دارد. دیدگاه دوم، برابری خواهی جهان وطنی که نظمی جهانی را متصور است که در آن افراد، نه دولت ها، بازیگران اخلاقی اولیه هستند. این دیدگاه از اطلاق اصول عدالت در افق جهانی و در تمام جوامع بشری قطع نظر از بستر فرهنگی و تاریخی آنها دفاع می کند که این امر غالباً به مداخلات نظامی قدرت های بزرگ در ملل دیگر انجامیده است. در مقابل، دیدگاه سوم، یعنی نسبی گرایی فرهنگی نسبت به اطلاق معیارهای اخلاقی واحد در بستر جهانی بدبین است و استدلال می کند که اصول عدالت باید در زمینه های فرهنگی خاص خود درک شود. در کتاب قانون ملل، جان رالز درعین اجتناب از نسبی گرایی فرهنگی، نظریه ای در باره عدالت بین المللی (یا عدالت جهانی) ارائه می دهد که حد وسط بین رئالیسم و برابری خواهی جهان وطنی است. او بر عدالت بین جوامع و با رعایت حقوق و هویت متمایز و استقلال سیاسی آنها تأکید می کند. رالز چارچوبی اصولی مبتنی بر عدالت، تعامل و تعهدات اخلاقی مشترک را ارائه می دهد که ضمن تصدیق کثرت گرایی فرهنگی، پویایی قدرت را با هنجارهای اخلاقی جهانشمول متعادل می سازد. این مقاله ابتدا به تحلیل و دفاع از ایده تصور سیاسی رالز از عدالت بین المللی به مثابه بنیاد صلح جهانی می پردازد، سپس دیدگاه او را از یک جامعه اسلامی معقول - موجه به منزله بازیگر اخلاقی کلیدی در تعمیق و ترویج عدالت و صلح بین المللی بررسی می کند.

واژگان کلیدی: جان رالز، عدالت بین المللی، صلح جهانی، کثرت گرایی فرهنگی، اصول هنجاری، جامعه موجه مسلمان

Original Research Paper

Justice as the Foundation of Global Peace: John Rawls and the Idea of a Decent Muslim Society

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Abstract

Traditionally, three dominant perspectives shape the role of justice in international relations theories. Realism rejects the relevance of normative principles, emphasizing power politics and the anarchic international system. Cosmopolitan egalitarianism envisions a global order where individuals, not states, are the primary moral actors, advocating universal principles of justice. In contrast, cultural relativism is skeptical of universal moral standards, arguing that cultural beliefs should be understood within their specific contexts. In *The Law of Peoples*, John Rawls offers a middle ground between realism and cosmopolitan egalitarianism while avoiding cultural relativism. He emphasizes justice between societies while respecting their distinct identities and political autonomy. Rawls proposes a principled framework based on justice, cooperation, and shared moral commitments, balancing power dynamics with universal norms while acknowledging cultural pluralism. This article first examines Rawls's political conception of international justice as a foundation for global peace, then explores his vision of a decent Muslim society as a key partner in promoting international justice and peace.

Keywords: John Rawls, international justice, global peace, cultural pluralism, normative principles, decent Muslim society

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I. Introduction

In theories of international relations, three dominant perspectives shape the understanding and role of justice. These perspectives offer competing views on how justice should be applied globally, influencing debates on international law, human rights, and global order. They address fundamental questions about the nature of international obligations, the legitimacy of state sovereignty, and the ethical principles guiding international cooperation and conflict resolution.

The first perspective is realism, which rejects the relevance of normative principles for resolving international disputes. Realism emphasizes the anarchic structure of the international system, prioritizes power politics, and assumes the absence of overarching moral or legal obligations between states (Mearsheimer, 2001). The second is cosmopolitan egalitarianism, which envisions a global order where individuals, rather than nation-states, are the primary moral and political actors (Beitz, 1999). This “monistic” approach to political morality asserts that a single set of fundamental principles of justice applies universally to all individuals, regardless of their cultural or social contexts (Barry, 2000). The third perspective is cultural relativism, which is skeptical of universal principles of rationality and morality. Advocates of cultural relativism argue that moral and cultural beliefs are shaped by social context and should be understood within their own cultural framework (Gray, 2007).

In *The Law of Peoples* (Rawls, 1999), John Rawls presents a novel perspective on international justice, positioning his theory as a middle ground between realism and cosmopolitan egalitarianism, while avoiding the pitfalls of cultural relativism (Brown, 2002). He prioritizes justice between societies while respecting their unique identities and political autonomy. Rawls argues for a principled approach that emphasizes justice, cooperation, and shared moral commitments among nations, offering a balanced alternative to the power dynamics of realism and the universal individualism of cosmopolitanism, also seeking to reconcile the tension between universal norms and cultural pluralism.

Rawls asserts that his idea of the Law of Peoples presents “a particular political conception of right and justice that applies to principles and norms of international law and practice” (Rawls, 1999, p. 3). Through this

conception, Rawls explains a distinct approach to international justice, challenging the views of Rawlsian cosmopolitans who seek to extend the principles of justice as fairness, originally designed for domestic societies, to the global stage. In particular, Rawls argues that the global context requires a separate and context-specific idea, as elaborated in *The Law of Peoples*. This distinction underscores Rawls's commitment to respecting the pluralism of political and cultural traditions while outlining a normative basis for peaceful and just relations among societies.

In *A Theory of Justice* (Rawls, 1971), one of the most influential works in contemporary political philosophy, Rawls argues that justice is the primary virtue of social institutions. A just basic structure is a cooperative arrangement among free and equal individuals. In an initial situation, known as the "original position," representatives of free and equal individuals are placed in a fair setting to negotiate the terms of social cooperation.

According to Rawls, delegates in the original position would choose two principles of justice. The first is the principle of equal basic liberties, which guarantees fundamental rights such as liberty of conscience, freedom of expression and association, personal integrity, and political participation. The second principle addresses social and economic inequalities, permitting them only if two conditions are met: fair equality of opportunity and the difference principle, which mandates that inequalities must benefit the least advantaged members of society (Rawls, 1971, pp. 60-90; Rawls, 2001, pp. 42-49).

Rawls calls his theory "justice as fairness," focusing on the institutions of domestic society. However, Rawlsian cosmopolitan egalitarians, such as Charles Beitz (1999) and Thomas Pogge (1989), argue that this theory should be extended to the global context. They advocate applying the two principles of *justice as fairness* at the international level. Beitz asserts that "it is wrong to limit the application of contractarian principles of social justice to the nation-state; instead, these principles ought to apply globally" (Beitz, 1999, p. 128). They propose the existence of a global basic structure—a network of political and economic institutions binding individuals across nations into a worldwide scheme of social cooperation, effectively making them citizens of the world (Wenar, 2006).

Beitz argues that not all states can claim a right to internal autonomy; only those whose institutions adhere to appropriate principles of justice can legitimately demand respect as autonomous entities. Consequently, a state's internal autonomy is both limited and conditional, with its boundaries defined by liberal principles of justice. Therefore, he maintains that intervening in the affairs of another state to uphold liberal justice is morally justifiable.

The problem with this perspective is its incompatibility with ethical and religious pluralism in today's world. Its conception of international justice cannot be universally accepted by diverse and incommensurable reasonable ethical and religious traditions. Additionally, by equating international justice with a liberal conception of justice, it provides a rationale for military interventions. Such interventions, often carried out by American and European governments, are rarely motivated by a genuine concern for the justice of the affected populations. Even in morally compelling cases – such as the Rwandan genocide in 1994 or the ongoing Israeli genocide in Gaza – Western governments have frequently failed to act responsibly or effectively.

Critics argue that external interventions may worsen the situation from a justice perspective. External actors are often less invested in and less familiar with the public interests of the countries they intervene in than the people who live there, making it unlikely that such interventions will genuinely promote justice (Cohen & Sabel, 2006).

David Miller (2002) explains the fundamental divide between cosmopolitan egalitarians and their opponents as follows: cosmopolitans advocate for global principles of distributive justice, arguing that resource distribution should be addressed on a global scale. In contrast, non-cosmopolitans contend that principles of distributive justice apply only within nations or smaller communities. According to the latter perspective, global principles of justice are not distributive in nature; instead, they might outline a minimum level of entitlement applicable to all human beings or establish procedures governing relationships between political communities, such as principles of reciprocity or mutual aid.

In essence, cosmopolitans emphasize comparing the distribution of resources across individuals in different regions, while their opponents prioritize other aspects of the global order – typically ensuring that basic rights and interests are protected and that political communities interact under fair terms. For cosmopolitans, global inequality is a concern in and of itself. For non-cosmopolitans, however, global inequality is troubling only when it results in poverty, exploitation, or other non-distributive forms of injustice.

It is worth noting that some of Rawls's cosmopolitan critics, such as Charles Beitz and Thomas Pogge, who initially defended accounts of global egalitarianism, have subsequently modified their theoretical claims. Beitz (2001) emphasizes "the derivative rather than intrinsic arguments for greater global equality," while Pogge grounds his case for a global economic shift in the principle of non-violation of human rights.

Unlike cosmopolitan liberals, Rawls argues that justice as fairness applies only within liberal democratic societies and cannot be extended to the global arena. In *The Law of Peoples*, Rawls seeks to develop a "political conception of international justice" suitable for a culturally plural world (Rawls, 1999). This conception establishes normative standards that any "decent" society must meet, outlining the minimal and necessary requirements of justice essential for creating and sustaining a just and peaceful global order.

According to Rawls, political philosophy should be "realistically utopian" (Rawls, 2001, pp. 4-5; Rawls, 1999, p. 4). This concept emphasizes the need to envision an ideal political order that harmonizes moral aspirations with practical feasibility. Rather than withdrawing from society and the world, political philosophy should aim "to reconcile us with our social world" (Rawls, 1999, p. 45). This approach involves identifying the limits of what is politically achievable while staying grounded in the realities of human nature and social conditions. By combining normative ideals with real-world constraints, political philosophy can help design just institutions that are both aspirational and attainable.

In this article, I begin by examining Rawls's political conception of international justice as the foundation for global peace. I then explore his

vision of an ideal, “decent Muslim society” as a “realistic utopia,” highlighting its role as a vital agent and collaborative partner in advancing international justice and peace.

II. The Political Conception of International Justice

Rawls describes the two fundamental motivating ideas of *The Law of Peoples* as follows:

One is that the great evils of human history – unjust war and oppression, religious persecution and the denial of liberty of conscience, starvation and poverty, not to mention genocide and mass murder – follow from political injustice, with its own cruelties and callousness. ... The other main idea, obviously connected with the first, is that, once the gravest forms of political injustice are eliminated by following just (or at least decent) social policies and establishing just (or at least decent) basic institutions, these great evils will eventually disappear (Rawls, 1999, pp. 6-7).

Rawls’s conception of the Law of Peoples includes three essential features: the idea of people, the liberal and decent peoples, and the idea of global public reason.

1. The Idea of People

The idea of a people has three “basic elements”: institutional, cultural, and moral.

The first element, the institutional, shows that a people has a government with a set of legal and political institutions that represent its people’s interests—a reasonably just government that serves their fundamental interests by protecting their territory, preserving their political institutions, culture, independence, and self-respect as a corporate body, and ensuring the safety, security, and well-being of their citizens (Rawls, 1999, pp. 34-35).

The second element, the cultural condition, indicates that peoples are culturally united by what J. S. Mill called “common sympathies”; this is an idea of nationality, generally based on a common language and shared historical memories (Rawls, 1999, pp. 23-25). Finally, the people have a

moral nature, meaning that the political society is regulated by a conception of justice and that the people are prepared to cooperate with other peoples on reasonable terms (Rawls, 1999, pp. 23–25, 61–68).

Peoples with these three elements differ from societies that Rawls refers to as states:

How far states differ from peoples rests on how rationality, the concern with power, and a state's basic interests are filled in. If rationality excludes the reasonable (that is, if a state is moved by the aims it has and ignores the criterion of reciprocity in dealing with other societies); if a state's concern with power is predominant; and if its interests include such things as converting other societies to the state's religion, enlarging its empire and winning territory, gaining dynastic or imperial or national prestige and glory, and increasing its relative economic strength – then the difference between states and peoples is enormous (Rawls, 1999, pp. 28–29).

Rawls also argues that peoples are not merely rational but also reasonable (Rawls, 1999, p. 25). This idea challenges the realism theory of international relations, which views states as rational agents pursuing self-interest. Furthermore, Rawls asserts that peoples have a significant interest in being respected by other peoples and in the recognition of their equality, beyond concerns for territorial security (Rawls, 1999, p. 35).

According to Rawls, each citizen of a well-ordered society ideally has two moral powers necessary for social cooperation: a capacity for a sense of justice and a capacity for a rational conception of the good (Rawls, 1993, pp. 19, 81, 103–104). In a well-ordered democratic society, citizens assume all members are free and equal moral persons with the same basic political and legal rights. Similarly, a people, as described in *The Law of Peoples*, is well-ordered by a conception of justice and is also a non-expansionist, non-aggressive society that participates in fair cooperation among other well-ordered societies (Reidy, 2004).

2. Liberal and Decent Peoples

The second essential feature of the Law of Peoples is the distinction between liberal and decent peoples. A liberal people believe that citizens have equal personal and political rights, while a decent people follow a

"common good idea of justice" that emphasizes community membership rather than individual equality. Although a common good idea of justice ensures basic rights for all members, it does not guarantee all individuals the same rights as found in liberal democracies.

Despite the aforementioned difference, Rawls uses the idea of the original position to argue that parties representing both liberal and non-liberal (but decent) peoples would endorse the proposed principles of the Law of Peoples. These principles, he suggests, form the moral foundation of international law and apply to international relations among all societies (Rawls, 1999, pp. 10, 32-33, 39-43, 58).

Rawls outlines eight principles of international justice:

1. Peoples are free and independent, and their freedom and independence are to be respected by other peoples.
2. Peoples are to observe treaties and undertakings.
3. Peoples are equal and are parties to agreements that bind them.
4. Peoples are to observe the duty of non-intervention.
5. Peoples have the right of self-defense but no right to instigate war except for self-defense.
6. Peoples are to honor human rights.
7. Peoples are to observe specified restrictions in the conduct of war.
8. Peoples have a duty to assist other peoples living under unfavorable conditions that prevent a just or decent political and social regime (Rawls, 1999, p. 37).

Rawls argues that the fundamental interests of free and democratic liberal peoples give them reason to seek the benefits of social cooperation among peoples:

Liberal peoples have a certain moral character. Like citizens in domestic society, liberal peoples are both reasonable and rational, and their rational conduct, as organized and expressed in their elections and votes, and the laws and policies of their government, is similarly constrained by their sense of what is reasonable. As reasonable citizens in domestic society offer to cooperate on fair terms with other citizens, so

(reasonable) liberal (or decent) peoples offer fair terms of cooperation to other peoples. A people will honor these terms when assured that other peoples will do so as well. This leads us to the principles of political justice in the first case and the Law of Peoples in the other (Rawls, 1999, p. 25).

He also argues that decent non-liberal societies are “well-ordered: and the parties representing these societies – placed in an original position – are “rational and moved by appropriate reasons” (Rawls, 1999, p. 63). They “do not engage in aggressive wars; therefore, their representatives respect the civic order and integrity of other peoples” and thus would “accept the symmetrical situation (the equality) of the original position as fair” (Rawls, 1999, p. 63). By virtue of their common good idea of justice, “the representatives strive both to protect the human rights and the good of the peoples they represent and to maintain their security and independence” (Rawls, 1999, p. 63). Furthermore, the representatives “care about the benefits of trade and also accept the idea of assistance among peoples in time of need” (Rawls, 1999, p. 69).

Some societies may lack the capacities necessary for participating in a Society of Peoples or may commit crimes; these are referred to as “burdened societies” and “outlaw regimes.” “Benevolent absolutisms” seem to be an intermediate case, insofar as they pose no threat to other states and secure human rights domestically, yet are not well-ordered societies (Rawls, 1999, pp. 92-93).

Well-ordered Peoples may pressure the “outlaw regimes” to observe the Law of Peoples and have duties of assistance toward “burdened societies” (Rawls, 1999, p. 93). Rawls argues that well-ordered peoples have a duty to assist burdened societies in building institutions that allow them to manage their own affairs reasonably and become members of the Society of Peoples. Once this “target” of assistance is achieved, further aid is not required (Rawls, 1999, p. 111).

3. The Idea of Global Public Reason

The third essential characteristic of the Law of Peoples is the idea of public reason: “The society of peoples is guided by reasons that can be shared by different peoples, and its content is provided by the principles of the Law of Peoples” (Rawls, 1999, pp. 55-57, 121).

To establish how the ideal of a peaceful world could be realized, Rawls rejects the idea of a world state:

I follow Kant's lead in *Perpetual Peace* (1795) in thinking that a world government—by which I mean a unified political regime with the legal powers normally exercised by central governments—would either be a global despotism or else would rule over a fragile empire torn by frequent civil strife as various regions and peoples tried to gain their political freedom and autonomy (Rawls, 1999, p. 36).

Rawls envisions a just order of politically independent peoples that is realistically achievable. His vision is of peaceful relations among peoples, each well-ordered by its conception of justice and motivated to treat other peoples justly. He refers to this as the "Society of Peoples." In their relations with each other, they would use the principles of the Law of Peoples as the basis of public political reasoning.

Rawls considers a Society of Peoples where all societies are liberal-democratic peoples and addresses whether just and stable relations among such societies are realistically possible (Rawls, 1999, pp. 11, 124-126). He presents two arguments in support of this claim.

The first argument—known as the democratic peace theory—focuses on empirical and historical facts explaining why well-established democracies have not gone to war with each other and likely will not. The second argument demonstrates that liberal peoples have reason to support international justice and peace by adhering to the principles of the Law of Peoples. This argument appeals to the idea of public reason as a basis for political reasoning shared by all.

Rawls considers his political conception of justice (justice as fairness) as one of many viable forms of public reason in a constitutional democracy. A reasonable conception of justice represents political values that can be shared by all free and equal citizens. A citizen can deliberate within a conception of justice, believing its political values can be approved by others (Rawls, 1999, p. 140).

The Law of Peoples offers a form of public reason for a Society of Peoples, which can be called "global public reason" (Cohen, 2006). The presumed just social world here is not a constitutional democracy but rather an order

of politically independent peoples. These peoples meet moral standards referred to as the criterion of decency (Rawls, 1999, pp. 23-25). Decent peoples are motivated to fulfill the ideal of a Society of Peoples by following its public reason and respecting basic human rights.

The idea of global public reason implies several key points. First, liberal peoples must tolerate non-liberal but decent peoples and not impose liberal principles on all societies. Second, global public reason must rely on shared grounds of argument. Finally, global public reason requires treating peoples—liberal and decent non-liberal—as equal cooperators guided by the principles of the Law of Peoples.

In a morally acceptable global order, war may be waged only against another state in self-defence or to secure the human rights of the peoples as violated by their own state. Therefore, wars cannot be justified in the interests of preserving military dominance, gaining access to economic resources, or expanding national territory, which have historically been the primary reasons for warfare (Rawls, 1999, pp. 94-97). Accordingly, Rawls assigns human rights three key roles in the Law of Peoples:

1. Their fulfillment is a necessary condition for a society's political and legal order to be considered decent.
2. Their fulfillment excludes justified intervention by other peoples, except in severe cases.
3. They set limits to the pluralism among peoples (Rawls, 1999, p. 80).

Rawls excluded certain moral rights from his definition of human rights, acknowledging that peoples ensuring only basic human rights—but not all liberal rights—meet his criterion of decency, even if they fall short of full justice from a liberal moral perspective (Rawls, 1999, pp. 78, 83; Cohen, 2006). For Rawls, decency holds significant moral value, as it guarantees peoples the rights to self-determination and non-intervention (Rawls, 1999, p. 83). This implies that the Society of Peoples can be just, even if some of its members do not fully align with liberal justice standards (Rawls, 1999, p. 70). The Society's primary responsibility is to secure basic human rights for all, rather than “enforce the liberal rights of democratic citizenship among all peoples.” Rawls maintains that

achieving democratic justice should be left to the self-determination of each politically independent society (Rawls, 1999, pp. 61, 85).

As noted earlier, the central aim of *The Law of Peoples* is to minimize war while safeguarding basic human rights through legal frameworks and promoting representative governance. Rawls argues that lasting world peace can be achieved only if societies uphold a political conception of international justice that meets what he terms the “criteria of decency.”

III. Criteria of Decency and a Decent Muslim Society

In the remainder of this article, I will first analyze the criteria Rawls uses to define decency as a core element of his political conception of international justice. To further clarify this concept and illustrate a viable model for a decent social order, I will then examine his portrayal of a decent Muslim society.

i. Criteria of Decency

Rawls defines two criteria of decency as follows: “First, the society does not have aggressive aims, and it recognizes that it must gain its legitimate ends through diplomacy and trade and other ways of peace” (Rawls, 1999, p. 64). A society meeting this first criterion “respects the political and social order of other societies.” Either it does not seek to increase its power relative to other societies, or if it does, “it does so in ways compatible with the independence of other societies, including their religious and civil liberties.” This condition entails that if a society has a comprehensive doctrine, whether religious or secular, which influences the structure of its government and its social policies, this doctrine should support “the institutional basis of its peaceful conduct” (Rawls, 1999, p. 64).

The second criterion of decency has three parts:

(a) The first part is that a decent hierarchical people’s system of law, in accordance with its common good idea of justice, secures for all members of the people what have come to be called human rights.

(b) The second part is that a decent people’s system of law must be such as to impose bona fide moral duties and obligations (distinct from human rights) on all persons within the people’s territory.

(c) Finally, the third part of the second criterion is that there must be a sincere and not unreasonable belief on the part of judges and other officials who administer the legal system that the law is indeed guided by a common good idea of justice (Rawls, 1999, pp. 65-67).

Rawls's concept of a "common good idea of justice" is grounded in a comprehensive doctrine that provides a vision of human life and well-being. This vision serves as the foundation for structuring society to promote human flourishing and cultivate forms of human excellence. Societies organized around such an idea of justice can be well-ordered – that is, they can function as systems of social cooperation rather than mere social coordination – provided the comprehensive doctrine defining their "common good" is broadly accepted by their members. Rawls refers to these societies as "decent" to distinguish them from well-ordered liberal societies (Rawls, 1999, pp. 66-68).

Every cooperative society must respect certain basic rights, as these are essential for ensuring the minimal capacities of the agency required for individuals to act according to their own will, make their own choices, or affirm their values. Without the protection afforded by these rights, obedience to a society's basic laws would not reflect the genuine, willing cooperation of its members. This criterion of protecting agency is less demanding than the liberal ideal of autonomy, as it does not require individuals to critically evaluate their choices or the social expectations imposed on them. Instead, it ensures only the minimal conditions necessary for meaningful participation in social cooperation (Rawls, 1999, pp. 71-72).

Rawls notes that "comprehensive doctrines, religious or non-religious, might base the idea of human rights on a theological, philosophical, or moral conception of the nature of the human person," but he explicitly avoids grounding his theory on such foundations (Rawls, 1999, p. 81). Instead, Rawls emphasizes that social cooperation is only possible if individuals possess basic capacities of agency. Societies guided by a common good idea of justice must, therefore, implement what Rawls terms a "consultation hierarchy" – a system in which members have some degree of representation in political decision-making. However, these

rights fall short of the full democratic participation guaranteed in liberal societies (Rawls, 1999, pp. 71-75).

While Rawls does not fully elaborate on why a consultation hierarchy is required, it appears to stem from his understanding of the institutional prerequisites for a society to embody a common good idea of justice. Such institutions, he implies, are necessary to uphold a minimal yet meaningful form of political representation and collective decision-making.

The comprehensive doctrine or “special priorities” accepted within such a society, which underpin its idea of justice, inherently shape and limit the terms of political discourse. However, disagreements about how that framework applies to specific policy issues or other relevant considerations are inevitable. To uphold their legitimacy, rulers must demonstrate their commitment to society’s idea of justice by being open to such disagreements and justifying their decisions in terms of the shared comprehensive doctrine (Rawls, 1999, pp. 71-73).

Without an institutional framework for addressing disagreements and explaining decisions, authorities would lack the means to show that their actions reflect a genuine, good-faith interpretation of the common good idea of justice rather than arbitrary or self-serving will. In such a scenario, those subject to their rule would have no compelling reason to accept an obligation to comply with their decisions.

A well-ordered society, therefore, must recognize the principle that rulership involves governing individuals who possess the capacity for agency and the right to have their voices heard. Only when individuals are given a meaningful opportunity to participate in or influence political decision-making can a society claim legitimacy (Rawls, 1999, pp. 71-72).

It would be simplistic to categorize societies based on the common good idea of justice as merely “traditional” in contrast to “modern.” Such an assumption would be misleading. As Rawls notes, “All societies undergo gradual changes, and this is no less true of decent societies than of others. Liberal peoples should not suppose that decent societies are unable to reform themselves in their own way” (Rawls, 1999, p. 61).

Liberal societies play a role in facilitating this evolution by recognizing decent societies as legitimate members of the Society of Peoples. When

these societies are treated with respect by liberal peoples, they are more likely to recognize the value of liberal democratic institutions and, in turn, make efforts toward reforming themselves in a way that reflects liberal ideals (Rawls, 1999, pp. 73-75).

ii. A Decent Muslim Society

Rawls further elaborates on the criteria of decency by examining the example of an imaginary society, *Kazanistan*, which he believes liberals should view as a non-liberal society deserving of toleration and recognition as a member of the Society of Peoples (Rawls, 1999, p. 79). While *Kazanistan* is a Muslim society, Rawls emphasizes that a decent non-liberal society need not be religious. He states that “many religious and philosophical doctrines, with their different ideas of justice,” can lead to institutions that meet the conditions of decency (Rawls, 1999, p. 64). Although Rawls provides an example of one type of decent non-liberal society—the decent hierarchical society—he acknowledges that other forms of decent societies may also exist. For example, Stephen Angle (2005) argues that the model of “decent socialist people” in the context of Chinese socialism might satisfy Rawls’s criteria of decency if certain reforms were made.

In *Kazanistan*, religion and state are not separate. The favored religion is Islam, and thus only Muslims can hold high political and legal positions. However, other religions are not only tolerated but encouraged to “flourish culturally” and to actively participate in the broader civic life of the society (Rawls, 1999, p. 76). Michael Walzer (1997) also argues that multiple paths can lead to toleration, a perspective that aligns with Rawls’s view of decency.

This idealized decent Islamic society is notable for its enlightened approach to non-Islamic religions, adhering to the belief that “all religious differences between peoples are divinely willed” and that “punishment for wrong belief is for God alone.” Here, Rawls references Roy Mottahedeh’s (1993) essay on Islamic toleration in his discussion of these principles. Additionally, it holds that different religious communities should respect one another (Rawls, 1999, p. 76).

Moreover, the rulers of *Kazanistan* do not have aggressive intentions toward their neighbors. They reject military interpretations of jihad,

instead advocating for a moral and spiritual understanding of the concept (Rawls, 1999, p. 76). Kazanistan also satisfies the second criterion of decency, as its political and legal system exemplifies a “decent consultation hierarchy” (Rawls, 1999, p. 64).

This structure serves as an example of a basic framework that a decent society could adopt. Rawls asserts that all decent hierarchical societies are “associationist in form.” In such societies, members are regarded as part of distinct groups, each of which is represented in the legal system through a “decent consultation hierarchy” or an equivalent structure, ensuring all members have a substantial role in political decision-making (Rawls, 1999, p. 64).

Although members of a decent hierarchical society do not enjoy the same full political rights as citizens in a democratic society (Rawls, 1999, pp. 66, 83), they still possess certain political rights, and the system as a whole ensures the protection of fundamental interests for each member. Rawls explains:

In political decisions, a decent consultation hierarchy allows an opportunity for different voices to be heard... . Persons as members of associations, corporations, and estates have the right at some point in the procedure of consultation (often at the stage of selecting a group’s representatives) to express political dissent, and the government has an obligation to take a group’s dissent seriously and to give a conscientious reply (Rawls, 1999, p. 72).

Additionally, representative bodies within the consultation hierarchy convene in assemblies where they can raise objections to government policies and receive responses from government officials. According to Rawls, “Dissent is respected in the sense that a reply is due that spells out how the government thinks it can both reasonably interpret its policies in line with its common good idea of justice and impose duties and obligations on all members of society” (Rawls, 1999, p. 78).

Dissent has the potential to drive meaningful reforms: “I further imagine... that in Kazanistan dissent has led to important reforms in the rights and role of women, with the judiciary agreeing that existing norms could not be squared with society’s common good idea of justice” (Rawls, 1999, p. 78).

Some critics argue that Rawls's conception of a decent society fails to grant women any meaningful political rights. For instance, Martha Nussbaum (2004) has criticized Rawls's conception, describing it as "inadequate and half-hearted in the remedies that it offers." But, this judgment is unfair. A defining feature of a decent society is its provision of a certain degree of political representation for all members, including women. This characteristic establishes the moral legitimacy of decent societies and differentiates them from benevolent absolutisms. While decent societies may not achieve full justice from a liberal perspective and lack the institutions of representative democracy that guarantee political participation on equal terms, they nevertheless incorporate a consultation procedure that ensures a right to political participation. This procedural mechanism upholds the moral character of decent societies, even if they fall short of liberal democratic ideals.

Thus, the idealized decent hierarchical society that Rawls envisions aligns with the concept of a well-ordered society, though from a liberal perspective, such a society falls short of being perfectly just (Rawls, 1999, pp. 78, 83). However, a liberal can still acknowledge a decent non-liberal society as possessing moral legitimacy. It is well-ordered under a legal framework grounded in a "common good idea of justice," which ensures the protection of basic human rights for all members and guarantees certain rights of political participation. Thus, political relationships in such a society are not based solely on coercion. Both government officials and the governed recognize and strive to fulfill their duties and obligations as defined by society's conception of justice.

Rawls asserts:

Something like Kazanistan is the best we can realistically—and coherently—hope for. It is an enlightened society in its treatment of religious minorities. I think enlightenment about the limits of liberalism recommends trying to conceive a reasonable, just Law of Peoples that both liberal and non-liberal peoples could jointly endorse. The alternative is a fatalistic cynicism that views the good of life solely in terms of power (Rawls, 1999, p. 78).

Rawls observes that "The Law of Peoples does not presuppose the existence of actual decent hierarchical peoples any more than it

presupposes the existence of actual reasonably just constitutional democratic peoples. If we set the standard very high, neither exists” (Rawls, 1999, p.75). Nevertheless, some commentators on *The Law of Peoples* have identified real-world examples that could align with Rawls’s idea of a decent hierarchical society. For instance, David Reidy (2004), suggests that Oman might, in some respects, qualify as a decent society. Similarly, Chris Brown (2000), argues that Rawls’s idea could be extended to societies such as Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand.

Rawls’s idea of a decent hierarchical society implies that modern democracies themselves have evolved from such systems (Riker, 2008). For instance, eighteenth-century Britain, though not fully democratic, upheld certain human rights, maintained a constitutional government, and provided limited political representation. This historical trajectory of partial justice and gradual reform mirrors the paths taken by many contemporary democracies, which have developed incrementally from more hierarchical and less inclusive systems.

Rawls’s theory of global normative order, as articulated in *The Law of Peoples*, has sparked significant debate, particularly among cosmopolitan egalitarians who accuse him of deviating from his own liberal egalitarian commitments. These critics argue that Rawls’s theory falls short in several key respects:

1. **Insufficient Attention to International Distributive Justice:** Rawls is criticized for not endorsing a more robust principle of global distributive justice, which cosmopolitans argue is essential to address economic inequalities between nations (Buchanan, 2007; Caney, 2002).
2. **Focus on Inter-Societal Rather Than Intra-Societal Justice:** Critics argue that Rawls prioritizes justice between societies at the expense of addressing inequalities and injustices within individual societies (Pogge, 2006).
3. **Reliance on Ideal Theory:** Rawls’s approach to international justice begins with ideal theory – an examination of how societies should ideally function – which some claim is an inappropriate

starting point for addressing urgent, real-world injustices (Kuper, 2006).

4. **Over-Accommodation of Non-Democratic Societies:** Rawls's recognition of "decent hierarchical societies" as legitimate participants in the Society of Peoples has been criticized as overly lenient, potentially legitimizing regimes that do not fully respect liberal democratic values (Tasioulas, 2002; Tan, 2000).
5. **Minimalist Conception of Human Rights:** His framework is viewed as offering a "thin" conception of human rights that, according to critics, fails to align with a more comprehensive liberal and egalitarian understanding of individual freedoms and entitlements (Beitz, 2004; Macleod, 2006).

Despite these criticisms, defenders of Rawls argue that his approach represents a principled extension of his commitment to toleration into the global realm. They maintain that cooperation among independent peoples is a moral requirement for fostering peaceful coexistence and mutual respect. Without such cooperation, they argue, cosmopolitan ideals risk failing to create the conditions necessary for societies Rawls terms "decent" to thrive. As Rawls himself asserts, "...liberal peoples should not suppose that decent societies are unable to reform themselves in their own way. By recognizing these societies as bona fide members of the Society of Peoples, liberal peoples encourage this change" (Rawls, 1999, p. 61).

Supporters of Rawls emphasize several pivotal aspects of his argument in *The Law of Peoples*:

- **No Obligation of Distributive Justice Among Societies:** Rawls argues that principles of distributive justice, central to his domestic theory, do not extend to relationships between societies. Instead, he focuses on ensuring that societies meet basic thresholds of justice and stability (Freeman, 2006; Heath, 2007; Risse, 2005).
- **Basic Human Rights Do Not Require Democracy:** Rawls asserts that a society can respect fundamental human rights without being a liberal democracy, so long as it meets the criteria of a

“decent hierarchical society” (Cohen, 2006; Cohen, 2004; Reidy, 2003).

- **The Peace Argument:** Rawls extends the democratic peace theory to include decent hierarchical peoples, suggesting that such societies deserve respect because they contribute to world peace by refraining from aggressive behavior (Wenar, 2002; Brown, 2002).

In this view, Rawls’s idea is less about enforcing liberal values universally and more about creating a pluralistic, stable global order in which diverse societies can coexist while respecting basic principles of justice.

IV. Conclusion

In light of John Rawls’s political conception of justice, the foundation of global peace is grounded in the establishment of a moral and just international order, where societies, whether liberal or decent, can coexist and cooperate within a framework of shared principles. Rawls’s *Law of Peoples* provides a comprehensive and pragmatic vision of how to structure relations among diverse societies, emphasizing justice, diplomacy, and mutual respect over the pursuit of dominance or military expansion. His model of a decent Muslim society, underscores the potential for non-liberal societies to meet the moral criteria of decency, demonstrating that respect for human rights, political participation, and non-aggression can coexist with diverse cultural and religious traditions. This example reflects Rawls’s broader argument that non-liberal societies—while not necessarily adhering to liberal democratic principles—can still be considered legitimate and moral members of the global community, so long as they meet the necessary standards of decency.

Rawls’s theory calls on us to transcend ideological divides and embrace the possibility of a peaceful global order that is not centered on uniformity, but on cooperative justice. His vision acknowledges the diversity of cultural and religious traditions, advocating for a form of justice that can be shared across societies despite their differing conceptions of the good life. This approach urges us to move beyond the often rigid binaries of liberal versus illiberal or Western versus non-Western and instead focus

on fostering international cooperation based on mutual respect and shared principles of justice.

Ultimately, the challenge posed by Rawls's vision lies in cultivating a global public reason that can effectively guide international relations, promoting peace while respecting the cultural pluralism that defines the contemporary world. Such a reason must be flexible enough to accommodate the diversity of perspectives that exist among different peoples, yet firm enough to maintain the moral standards necessary for sustaining a just global order. While Rawls's conception of just world order is not without its limitations – particularly in terms of its reliance on a minimal conception of justice that may not fully address global inequalities – his framework offers a hopeful path forward. It encourages us to envision a world where justice, peace, and cooperation are not only possible but achievable, and where societies, both liberal and non-liberal, can collaborate in the pursuit of a more just and peaceful global society.

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Original Research Paper

Die friedlichen Grundlagen der islamischen Sicht auf andere Religionen

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Zusammenfassung:

Heute werden viele Kriege und Gewalttaten im Namen des Islam und mit islamischen Motiven geführt, teilweise aufgrund der Zurückweisung anderer Religionen. Dieser Artikel zielt darauf ab, die Sichtweise des Islam auf andere Religionen zu verstehen und zu analysieren sowie herauszufinden, wie diese Perspektive zum Frieden und zur Koexistenz beiträgt. Die zentrale Frage dieses Artikels lautet: Was sind die friedlichen Grundlagen der islamischen Sicht auf andere Religionen?

In diesem Artikel bezieht sich der Begriff Islam sowohl auf den Koran als auch auf die prophetische Tradition, die beide als Hauptquellen und Argumentationsgrundlagen dienen. Es werden drei wesentliche friedliche Grundlagen der islamischen Sichtweise auf andere Religionen und deren Anhänger erörtert: die Freiwilligkeit des Glaubens oder bestimmter Überzeugungen, die Anerkennung des Rechts des Einzelnen, seinen eigenen Glauben auszuüben, sowie die Unterscheidung zwischen Wahrheit und Realität als theoretischer Rahmen zur Interpretation bestimmter Koranverse.

Diese Forschung verwendet zwei Methoden: qualitative Inhaltsanalyse und grundlagentheoretische Forschung. Die Ergebnisse zeigen, dass die Perspektiven des Korans und der prophetischen Tradition auf andere Religionen aufklärend und realistisch sind. Sie bieten keine Rechtfertigung für Gewalt, sondern eine solide Grundlage für Frieden und Koexistenz.

Schlüsselwörter: Islam, Koexistenz, Frieden, Gewalt, Religionen

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مبانی صلح گرایانه اسلام در نگاه به سایر ادیان

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چکیده

امروزه بسیاری از جنگ ها و خشونت ها به اسم اسلام و با انگیزه های اسلامی انجام می شود که بخشی از آن به دلیل باطل دانستن سایر مذاهب است. مسئله این مقاله فهم و تحلیل نگاه اسلام به سایر ادیان است و اینکه اسلام تا چه حد صلح و همزیستی را به دنبال دارد. پرسش اصلی مقاله این است مبانی صلح گرایانه اسلام در نگاه به سایر ادیان کدامند؟ مقصود از اسلام در این مقاله قرآن و سنت نبوی است که عمده استنادات و استدلال های مقاله به آن هاست. در این مقاله سه مبنای مهم صلح گرایانه و صلح جویانه اسلام در مورد نوع نگاه به سایر ادیان و پیروان آن ها بحث شده که عبارتند از: اجباری نبودن دین یا اعتقادی خاص، محترم دانستن عمل هر کس طبق دین خود، و تفکیک حقانیت از واقعیت به عنوان یک چارچوب نظری برای فهم برخی آیات قرآن. ذیل هر کدام از مباحث دسته بندی هایی ارائه می شود. در این تحقیق از دو روش استفاده شده است، نخست روش تحلیل محتوای کیفی و دوم روش تحقیق پایه. نتایج مقاله نشان می دهد نگاه قرآن و سنت به سایر ادیان یک نگاه روشنگرانه و واقع بینانه است و نه تنها هیچ گونه جوازی برای ارتکاب خشونت به دست نمی دهد بلکه اساس مستحکمی برای صلح و همزیستی است.

واژگان کلیدی: اسلام، همزیستی، صلح، خشونت، ادیان

The Peaceful Foundations of Islam's View on Other Religions

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Abstract

Today, many wars and acts of violence are carried out in the name of Islam and with Islamic motivations, partly due to the invalidation of other religions. This article seeks to understand and analyze Islam's perspective on other religions and to determine how this view contributes to peace and coexistence. The main question of this article is: What are the peaceful foundations of Islam's view on other religions? In this article, Islam refers to both the Quran as well as the prophetic tradition, both serving as the main references and arguments. Three significant peaceful foundations of Islam's outlook towards other religions and their followers are discussed: the non-compulsory nature of religion or specific beliefs, the acknowledgment of individuals' right to practice their own faith, and the distinction between truth and reality as a theoretical framework for understanding certain Quranic verses. This research employs two methods: Qualitative content analysis and foundational research. The results indicate that the perspectives of the Quran and the prophetic tradition on other religions are enlightening and realistic, providing no justification for violence but a solid basis for peace and coexistence.

Keywords: Islam, coexistence, peace, violence, religions

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Introduction

Part of the conflicts and violence in today's Islamic world depends on individuals' perspectives of other religions and adherents of religions. The violence of a Muslim against the "other" is legitimized and begins when they consider the "other" as deserving of deprivation of social rights, harassment, torture, or even annihilation. A significant portion of the judgments made by violent individuals about others relates to the religions and beliefs of those others. This article aims to understand and analyze Islam's perspective on other religions and how this view contributes to peace and coexistence. The article assumes that divine religions should rationally and logically base their tenets on humanitarian ethics and values and should not condone violence. The main question of this article is: What are the peaceful foundations of Islam's view on other religions?

In this article, Islam refers to the Quran and the prophetic tradition. During the time of the Quran's revelation and the Prophet Muhammad's life, only religious minorities, primarily Jews and Christians, lived in the Arabian Peninsula. Thus, the Quranic messages and the Prophet's interactions with other religions were about these religious minorities. However, due to the universality and eternal relevance of the Quran, this viewpoint may extend to minorities of other divine— and perhaps non-divine— religions. Since no other religious minorities resided in Mecca and Medina during the Prophet's time, they are not mentioned in the Quran.

This article discusses three significant peaceful foundations of Islam's perspective on other religions and their followers: the non-compulsory nature of religion or specific beliefs, the acknowledgment of individual practices according to their faith, and the distinction between truth and reality as a theoretical framework for understanding Quranic verses that affirm other religions. Relevant conceptual classifications will be provided under each topic.

The focus and aim of this article have been to demonstrate the peace-oriented foundations of Islam in its interactions with other religions. Naturally, some may critique this perspective or have expressed opposing views, or there may be rival and conflicting

discourses. The goal of the article has not been to respond to critiques or compare discourses in this regard.

Research Method

In this study, two methods have been used: first, qualitative content analysis and second foundational research method. In qualitative content analysis, the researcher seeks to identify the explicit and implicit messages of the text and sometimes interprets them. In this method, both inductive and deductive approaches are employed for analysis (Ghasemi et al., 2021, p. 270). If we consider qualitative content analysis a professional research method, the second method used in this research is the foundational research method, which occurs in three phases. The first phase involves designing the research based on certain principles and standards. The second phase includes data collection. In the third phase, the research is conducted following specific scientific guidelines (see Ali Khani, 2023, pp. 29-30).

Literature Review

Numerous works have been published on Islam and peace. One of these works discusses the non-violent legacy of Islam. This article first refers to Islamophobia and various accusations that deem Islam a religion of violence. It then discusses specific verses and concepts in the Quran and Hadith to show that Islam is a religion of peace. Another part of the article mentions political groups and movements in the Islamic world and the Middle East that advocate for peace (Pal, 1917). Another article discusses the dimensions of war and violence in Islam, noting that while these aspects have often received attention, Islam has important and numerous theoretical foundations for peace. This article further discusses some of these concepts and principles as pathways to achieving peace and resolving conflicts within Islam (Ul Islam, 2024). Qazi bin Muhammad and colleagues have discussed war and peace in Islam, explaining misunderstandings and misuses of the concept of jihad (Bin Muhammad, Kalin, Kamali, 2013). Another paper explores human security and peaceful coexistence in the Quran and tradition based on covenants and agreements. Numerous verses in the Quran address the necessity of adhering to covenants under all circumstances. Upon entering Medina, the Prophet established many agreements with

non-Muslims. This article discusses covenants in Islam as significant bases for human security and coexistence (Rane, 2024). Othman Sulayman has offered a general overview of peace and coexistence from the perspective of Islam in an article published in the *European Journal of Theology and Philosophy*. The article initially addresses the social goals of Islam. Then, it discusses the importance and necessity of peace, coexistence, principles, and skills for peaceful relationships with others, oneself, nature, etc., based on the Quran and tradition (Sulayman, 2024). Nasir Hasan Wani discusses peace in Islam from the perspective of the Quran and Hadith, focusing on the concept of humanity and striving to show how Islam's view of humanity fosters peace and coexistence for human societies from various aspects (Wani, 2023).

The foundations of Islam's peaceful perspective on other religions will be discussed in three sections below.

Non-compulsory Nature of Religion or Specific Beliefs

The first peaceful foundation of Islam concerning other religions is the belief in the non-compulsory nature of any religion or belief, including Islam. A portion of violent actions rooted in religion seeks to compel others to accept a particular religion or doctrine or to deem others as invalid and worthless based on their own religious beliefs. There are numerous reasons in the Quran and the prophetic canon indicating that acceptance of any religion or belief is not obligatory. If it were enforced, it would fundamentally lack legitimacy and value. Several of these reasons are elaborated below.

1. Freedom of Choice in Religion

A person's value exists before they choose a religion. The significance of humanity in the Quran is so pronounced that it is regarded as "the crown of creation" (Izutsu, 2009, pp. 93-91). Some Quranic verses and Islamic teachings demonstrate the inherent dignity of humans, not least the notion that God breathed His spirit into humans upon their creationⁱ and granted them dignity, making them superior to other creatures.ⁱⁱ Human dignity is associated with the soul (Jawadi Amoli, 2009, pp. 80-79). The Quran explicitly states that there is no compulsion in acceptance of religionⁱⁱⁱ and notes that if God had

desired, He could have made all people believers or Muslims.^{iv} This verse and the subsequent one address the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), stating that your duty is merely to remind and convey the message, and you cannot force people to accept Islam.^v If the Prophet of God, directly appointed by Him and endowed with a mission, has no right to compel people to accept a religion, then others certainly do not have that right as well. The Quran advises people not to compel each other to accept a particular religion or belief, perhaps advocating for everyone to choose their faith through understanding and awareness and to let each person attend to themselves since God has willed people to choose their paths and witness the consequences in the Hereafter.^{vi} According to another verse from the Quran, everyone is responsible for their actions. If one chooses the correct path and religion, they act to their benefit, while anyone who disregards the truth shall suffer the consequences.^{vii}

Thus, religious beliefs and practices are the responsibility of individuals, and according to the aforementioned verses and other Quranic passages, no one has the right to seek to change others' beliefs forcefully, compel them to perform religious practices, or to prohibit them from performing their own religious rituals. Compulsion and coercion in matters of faith are unacceptable and fundamentally negate the essential redemptive purpose for which religion was revealed. Even outwardly converting to a religion lacks value; the essence of the matter is that individuals must sincerely believe and harbor that faith deeply; it should penetrate the core of their thoughts and beliefs. The Quran states that some Bedouins claimed they believed; tell them they have not truly believed, but rather they have accepted Islam, as faith has not yet entered their hearts, and their actions are of no benefit.^{viii} Motahari asserts that a student must solve a mathematical problem independently; it serves no purpose if others solve the problem for him. Islam clearly states that the declaration of "There is no god but God" is a problem that each person must resolve themselves. After the oneness of God, prophethood and resurrection are individual concerns that everyone must contemplate and address with their own understanding and belief. Not only is coercion and compulsion not permissible, but

imitation is also unacceptable (see: Morteza Motahari, *On the Islamic Republic*, pp. 94-97).

It is evident that heartfelt faith results from individuals' choice and will to accept, reflecting their conscious selection of religion (Sashadina, 2007, pp. 172-170). God tells the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) that if you are denied, say: "My actions are for me, and your actions are for you. You are disavowed from my actions, and I am disavowed from yours."^{ix} This verse implies that we must accept the actions and practices of each individual and group without making value judgments, deeming them right or wrong, or approving them. Another verse reaffirms this point by stating that each person's views, behaviors, and actions are their own.^x This does not mean that all behaviors and views are correct; rather, the verse considers the views and actions of each individual within their logic and context. Naturally, everyone will be responsible for themselves and see the consequences of their actions, with no one accountable for another's actions. Therefore, from an Islamic perspective, no one has the right to compel others to adopt a specific religion or belief, even if it is deemed true and correct.^{xi}

It is appropriate for each individual to determine the validity and correctness of any faith or way of life. According to Quranic verses, the mission of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was merely to convey and clarify so that the correct from the incorrect might be recognized, and the end of each path and belief might become clear.

2. Muslims Today

The Quran and Islamic texts recommend Muslims engage in understanding their faith, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, or inviting others to Islam. However, this relates primarily to internal matters within Islamic communities and does not imply obliging people to accept Islam or act according to Islamic practices. The rules and conditions under which understanding and calling others to Islam are to be practiced must not involve compulsion. The invitation to non-Muslims to Islam, however, interpreted, cannot equate to or exceed the mandates that were placed upon the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), who was infallible and directly commanded by

God to proclaim Islam through Divine guidance. No other Muslim possesses such characteristics and, therefore, cannot surpass or assume a role beyond the Prophet's.

According to Quranic verses, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was only responsible for conveying the faith and had no authority to compel people to accept it. It is clear that if the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) could not force people to accept Islam, then no other Muslim possesses such a right either. The responsibilities of other Muslims are even less than that, as God directly commissioned the Prophet to guide humanity, supplemented by Divine revelation. In contrast, no other individuals possess a similar mandate or divine message. Furthermore, while Islam considers itself the right religion but does not impose itself, nor does it permit the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to enforce it on others, it follows that other Muslims also do not have the right to impose beliefs or compel others regarding their beliefs or practices.

Islam intends individuals to embrace the truth and faith through reason, knowledge, and genuine conviction rooted in their nature and without fear or coercion because such belief lacks intrinsic value and results in no real benefit. Imam Ali (PBUH), replying to Muhammad Ibn Abu Bakr, the governor of Egypt, regarding sun and moon worshippers, advised that they be left alone to worship as they desire (Abu Ishaq Isfahani, 1976, Vol. 1, pp. 231-230; Al-Hurr al-Amili, 1989, Vol. 28, Chapter 50, p. 152).

The Quran's rejection of coercion in accepting any religion and its allowance for humans to choose any faith they wish, along with the consequences of that choice, represents a significant and profound view of humanity and human society that has become increasingly clear today. Alongside the option to choose any religion, respect for all thoughts and views, the necessity of refraining from insult even to polytheists and atheists,^{xiii} and similar issues posed by the Quran form fundamental principles necessary for the establishment, sustainability, and progress of peaceful societies. Some may argue that the Quran only endorses divine religions with sacred texts and not others; in response, it can be stated that in some instances, the Quran validates other divine religions as legitimate systems and recognizes their commands as

divine statutes. Yet, in many other cases, such as the non-compulsory nature of accepting religion, avoidance of insult, respect for humanity, and performing good actions, the Quran broadly encompasses all individuals across religions and beliefs beyond mere religious minority concerns.

It may be difficult for some contemporary Islamist discourses to accept this degree of freedom and respect for non-Muslims, which stems from limitations in human understanding. Only God, as the absolute Creator, can truly understand humans – those He has created and the nature and essence He has imbued within them and establish doctrinal requirements. This divine perspective of humanity contrasts sharply with limited, superficial, self-serving, and sometimes objectifying views. God has intricately created the nature and spirit of humans, entrusting many requirements and implications to them, providing them with levels of discernment. He has also revealed His holy books in accordance with this nature, leading to divine accountability on Judgment Day. Much of this complicated being and process, including the freedom to choose one's religion, is beyond human comprehension.

3. Types of Divine Guidance

Additionally, a further reason preventing anyone from compelling others to accept faith and necessitating respect for their choices is the understanding that God has guided humans through various means and knows how to interact with them. No Muslim represents God on Earth. Some Quran interpreters and scholars have divided divine guidance into four categories:

Firstly, intrinsic guidance is achieved through innate human desires and natural inclinations encompassing all individuals.

Secondly, sensory guidance through sensory perception and a type of inner inspiration.

Thirdly, rational guidance through the power of cognition and thought.

Fourthly, religious guidance through the sending of divine prophets.

The first three types of guidance are general and universal, encompassing all humans simply as beings. The fourth type is a completion of the prior forms through messengers and religions (Rashid Riza, Vol. 1, pp. 64-62). Given the four types of guidance, three important points arise:

First, if someone does not accept the fourth form of guidance and rejects any religion, they are still encompassed by the first three types, and as a human, they cannot escape from them; they cannot voluntarily ignore or alter their innate nature and understanding unless they display obstinacy and deliberately act against their insights, in which case they remain accountable to the Quran's meaning of *Kafir* - disbeliever-, meaning they conceal the truth. The severe punishments promised in the Quran for the Hereafter^{xiii} are specifically for such individuals.

Second, asserting complete freedom and choice for humans in selecting their faith in light of the fourth form of guidance follows the premise that the first three forms have already taken place. If people do not accept the fourth type of guidance, they will still be accountable for the actions they have taken based on the first three types in the Hereafter.

Third, the Quran repeatedly mentions that God will misguide or deprive the disbelievers of guidance, which pertains to the fourth type of guidance. According to the views of certain interpreters, including Allameh Tabatabai, the individuals who adhere to the first three types of guidance, particularly the innate guidance, will progress to higher stages of guidance and salvation, and these stages will serve as rewards for acting based on their nature and intellect. However, those who act against innate guidance and disregard the path leading to truth will face loss and penalties imposed by God and may encounter even greater divine punishments in the future (Tabatabai, 1988, Vol. 20, p. 196).

Acknowledgment of Individual Practices According to Their Faith

Another peaceful basis Islam holds regarding other religions is recognizing and honoring the practices of each individual according to

their faith. Supporting documentation and arguments for this are as follows.

1. Primacy and Authenticity of Faith and Good Actions

According to Islamic thought, all humans are equal, and it is famously stated by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) that "All humans are like the teeth of a comb" (Harani, 1984, p. 368; Ibn Babawayh Qummi, 1998, Vol. 4, p. 379). During his last sermon, the Prophet emphasized that the God of all is one, all humans share Adam as their forefather, who was created from clay, and no individual has superiority over another (Al-Haraini, 1984, p. 34; Ahmad ibn Hanbal, 1999, Vol. 14, p. 394, Hadith 8736 and Vol. 16, p. 486, Hadith 10781; Abu Naim, 1987, Vol. 3, p. 100; Ibn Abi Al-Hadid, 2008, Vol. 1, p. 128).^{xiv} Imam Ali (PBUH) has repeatedly emphasized that all humans are equal and no individual or race is superior to another (Al-Hurr al-Amili, 1989, Vol. 15, p. 107; Hilal Thaqafi, 1990, Vol. 1, p. 46; Ibn Abi Al-Hadid, 2008, Vol. 2, p. 201).^{xv} Some Islamic teachings explicitly state that doing good and being righteous holds significant value and importance. While the Quran recognizes Islam as the accepted religion of God,^{xvi} it also states that followers of other religions, if they sincerely believe in God and do good deeds, will be saved, and their rewards are with Him.^{xvii} Allameh Tabatabai asserts that salvation and happiness are not exclusive to specific individuals or merely Muslims, but anyone who truly believes in God and performs good deeds will be granted salvation. Although Allameh Tabatabai considers the pre-Islamic religions distorted or altered, he does not deem them abrogated but rather identifies some of the Quranic rulings as abrogating certain preceding laws (Tabatabai, 1985, Vol. 1, p. 239). Rashid Riza also implicitly regards the faithful followers of Judaism and Christianity as salvaged (Rashid Riza, Vol. 1, pp. 281-278). The Quran regards other heavenly books as possessing light and guidance and calls upon their followers to adhere to and act upon them.^{xviii} Moreover, one verse of the Quran highlights that the command of God was also present in the Torah.^{xix}

Islam endorses other religions and divine prophets, with a Quranic verse addressing the Prophet Muhammad stating, "We have revealed

to you as We revealed to Noah and the prophets after him – and to Ibrahim, Ismail, Ishaq, Yaqub, and the descendants – and Isa, Ayyub, Yunus, Harun, and Sulayman, and We gave Dawud the Psalms"^{xx}. This reveals that all previous prophets are affirmed by the Quran, with the Prophet Muhammad recognized as the last bearer of a complete religion. Additionally, the Prophet has stated that "All of us prophets are brothers, and our faith is one" (Ibn Kathir, 1998, Vol. 1, p. 320 and Vol. 3, pp. 117, 339, 344; Vol. 4, p. 247; Vol. 5, p. 326; Vol. 7, p. 178). This highlights the shared essence of divine religions while acknowledging that the Quran refers to Ibrahim as the first to submit and profess monotheism.^{xxi}

Recognizing that all prophets and the principles mentioned earlier are part of one continuum naturally leads to the understanding that they have unified objectives and fundamentally do not differ in their premises and principles, even though Muslims believe Islam is the most complete religion. According to Quranic verses, the other religions cannot be wholly rejected, as they may contain truths. Nevertheless, they also might have encountered erroneous teachings outside the scope of religion that have been mistakenly incorporated as beliefs. If this were to happen within Islam, it would not be accepted. Another Quranic verse explicitly notes that it has been revealed to the Prophet Muhammad that "We have sent down this Quran with the truth confirming the Scriptures which came before it" (Quran 2:97). God could have made all people a single nation with one religion. However, He did not desire this, as it serves as a test for humanity (Quran 5:48). The requisite behaviors should encourage charitable actions and cooperation in doing good, integral to all divine faiths, transcending ethnic and religious divides.^{xxii}

The Quran encourages all believers to strive for goodness and act kindly towards others, providing a significant opportunity for peaceful coexistence among diverse religions and beliefs while maintaining inherent freedoms of worship and respect for different beliefs. Moreover, the superiority of individuals lies only in the realm of piety^{xxiii} and has no impact on the political rights or social standing of individuals in this world (Ibn Abu Al-Hadid, 2008, Vol. 7, p. 37; Mohammad Al-Rishehri, previously, Vol. 4, pp. 7-106), even though

the effects of piety do manifest in this world and political realms as well. The rule of obligation is a jurisprudential principle that dictates that judgments in legal disputes or similar situations must conform to the belief systems of each minority (Bojnourdi, 1999, Vol. 3, p. 179 and Vol. 26, p. 319, Hadith 33077). Imam al-Baqir (PBUH) further noted that what is deemed permissible by practitioners of any religion is acceptable (Hurr Amili, 1989, Vol. 25, p. 159, Hadith 32711).^{xxiv}

2. Islam as a Complete Yet Voluntary Religion

Adherents of each faith tend to view their religion as the most complete and the best, and Muslims are no exception. Considering the discussions regarding respect for other religions and their salvation for adhering to their religious directives, a question arises about verses in the Quran that affirm that the correct religion with God is Islam^{xxv} and that anyone who adopts a religion other than Islam will not be accepted by Him.^{xxvi} How do these coexist? Taking into account the other Quranic verses regarding divine religions, it might be interpreted that Islam is, indeed, God's most complete, comprehensive, and correct religion; hence, it makes sense that it would be divinely accepted; however, each of the divine religions contains aspects of truth and merit, having various divine commandments they emphasize.

When it states that anyone choosing a religion other than Islam will not be accepted, this may refer to instances where an individual has known Islam and recognized its completeness and superiority yet consciously remains obstinate in rejecting it. If someone does not mentally or morally conclude that Islam is complete, they cannot be reprimanded for such. Furthermore, since Islam is a complete religion, adherence to it carries corresponding worldly and otherworldly consequences. Thus, those who do not accept the complete religion will face forfeiture of its benefits proportionate to this rejection. They cannot expect rewards for adhering to the complete faith when they have not accepted it. Some argue that "Islam" in these verses does not specifically refer to the faith of Islam but rather denotes submission to God's will and obedience to Him (Sashadina, 2007, pp. 89-88). Their reasoning rests on earlier verses in which the terms "Islam" and "Muslimoon" signify surrendering.^{xxvii}

Allameh Tabatabai contends that the "Islam" in verses 19 and 85 of Surah Al-Imran specifically refers to the religion of Islam as the last link in the chain of divine religions (Tabatabai, 1989, Vol. 3, pp. 520-513). However, an essential aspect related to our discussion, which the Quran emphasizes, is that this matter primarily concerns the Hereafter. Ultimately, God accepts or rejects an individual's faith, not others. Conversely, those choosing not to follow the correct and complete path will undoubtedly be among the losers in the Hereafter. However, according to Islamic teachings, no one has the right to impose the complete religion upon another in this world or to forcibly attempt to rescue them from the losses of the Hereafter.

Distinction Between Truth and Reality: A Theoretical Framework for Understanding Certain Quranic Verses

While asserting itself as the complete religion and presenting it as the sole accepted creed of God, the Quran acknowledges other religions and assures them of salvation in the Hereafter, leading to questions or ambiguity. To understand and clarify this ambiguity, the author proposes the conceptual framework of "distinction between truth and reality" (see: Ali Akbar Ali Khani, 2023, pp. 270-267). According to this framework, Islam adopts two methods of "enlightenment" and "realism." Within this theoretical framework, every phenomenon can be examined and analyzed from two viewpoints, either concerning its correctness or legitimacy, and second, from the perspective of its objective and external existence as a reality. The discussion of which religion is more accurate and complete pertains to "truth," which Islam has elaborated upon. On the other hand, recognizing the existence of various religions relates to "reality," which Islam acknowledges amicably and peacefully. In the context of peace and peaceful coexistence, the existence of diverse religions, sects, and ideologies as a reality is paramount. Islam's realism can be explained through the following two points:

1. Realism concerning Other Religions

Many verses in the Quran adopt a realistic approach to the phenomenon of multiple religions and sects. There are verses that, in some way, recognize other religions as a reality and ask their followers

to adhere to the principles of their respective faiths.^{xxviii} Even for those who do not accept the Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) invitation to Islam, God passes by,^{xxix} allowing individuals to act as they wish while holding them accountable for their actions. This perspective does not contradict the verse stating that the only true religion in the eyes of God is Islam.^{xxx} The essence of Islam and the Quran holds that it recognizes Islam as the most complete and superior faith, reminding others of this. Others following different religions also view their beliefs as superior and correct; if that belief were absent, the very basis for their religion would come into question. Importantly, the declaration in the Quran about Islam's superiority does not impede the respect towards other beliefs and ideologies or even towards all people.

What has enabled the Quran to regard the diversity of religions and beliefs as a reality to be acknowledged and engaged with, thereby opening a path to peace and coexistence, is the fundamental existence of "diverse humans with various ideological and belief systems." From an Islamic perspective, "humanity" possesses intrinsic superiority, and regardless of the societal context, it retains its inherent worth. Concurrently, it presents itself as a reality that may generate a multitude of actions and transformations within society. Amidi Zanjani argues that from Islam's perspective, minorities living in a society are not seen as outsiders, foreigners, or aliens but as possessing a spiritual and intrinsic connection to the Islamic community (Amidi Zanjani, 2000, p. 30).

2. Islam's Realism Concerning the Non-Religious

The next step in Islam's realism encompasses individuals who do not adhere to any religion or worship any deity. When Muslims engage with such individuals, respect and peaceful coexistence manifest as essential because their existence constitutes a reality that must be accommodated, enabling individuals to act according to their beliefs. Imam Ali (PBUH) stated that a government is required under which "the believer can practice their beliefs, and the non-believer can receive their own benefit" (Nahj Al-Balagha, 1992; Sermon 40, p. 39). The Quran instructs the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to convey that, in confronting disbelievers, "I do not worship what you worship, nor do

you worship what I worship. To you your religion, and to me my religion" (Quran 109:1-6).^{xxxii} Here, the discourse does not revolve around right and wrong or the correct path versus the incorrect but rather describes a situation where groups acknowledge each other's differing beliefs and convictions and are steadfast in their views, unable to reach consensus through dialogue. The Quran's directive in these verses suggests that each individual's faith should remain personal and that no one should interfere with or disrupt another. Allameh Tabatabai's interpretation asserts that this verse fundamentally concerns the absence of mutual conversion or persuasion and denotes the absence of willingness to accept each other's beliefs (Tabatabai, 1989, Vol. 20, pp. 645-648). Thus, each should continue on their path. This Quranic perspective is a significant strategy toward peace and coexistence, closing the route of "forcibly making others like us."

Conclusion

Islam is a divine religion with inherent characteristics tied to its "religious" and "divine" nature. If these characteristics are stripped away or ignored by its adherents, Islam will lose its essence as a divine religion and become a mere tool in human hands. These characteristics include:

1. **Moral foundation:** Morality is both the foundation and an intrinsic part of religion.
2. **Faith-based nature:** Belief in religion is a matter of the heart and mind, requiring individuals to willingly and intellectually accept it.
3. **Voluntary acceptance:** Religion must be embraced with free will and enthusiasm.
4. **Rejection of violence:** Violence is the most unethical and inhumane phenomenon, and no religion inherently endorses it. If a religion does so, it loses its essential nature.

Despite these four characteristics, clashes in interpretation and perspective are natural, as within any other religion. During the Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) lifetime, disputes regarding Islamic

teachings and the Quran were minimal, as the Prophet was present to clarify ambiguities and answer questions. However, immediately after the Prophet's death—before his burial—political disputes emerged among his companions over leadership, marking the first major schism in the Muslim community. As time passed, these disputes deepened and expanded into all dimensions of religious understanding. While the Quran and the Prophet's Sunnah remain, diverse interpretations and readings of these sources have proliferated. Nonetheless, interpretations of the Quran and authentic Sunnah must align with the spirit of Islam and adhere to the frameworks and principles, including the four characteristics outlined above.

Numerous arguments and discussions demonstrate the incompatibility of Islamic teachings with violence (Ali-Khani, 2012; Sachedina, 2007; Shaltut, 1951; Saheb Nasi et al., 2020, pp. 42–63). The Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) practice emphasized peaceful coexistence among people of diverse beliefs, ensuring their freedom to practice their rituals without interference or harassment (Hamidullah, 1995, pp. 169–170; Ali-Khani et al., 2007, pp. 270–290, 477–484). The Quranic verses on warfare and the Prophet's (PBUH) battles were entirely defensive, though further discussion on this topic lies beyond the scope of this article (see Shaltut, 1951; Sachedina, 2007; Ali-Khani, 2012).

The behaviors and ideologies of religious extremist groups reflect a three-stage process:

1. **Theoretical justification:** These groups justify violence on theoretical and religious grounds.
2. **Specific application:** They excommunicate individuals, deeming their blood and property permissible to seize.
3. **Acts of violence:** They engage in violent actions.

One primary cause of this process is their worldview regarding other religions and sects. This article has aimed to demonstrate that the Quran and the Prophet's Sunnah do not provide a basis for violence against other religions; instead, they form a strong foundation for peace and coexistence. Neglecting these epistemological foundations

by certain extremist Muslim individuals and groups – combined with their misuse of religion to justify their actions, often driven by political motives, self-interest, or ignorance – has marginalized Islam's principles of peace and coexistence. The marginalization of Islam's peace-oriented foundations and its misinterpretation to justify violence can be attributed to several factors:

1. **Failure to reexamine Islamic principles and teachings** from primary sources, such as the Quran and authentic Sunnah, while distinguishing fabricated and incorrect elements falsely attributed to tradition.
2. **Failure to reinterpret Islamic principles and teachings** in alignment with contemporary circumstances and the rational spirit of Islam.
3. **Failure to conduct a profound and comprehensive reinterpretation** of Islamic principles and teachings by experts with decades of experience in Islamic sciences and modern knowledge.

- i. وَ نَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِنْ رُوحِي. حجر (١٥): ٢٩. فَإِذَا سَوَّيْتُهُ وَ نَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِنْ رُوحِي فَقَعُوا لَهُ سَاجِدِينَ. ص (٣٨): ٧٢.
- ii. وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ وَ ... الإسراء (١٧): ٧٠.
- iii. لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ. بقره (٢): ٢٥٦.
- iv. وَ لَوْ شَاءَ رَبُّكَ لَأَمَنَّ مِنَ فِي الْأَرْضِ كُلَّهُمْ جَمِيعًا أَفَأَنْتَ تُكْفِرُ النَّاسَ حَتَّى يَكُونُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ. يونس (١٠): ٩٩.
- v. ... وَ مَا أَنْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِجَبَّارٍ فَذَكَرْ بِالْقُرْآنِ مِنَ يَخَافُ وَ عِبِدِ. ق (٥٠): ٤٥. / فَذَكَرْ إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُذَكِّرٌ، لَسْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِمُصَيِّرٍ. غاشية (٨٨): ٢٢-٢١. ... أَفَأَنْتَ تُكْفِرُ النَّاسَ حَتَّى يَكُونُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ. يونس (١٠): ٩٩. / با همين مضمون: فَإِنَّ حَاجُوكَ فَقُلْ أَسْلَمْتُ وَجْهِي لِلَّهِ وَ مَنِ اتَّبَعَنِي وَ قُلْ لِلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ وَ الْأُمِّيِّينَ أَسْلَمْتُمْ فَإِنْ أَسْلَمُوا فَقَدِ اهْتَدَوْا وَ إِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ الْبَلَاغُ وَ اللَّهُ يَبْصِرُ بِالْعِبَادِ. آل عمران (٣): ٢٠. / وَ أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَ أَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَ احْذَرُوا فَإِنْ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ فَأَعْلَمُوا إِنَّمَا عَلَى رَسُولِنَا الْبَلَاغُ الْمُبِينُ. مائدة (٥): ٩٢. / مَا عَلَى الرَّسُولِ إِلَّا الْبَلَاغُ وَ اللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُونَ وَ مَا تَكْتُمُونَ. مائدة (٥): ٩٩. / وَ إِنْ مَا تُرِيدُكَ بَعْضَ الَّذِي نَعُدُّهُمْ أَوْ تَتَوَقَّعُكَ فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ الْبَلَاغُ وَ عَلَيْنَا الْحِسَابُ. رعد (١٣): ٤٠. / قَالَ الَّذِينَ اشْرَكُوا لَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا عَلَّمْنَا مِنْ شَيْءٍ نَحْنُ وَ لَا آبَاؤُنَا وَ لَا حَرَمْنَا مِنْ دُونِهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ كَذَلِكَ فَعَلَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ فَبَقِيَ عَلَى الرَّسُولِ إِلَّا الْبَلَاغُ الْمُبِينُ. نحل (١٦): ٣٥. / فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ الْبَلَاغُ الْمُبِينُ. نحل (١٦): ٨٢. / قُلْ أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَ أَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْهِ مَا حُمِّلَ وَ عَلَيْكُمْ مَا حُمِّلْتُمْ وَ إِنْ طَئِبُوا فَيَهْتَدُوا وَ مَا عَلَى الرَّسُولِ إِلَّا الْبَلَاغُ الْمُبِينُ. نور (٢٤): ٥٤. / وَ إِنْ كَذَّبْتُمْ فَسَقْتُمْ كَذِبًا أَمْ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ وَ مَا عَلَى الرَّسُولِ إِلَّا الْبَلَاغُ الْمُبِينُ. عنكبوت (٢٩): ١٨. / فَإِنْ أَعْرَضُوا فَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِيظًا إِنْ عَلَيْكَ إِلَّا الْبَلَاغُ وَ إِنَّا إِذَا أَنْذَرْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنَّا رَحْمَةً فَارْحَبْهَا وَ إِنْ نُصِيبُهَا سَيِّئَةً بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ يُدْبِرُهَا فَإِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ كَفُورٌ. شورى (٤٢): ٤٨. / وَ أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَ أَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ فَإِنَّمَا عَلَى رَسُولِنَا الْبَلَاغُ الْمُبِينُ. تغابن (٦٤): ١٢.
- vi. وَ قُلِ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ فَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُؤْمِنْ وَ مَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُكْفُرْ إِنَّا أَعْتَدْنَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ نَارًا. كهف (١٨): ٢٩. / با همين مضمون: إِنَّا هَدَيْنَاهُ السَّبِيلَ إِمَّا شَاكِرًا وَ إِمَّا كَافِرًا. إنسان (٧٦): ٣.
- vii. قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ بَصَائِرُ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ فَمَنْ أَبْصَرَ فَلِنَفْسِهِ وَ مَنْ عَمِيَ فَعَلَيْهَا وَ مَا أَنَا عَلَيْكُمْ بِحَفِيظٍ. انعام (٦): ١٠٤. / با همين مضمون: إِنْ أَحْسَنْتُمْ أُحْسِنْتُمْ لَأَنْفُسِكُمْ وَ إِنْ أَسَأْتُمْ فَلَهَا فَإِذَا جَاءَ وَعْدُ الْآخِرَةِ لِيَسُوءُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ وَلِيَدْخُلُوا الْمَسْجِدَ كَمَا دَخَلُوهُ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَ لِيُبَيِّرُوا مَا عَلَوْا تَتْبِيرًا. اسراء (١٧): ٧. / فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ. وَ مَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ. زلزله (٩٩): ٨-٧. / يَوْمَ تَجِدُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مِمَّا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ مُحَضَّرًا وَ مَا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ سُوءٍ تَوَدُّ لَوْ أَنَّ بَيْنَهَا وَ بَيْنَهُ أَمَدًا بَعِيدًا وَ يُحْذِرُكَ اللَّهُ نَفْسَهُ وَ اللَّهُ رَؤُوفٌ بِالْعِبَادِ. آل عمران (٣): ٣٠.
- viii. قَالَتِ الْأَعْرَابُ آمَنَّا قُلْ لَمْ نُؤْمِنُوا وَ لَكِنْ قَوْلُوا اسْلَمْنَا وَ لَمَّا يَدْخُلِ الْإِيمَانُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ وَ إِنْ طَئِبُوا اللَّهُ وَ رَسُولُهُ لَا يَتْلُوكُمْ مِنْ أَعْمَالِكُمْ شَيْئًا إِنْ اللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ. حجرات (٤٩): ١٤.
- ix. وَ إِنْ كَذَّبُوكَ فَقُلْ لِي عَمَلِي وَ لَكُمْ عَمَلِكُمْ أَنْتُمْ بَرِيئُونَ مِمَّا أَعْمَلُ وَ أَنَا بَرِيءٌ مِمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ. يونس (١٠): ٤١.
- x. قُلْ أَنْحَاؤُنَا فِي اللَّهِ وَ هُوَ رَبُّنَا وَ رَبُّكُمْ وَ لَنَا أَعْمَالُنَا وَ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالُكُمْ وَ نَحْنُ لَهُ مُخْلِصُونَ. بقره (٢): ١٣٩.
- xi. فَإِنَّ حَاجُوكَ فَقُلْ أَسْلَمْتُ وَجْهِي لِلَّهِ وَ مَنِ اتَّبَعَنِي وَ قُلْ لِلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ وَ الْأُمِّيِّينَ أَسْلَمْتُمْ فَإِنْ أَسْلَمُوا فَقَدِ اهْتَدَوْا وَ إِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ الْبَلَاغُ وَ اللَّهُ يَبْصِرُ بِالْعِبَادِ. آل عمران (٣): ٢٠. / مَا عَلَى الرَّسُولِ إِلَّا الْبَلَاغُ وَ اللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُونَ وَ مَا تَكْتُمُونَ. مائدة (٥): ٩٩. / وَ أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَ أَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَ احْذَرُوا فَإِنْ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ فَأَعْلَمُوا إِنَّمَا عَلَى رَسُولِنَا الْبَلَاغُ الْمُبِينُ. مائدة (٥): ٩٢. / فَإِنْ أَعْرَضُوا فَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِيظًا. شوري (٤٢): ٤٨.
- xii. وَ لَا تَسْتَوِيَ الَّذِينَ يُدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَيَسْتَوِي اللَّهُ عَدُوًّا بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِيظًا. شوري (٤٢): ٤٨.
- xiii. فَيَتَّبِعُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ. انعام (٦): ١٠٨.
- xiv. نمل (٢٧): ١٤. / ملك (٦٧): ٢١.
- xv. قال رسول الله: يا ايها الناس، ان ربكم واحد و ان اباكم واحد، كلكم لادم و آدم من تراب ان اكرمكم عندالله اتقاكم، ليس لعربي علي عجمي فضل الا بالتقوي.
- xvi. ... و الله لا اجد ليني اسماعيل في هذا الفءى فضلا
- xvii. ان الذين عند الله الاسلام و ما اختلف الذين اوتوا الكتاب الا من بعد ما جاءهم العلم بغيا بينهم. آل عمران (٣): ١٩.
- xviii. ان الذين امنوا و الذين هادوا و النصارى و الصابيين من امن بالله و اليوم الآخر و عمل صالحا فلهم اجرهم عند ربهم و لا خوف عليهم و لا هم يحزنون. بقره (٢): ٦٢. / وعد الله الذين امنوا و عملوا الصالحات لهم مغفرة و اجر عظيم. مائدة (٥): ٩.
- xix. انما انزلنا التوراة فيها هدى و نور يحكم بها النبيون الذين اسلموا للذين هادوا و الربانين و الاحبار بما استحفطوا من كتاب الله و كانوا عليه شهداء فلا تخشوا الناس و احشون و لا تستنروا باياتي تمنا قليلا و من لم يحكم بما انزل الله

- فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ. مآنده (٥): ٤٤. / وَلَيَحْكُمُ أَهْلَ الْإِنجِيلِ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ وَمَنْ لَمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ. مآنده (٥): ٤٧. / قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَسْتُ عَلَى شَيْءٍ حَتَّى تُقِيمُوا التَّوْرَةَ وَ الْإِنجِيلَ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكُم مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَلَيَزِيدَنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنْهُم مَّا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكُم مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ طَغْيَانًا وَ كُفْرًا فَلَا تَأْسَ عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ. مآنده (٥): ٦٨.
- xix. وَ كَيْفَ يُحْكُمُونَكَ وَ عِنْدَهُمُ التَّوْرَةُ فِيهَا حُكْمُ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ يَتَوَلَّوْنَ مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ وَمَا أُولَئِكَ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ. مآنده (٥): ٤٣.
- xx. إِنَّا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ كَمَا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى نُوحٍ وَ النَّبِيِّينَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَ إِسْمَاعِيلَ وَ إِسْحَاقَ وَ يَعْقُوبَ وَ الْأَسْبَاطَ وَ عِيسَى وَ الْيُوسُفَ وَ هَارُونَ وَ سُلَيْمَانَ وَ آدَمَ وَ دَاوُدَ وَ زُبَيْرًا، وَ رُسُلًا قَدْ قَصَصْنَاهُمْ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَ رُسُلًا لَمْ نَقْصُصْهُمْ عَلَيْكَ وَ كَلَّمَ اللَّهُ مُوسَى تَكْلِيمًا، رُسُلًا مُتَّبِعِينَ وَ مُنذِرِينَ لئَلَّا يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَى اللَّهِ حُجَّةٌ بَعْدَ الرُّسُلِ وَ كَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا. نساء (٤): ١٦٥-١٦٣.
- xxi. يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تَحَاجُونَ فِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمَا أَنْزَلْنَا التَّوْرَةَ وَ الْإِنجِيلَ إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِهِ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ، مَا أَنْتُمْ هَؤُلَاءِ حَاجِحِينَ فِيهَا لَكُمْ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلِمَ تُحَاجُونَ فِيهَا لَيْسَ لَكُمْ بِهِ عِلْمٌ وَ اللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَ أَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ، مَا كَانَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ يَهُودِيًّا وَلَا نَصْرَانِيًّا وَ لَكِنْ كَانَ حَنِيفًا مُسْلِمًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ. آل عمران (٣): ٦٧-٦٥.
- xxii. وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَ مُهَيِّمًا عَلَيْهِ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ عَمَّا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ لِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ شِرْعَةً وَ مِمَّا جَاءَا لَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَ لَكِنْ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ فِي مَا آتَاكُمْ فَاسْتَشْفُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ إِلَى اللَّهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ. مآنده (٥): ٤٨.
- xxiii. إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَى وَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ. حجرات (٤٩): ١٣.
- xxiv. امام باقر ٧: تجوز على اهل كل دوى دين ما يستحلون
- xxv. إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ. آل عمران (٤): ١٩.
- xxvi. وَ مَنْ يَتَّبِعْ غَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ. آل عمران (٤): ٨٥.
- xxvii. أَفَغَيْرَ دِينِ اللَّهِ يَتَّبِعُونَ وَ لَهُ أَسْلَمَ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَ الْأَرْضِ طَوْعًا وَ كَرْهًا وَ إِلَيْهِ يُرْجَعُونَ، قُلْ أَمَّا بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْنَا وَمَا أَنْزَلَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَ إِسْمَاعِيلَ وَ إِسْحَاقَ وَ يَعْقُوبَ وَ الْأَسْبَاطِ وَمَا أُوتِيَ مُوسَى وَ عِيسَى وَ النَّبِيُّونَ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِّنْهُمْ وَ نَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ. آل عمران (٤): ٨٤-٨٣.
- xxviii. إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا التَّوْرَةَ فِيهَا هُدًى وَ نُورٌ يَحْكُمُ بِهَا النَّبِيُّونَ الَّذِينَ أَسْلَمُوا لِلَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَ الرِّبَابِيُّونَ وَ الْأَخْبَارُ بِمَا اسْتُخْفِطُوا مِنْ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ وَ كَانُوا عَلَيْهِ شُهَدَاءَ فَلَا تَخْشَوُا النَّاسَ وَ اخْشَوُا اللَّهَ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا بَاطِلًا وَمَنْ لَمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ. مآنده (٥): ٤٤. / وَلَيَحْكُمُ أَهْلَ الْإِنجِيلِ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ وَمَنْ لَمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ. مآنده (٥): ٤٧. / قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَسْتُ عَلَى شَيْءٍ حَتَّى تُقِيمُوا التَّوْرَةَ وَ الْإِنجِيلَ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكُم مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَلَيَزِيدَنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنْهُم مَّا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكُم مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ طَغْيَانًا وَ كُفْرًا فَلَا تَأْسَ عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ. مآنده (٥): ٦٨.
- xxix. قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ بَصَائِرُ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ فَمَنْ أَبْصَرَ فَلِنَفْسِهِ وَ مَنْ عَمِيَ فَعَلَيْهَا وَمَا أَنَا عَلَيْكُمْ بِخَفِيظٍ. انعام (٦): ١٠٤. / وَ إِنْ كَذَّبُوكَ فَقُلْ لِي عَمَلِي وَ لَكُمْ عَمَلِكُمْ أَنْتُمْ بَرِيئُونَ مِمَّا أَعْمَلُ وَ أَنَا بَرِيءٌ مِمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ. يونس (١٠): ٤١.
- xxx. إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ، إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ وَ مَا اخْتَلَفَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْعِلْمُ بَعِيًّا يَبْئُتُهُمْ وَ مَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ. آل عمران (٣): ١٩. / وَ مَنْ يَتَّبِعْ غَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ. آل عمران (٣): ٨٥.
- xxxi. قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْكَافِرُونَ، لَا أَعْبُدُ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ، وَ لَا أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ، وَ لَا أَنَا عَابِدٌ مَّا عَبَدْتُمْ، وَ لَا أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ، لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَ لِي دِينِ. كافرون (١٠٩): ١-٦.

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Original Research Paper

Religiöse friedensorientierte Gedanken im heutigen Iran

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Zusammenfassung:

Ein intellektueller Ansatz für friedensorientierte Gedanken in der Ära der Islamischen Republik ist die religiös orientierte Friedensidee, die das Konzept des Friedens aus der Perspektive des Islams untersucht. Denker dieser Denkschule analysieren die Wurzeln und Kontexte von Zwietracht und sozio-politischer Gewalt in der Gesellschaft. Sie greifen dabei auf islamische Texte zurück, darunter Koranverse, die Praxis des Propheten sowie die Aussprüche und Traditionen der schiitischen Imame, um Frieden, Koexistenz, Toleranz und Geduld für Individuen und sozio-politische Gruppen zu fördern und vorzuschreiben. Diese Studie zielt mithilfe eines theoretischen Rahmens und einer gestaffelten Methodologie der Gedankenanalyse darauf ab, diese Denker und ihre Ansichten zu identifizieren. Dabei werden Problemstellungen, vorgeschlagene Lösungen und Dimensionen analysiert, die in einem religiösen friedensorientierten Ansatz verwurzelt sind. Die von religiös friedensorientierten Denkern aufgeworfenen Themen lassen sich in mehrere Kategorien einteilen, darunter: politische Streitigkeiten und Konflikte zwischen Einzelpersonen und Gruppen, militante Auslegungen des Islams, die Anwendung bestimmter rechtlicher Vorschriften zur Rechtfertigung von Tötungen, offizielle religiöse Interpretationen, ideologischer Extremismus, die Übernahme vorislamischer Stammesgewalt in die islamische Kultur, epistemologische Verwirrung beim Verständnis der Religion sowie irreführende und geheiligte Unwissenheit in Bezug auf Religion. Zur Bekämpfung von Gewalt und zur Förderung von Frieden und friedlicher Koexistenz in der Gesellschaft haben diese Denker Lösungen wie Einheit, religiöse Demokratie, die Anwendung von Kriegs- und Friedensprinzipien basierend auf schiitischen Lehren, Pluralismus, die Förderung eines glaubensbasierten und monotheistischen Friedens, die Entwicklung einer Friedenstheologie und zehn epistemologische Unterscheidungen im Verständnis der Religion vorgeschlagen.

Schlüsselwörter: Islam, Koexistenz, Frieden, Gewalt, Religionen

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اندیشه‌های دینی صلح‌گرا در ایران امروز

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چکیده:

یکی از رویکردهای اندیشه‌های صلح‌گرا در دوران جمهوری اسلامی، اندیشه‌های دینی صلح‌گرا است که از منظر دین اسلام به موضوع صلح می‌پردازند. متفکران این اندیشه‌ها با شکل‌گیری بسترها و زمینه‌های ناصح و خشونت‌های سیاسی اجتماعی در جامعه، با استناد بر متون اسلام، شامل آیات قرآن، سیره پیامبر (ص) و احادیث و روایات امامان شیعه (ع)، صلح، همزیستی و مدارا و تساهل را به افراد و گروه‌های سیاسی و اجتماعی توصیه و تجویز می‌کنند. این تحقیق، با استفاده از چارچوب نظری و روش لایه‌ای در اندیشه پژوهی، به دنبال شناسایی متفکران و اندیشه‌های آنان، شامل مسئله شناسی و ارائه راهکارها و ابعاد مبتنی بر رویکرد دینی صلح‌گرا می‌باشد. مسئله‌های متفکران دینی صلح‌گرا در چند محور قابل طرح‌اند که شامل، «منازعات و اختلافات سیاسی میان افراد و گروه‌ها»، «بازخوانی جنگ طلبانه اسلام»، «به‌کارگیری برخی از قواعد فقهی در تجویز کشتار»، «قرائت رسمی از دین»، «ایدئولوژی گرای»، «رسوخ خشونت جاهلی در فرهنگ اسلام»، «خلط‌های معرفت‌شناختی در فهم دین»، و «کج‌اندیشی و جهل مقدس از دین»، می‌باشند. متفکران دینی صلح‌گرا برای حل مسئله خشونت و ایجاد صلح و همزیستی مسالمت‌آمیز در جامعه، راهکارهایی ارائه داده‌اند که شامل، «وحدت»، «دموکراسی دینی»، «کاربست احکام جنگ و صلح بر اساس آموزه‌های شیعی»، «پلورالیسم»، «طرح صلح ایمانی و توحیدی»، «تولید و توسعه الهیات صلح»، و «ده تمایز معرفت‌شناختی در فهم دین»، می‌باشند.

واژگان کلیدی: ایران، اسلام، صلح، اندیشه‌های دینی

Religious Peace-Oriented Thoughts in Today's Iran

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Abstract

One intellectual approach to Peace-Oriented thoughts in the Islamic Republic era is the religiously oriented peace thought, which examines the concept of peace from the perspective of Islam. Thinkers in this school of thought, addressing the roots and contexts of discord and socio-political violence in society, draw upon Islamic texts, including Quranic verses, the Prophet's practices, and the sayings and traditions of Shia Imams, to advocate and prescribe peace, coexistence, tolerance, and forbearance for individuals and socio-political groups. This study, utilizing a theoretical framework and layered methodology in thought analysis, aims to identify these thinkers and their views, encompassing problem identification, proposed solutions, and dimensions rooted in a religious Peace-Oriented approach. The issues raised by religious Peace-Oriented thinkers can be categorized into several themes, including: political disputes and conflicts among individuals and groups, militant interpretations of Islam, application of certain jurisprudential rules to justify killings, official religious interpretations, ideological extremism, infiltration of pre-Islamic tribal violence into Islamic culture, epistemological confusions in understanding religion, and misguided and sanctified ignorance of religion. To address violence and establish peace and peaceful coexistence in society, these thinkers have proposed solutions such as unity, religious democracy, application of war and peace principles based on Shia teachings, pluralism, the proposal of faith-based and monotheistic peace, development of peace theology, and ten epistemological distinctions in understanding religion.

Keywords: Iran, Islam, Peace, Religious Ideas

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Introduction

During the Islamic Republic era in Iran, various peace-oriented ideas have been proposed by scholars and thinkers through philosophical, secular, integrative, and other approaches. Among these, religious peace-oriented thought stands out, focusing on the concept of peace from the perspective of Islam. These scholars, amidst the nation's challenges – such as social and political conflicts, war, and tensions with the West, particularly the United States – have used their reasoning to advocate for peace, tolerance, and coexistence among individuals, groups, and political and social movements. The core research issue revolves around understanding the content, foundations, and origins of these ideas. The main question seeks to identify the dimensions of religious peace-oriented thought during the Islamic Republic. To address this overarching question, several sub-questions are explored: When and how did these ideas emerge? Who are the key thinkers and scholars behind them? What issues have they raised in this context? What are their sources of reference? What are the central themes and implications of their ideas? Finally, what strategies do they propose for promoting peace and coexistence in society?

In this study, the term "thought" is understood in a specific sense, defined as: *"Relatively coherent discussions derived from a knowledge system that address relevant issues within their specialized domain using normative, prescriptive, explanatory, interpretative, and evaluative approaches, with the primary goal of solving problems or advancing one of the specialized fields of human and social studies"* (Alikhani, 2023: 44-45). Accordingly, "religious peace-oriented thought" in this research refers to a coherent body of epistemological discussions that advocate peaceful relations, coexistence, tolerance, and mutual understanding in human interactions, drawing on Islamic teachings, including Quranic verses, the Prophet's tradition, and the narrations of the Infallible Imams. The term "contemporary Iran" specifically denotes the era of the Islamic Republic.

Theoretical Framework and Research Method

This research utilizes a layered theoretical framework, which involves conducting the study in five stages, each with several layers. Each layer consists of practical steps that facilitate understanding and recognizing the thought. Not all stages, layers, and defined steps in this method may

apply to every thought and thinker, or the researcher may not have the opportunity to implement all of them in their study. Consequently, the research on thoughts is conducted to the extent feasible and possible. The five stages are as follows:

Stage One: Pre-Philosophy of Thought

This stage serves as a roadmap that the researcher determines to follow, applying the defined cases throughout the research. The layers of this stage include the following: thought indicators; problematization of thought; typologizing research patterns and selecting a suitable model; determining the research level (Alikhani, 2022: 91-75). In this layer, the researcher must describe the research level within one of the models and across five levels: description, analysis, explanation, interpretation, critique, or a combination of all. The model determined in this study involves two levels of description and analysis of the thoughts (Alikhani, 2022: 91-90).

Stage Two: Thinker Identification

This stage focuses on understanding the thinker themselves, serving as a bridge between the first stage and the stage of thought identification. In this stage, thinkers and thinkers with peace-oriented religious thoughts are identified and introduced (Alikhani, 2022: 108-93).

Stage Three: Thought Identification

This stage is considered the main body of the research, with the previous two stages serving as an introduction and background for better understanding. Directly addressing the content of the thinkers' ideas being studied occurs in this stage. The layers of this stage include: 1. foundational philosophy of thought; 2. problematization of thought; 3. goal identification of thought; structure identification of thought. The thoughts of human and social sciences in Iran and Islamic countries consist of five components forming their main structure. These components are: Islam, liberal West, leftist West, regional culture, and the domestic culture of the country (Alikhani, 2022: 121-109).

Stage Four: Post-Thinking Analysis

The layers of this stage include: explaining thought; analyzing thought; interpreting thought; critiquing thought; understanding and justifying

potential informational chaos and contradictions; compiling a thought system; developing the thinker's worldview (Alikhani, 2022: 133-125).

Stage Five: Meta-Thought Analysis

The layers of this stage include: the geography of the thought's epistemology; the approach to thought and its intellectual shifts; compiling a comparative table of the knowledge geography of the thought (Alikhani, 2022: 177-135).

Research Background

Based on conducted searches, there has not yet been an independent study titled "Peace-Oriented Religious Thoughts." However, some studies indirectly relate to it, which can be categorized as follows:

The first category includes studies that examine topics such as jihad and peace in Islam, Islam and peaceful coexistence, and tolerance and coexistence in Islam. In these studies, the concept and dimensions of peace in Islam and Shia jurisprudence are discussed, attempting to present a merciful and peace-oriented image of Islam through references to the Quran, the Prophet's (PBUH) traditions, and the sayings of Shia Imams (PBUH) (Sheltout, n.d.; Salehi Najafi, 2003; Feirahi, 2008,2009; Rashad, 2019; Ayazi, 2020 and 2021; Haqiqat, 2021; Alikhani, 2010; 2014; Mohaqiq Damad, 2019; Arayesh, Mansouri, & Rahimi Imad, 2022).

The second category includes studies that examine peace and coexistence in the thought of the Islamic Revolution (Haqgou and Shokouhi, 2020) and the anti-imperialism and peace in the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic (Rouhi and Dehghani Firouzabadi, 2018) and peace and coexistence from Imam Khomeini's perspective (Simbar, Jafari, & Payande, 2016; Fawzi, 2017).

The present research seeks to identify peace-oriented religious thoughts in today's Iran using the layered theory and method of thought research, systematically categorizing, examining, and analyzing these thoughts.

Thinkers of Religious Peace-Oriented Thoughts

In this stage, we introduce thinkers with religious peace-oriented thoughts in the Islamic Republic era. These thinkers, besides having an

intellectual system, also possess scientific works and writings, directly or indirectly addressing the topic of peace from an Islamic perspective. The thinkers discussed in this article include:

1. Ayatollah Ni'matollah Salehi Najafabadi (1924-2006): A jurist, theologian, Quran commentator, and a pioneer of contemporary religious intellectualism. His area of thought relates to "jihad." Some of his works include "Martyr Jawad," "Jihad in Islam," and "Open Letter on the Ta'if Conference and War Issues."

2. Mahdi Bazargan (1907-1994): One of the founders of the Freedom Movement of Iran, a member of the Revolutionary Council, the head of the provisional government, and a representative of Tehran in the first elections of the Islamic Consultative Assembly. His thought is a combination of religion and modernity and is based on a return to the Quran movement. Notable works of his include "Scientific Critique of Marxism," "The Iranian Revolution in Two Movements," and "Reviving Values."

3. Mohammad Mojtabeh Shabestari (born 1936): A jurist, university lecturer, and specialist in comparative theology. Before the revolution, he was the director of the Islamic Center in Hamburg, Germany, and after the revolution, he was elected as a representative of Shabestar in the first elections of the Islamic Consultative Assembly. With the onset of the Iran-Iraq war, he criticized the political situation in Iran, reflecting his opinions in Parliament and media. His works include "Faith and Freedom," "Critique of the Official Reading of Religion," "Reflections on a Human Reading of Religion," and "Hermeneutics of the Book and Tradition."

4. Ayatollah Seyyed Mostafa Mohaqiq Damad (born 1945): A philosopher and legal scholar, with roles such as the head of the Islamic Studies Group at the Academy of Sciences and a member of the Board of Trustees at Shahid Motahari University. His works include "The Catastrophe of Sacred Ignorance," "In the Court of Sacred Ignorance," "International Humanitarian Law; An Islamic Approach," and "Wisdom and Religion."

5. Abdul Karim Soroush (born 1945): A researcher and religious intellectual. After the Islamic Revolution, he joined the Committee for Cultural Revolution; however, he later became a serious critic of the

Islamic Republic, ultimately leaving Iran for the USA in 1995 due to various limitations. He has written "Theoretical Contraction and Expansion of Shari'ah," "Heavier than Ideology," "Tolerance and Management," and "Straight Paths."

6. Mohsen Kadivar (born 1959): A religious thinker, researcher, and university lecturer in theology, jurisprudence, and Shia political thought. He has criticized the policies and positions of the Islamic Republic since 1987. Invited by the University of Virginia in 2008, he became a visiting professor in religious studies in Charlottesville and has since lived abroad. He currently serves as a research professor at Duke University in the USA, with works including "Concerns of Religious Governance," "Shari'ah and Politics," and "Revolution and System in Moral Criticism."

7. Mohammad Jafar Amir Mahallati (born 1952): A former diplomat and professor of Islamic Studies and Peace Theology at the Religious Studies Department, holding the Nancy Schroom Chair in Middle Eastern and North African studies at Oberlin College. He established the Majd Research Center for promoting peaceful thoughts in Shiraz, aiming to study and research theological discussions focused on peace. His works include "The White Ruby," "Excuse and Forgiveness; a Comparative Study," and "Friendship as Worldview."

8. Ali Akbar Alikhani (born 1968): An associate professor at the University of Tehran, he is a member of the West Asia and Africa studies group in the Faculty of World Studies. He has focused part of his academic and practical activities on "peace and conflict resolution," publishing numerous articles and books regarding peace and violence from an Islamic perspective and in the thought of Imam Ali (PBUH). He established the permanent Secretariat of the "International Conference on Peace and Conflict Resolution" at the University of Tehran and has organized five cycles of this conference. Furthermore, he was the first in Iran to establish a Peace and Conflict Studies program at both Master's and PhD levels in the Faculty of World Studies of the University of Tehran. Works include "Islam and Peaceful Coexistence," "Realizing Iranian-Islamic Peace; From Ideal to Reality," and "Justice and Violence in Islamic Political Thought."

Background and Socio-Political Conditions for the Emergence of Religious Peace-Oriented Thoughts

First, we will examine the political and social conditions in Iran that gave rise to religious peace-oriented thoughts in response to the existing problems. These conditions are as follows:

1. Ideological Conflicts Leading to Violence Among Political Factions

Before the Islamic Revolution, the most crucial factor for the coalition and unity of the involved forces in the revolution was opposition to the Shah and the Pahlavi regime. However, after the revolution, this coalition quickly fractured, and various semantic structures of political power, society, economy, and culture were reproduced, leading to political - social conflicts among groups of various political currents such as Islamists, national-religious, liberal, and Marxist left. Although the plurality of political and social forces seemed promising for establishing an open political space and moving toward democracy, the political disputes in the early months after the revolution led to radicalization and increased political and social violence. One of the main causes of such conditions was "ideological and intellectual conflicts" manifested in issues such as the Revolutionary Council, the provisional government, press freedom, the draft Constitution, presidential and legislative elections, cultural revolution, and the hostage crisis at the US embassy (Banisadr, 2001: 118-113). Though political power was held by two currents—liberal-religious (Freedom Movement) and Islamists (Islamic Republic Party)—other groups also engaged in political conflicts, sometimes resulting in political and even physical violence, such as torture, murder, and assassinations of political and cultural figures. Radical and violent actions by leftist and Marxist groups, and some extremist Islamists like the Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization and Farghan group, can be noted in this regard.

2. Iran-Iraq War

With the onset of the war between Iran and Iraq in 1980, political disputes among groups and currents entered a new phase. The involvement of all discourses, currents, and groups in the war did not signify their agreement on a single meaning or final reality of "war." The

"war" was interpreted concurrently as a nationalist attack aimed at dismembering part of Iran's territorial integrity, as an imperialist conflict against the revolution (leftist discourse), as a battle of the front of infidelity against the front of truth (political Islam discourse), and similar interpretations. Though the continuation of the war brought about political, economic, and social challenges, the unfolding situation pointed to the effective attempts of the "political Islam" discourse to analyze the war, gradually coalescing around concepts such as "the war of infidelity against Islam," "resistance," "martyrdom," "Basij," and more. The conflict over the meaning of war was seen as part of the discourse struggle over defining the contents of political order, significantly affecting how forces dealt with the war issue and whether or not to prolong it after the liberation of Khorramshahr. According to the "jurisprudential Islam" currents, any effort to influence the fate of the war politically for peace was seen as a liberal, compromising, and non-revolutionary move. These reactions contributed to a deeper link between the war and a revolutionary discourse that continued until the war's end (Hemmati and Delavari, 2015).

3. Dominance of Islamists and Marginalization of Rivals

Following the ousting of Banisadr, the Islamists or the "Maktabi" currents overshadowed other political movements such as Liberals, Nationalists, and Marxist left, marking them as "illegal other" and removing them from the political scene. Consequently, the period of political plurality gave way to political homogeneity gradually eliminating rivals from the political arena, a significant step towards the establishment of an Islamic Republic System (Delavari et al., 2020). After the events of 1981, the political atmosphere of the country was consistently dominated by the leftist and rightist Islamic factions framed within two main organizations: the Islamic Republic Party and the Islamic Revolutionary Mojahedin Organization, which can be considered the progenitors of reformist and principlist movements (Shadloo, 2007: 21). Islamist groups, with labels such as "political Islam," "Maktabi," and "jurisprudential," managed to seize political space by constructing a political discourse based on the two concepts of "Islamicity" and "Republicity" under a third hegemonic concept of "Guardianship of the Jurist." The political Islam discourse sought "otherness," "decisive confrontation with the West," and "resistance

against imperialism," serving the cause of "post-war idealism" (Fawzi, 2011).

4. Duality of Idealism and Political Realism During Reconstruction

After the war ended, it provided the opportunity for new perspectives from Islamist currents and a re-examination of some slogans and positions in the political and economic conditions of the country. Additionally, after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the defeat of Communism, alongside the dominance of Liberalism in a "global discourse," some currents influenced by this intellectual atmosphere defended Islamic Liberalism and Secularism, critiquing some foundational ideas of the religious government. Political rivalry during this period was characterized by two currents: "principlists" and "reformists"; while both emphasized the values of the revolution, the principlists adopted a radical policy against political critics and the West, particularly the United States. In contrast, the reformist faction called for more open cultural, social, and even economic policies, showing a tolerant attitude towards the hegemony of religious values in society (Fawzi, 2011). This dual space intensified "domineering" and "political blockage," escalating political and social conflicts among individuals and currents that persisted until the Khorramabadi, 2nd election in 1997.

5. Lack of Political Institutionalism During the Reform Era

With the advent of the reformist government, new demands arose in politics, driven by the participation of new social actors such as religious intellectuals, students, women, and youth. Concurrently, indicators such as access to information and education level, along with a desire for political participation, increased. Globally, the collapse of the Soviet Union rejuvenated the "democratization wave" that had begun in the 1970s. In the realm of thought and discourse, a range of thinkers proposed new discussions; some political actors entered political and social activities through groups such as the Society of the Clergymen of Struggle, the Islamic Revolutionary Mojahedin Organization, and the Office for Consolidating Unity (Ebadi and Rouzkhush, 2017). During this period, a new political-social discourse emerged with concepts like reforms, political development, rule of law, citizenship rights, justice, and human

dignity, while in the cultural domain, terms such as "cultural participation," "cultural dialogue," and "intercultural communications" proliferated. However, outside groups close to either of the two factions – "reformists" or "principlists" – faced barriers to organized activities, and political practices unfolded in the form of factionalism, albeit with more parties gaining strength among reformists. Despite reformists and Seyyed Mohammad Khatami emphasizing the need for legal political engagement by all groups, this slogan never materialized and gradually faded during the reform period. Some scholars believe that although the reformist era facilitated dialogue and negotiations over internal political disputes among individuals, currents, groups, and parties, the reform front was criticized by some political groups for its "lack of political institutionalism" and "disregard for the enemy" (Khorramshad and Jamali, 2018). Gradually, a division emerged between the concepts of reformism on one hand and the "revolutionary current" on the other, paving the way for radicalism and violence in the political and social realms of the reform era, as evidenced by incidents such as the University Dormitory incident, serial killings, arrests, and torture of some intellectuals. Such conditions contributed to the emergence of a new discourse known as "justice-oriented or Islamic principlism" (Maqsoodi and Rahbar, 2015).

6. Continuing Domestic Political Conflicts and Distrust of the West During the Principlist Government

The Ninth government, known as the Principlist government, was formed after the 2005 elections under the presidency of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. This government, with its goals and slogans centered on fighting corruption and social justice, aimed to resurrect the ideals and principles of the revolution and the war. These principles were intertwined with religious Mahdism symbolism, reflecting the government's "populist" policies (Rezapour and Maqsoodi, 2019). Ahmadinejad believed that the Ninth government or "Third Revolution" faced challenges on both internal and external fronts rooted in previous administrations. His strong criticisms of previous governments led to "othering" within the domestic political discourse that persisted nearly until the end of his second term.

Externally, the Ninth government and its supporters harbored historical distrust toward the West, a sentiment stemming from ideological skepticism and conflicts with the "other," notably the West and Israel. Overall, the foreign policy of the Ninth government was characterized by "offensive-confrontational" stances, which despite their radical nature, rarely deviated from a fixed pattern. Such policies resulted in significant repercussions concerning the Iranian nuclear issue, leading to three IAEA resolutions, one statement, and four United Nations Security Council resolutions against the Islamic Republic, imposing economic sanctions and political pressures on the country (Haji Yousefi, 2010).

7. The Issue of Iran's Nuclear File

The "Government of Prudence and Hope," or the moderate government led by Hasan Rouhani, emphasized foreign policy based on "interaction and dialogue with the West" grounded in mutual respect. The new government, with its novel approach and reliance on critical pragmatism in redefining core principles such as independence, justice-seeking, and resistance, emphasized the peaceful nature of the Islamic Republic's nuclear program and sought recognition of its enrichment rights within regulatory frameworks (Moshirzadeh, 2018). Through ongoing negotiations with foreign parties, the government aimed to clarify its nuclear activities and fulfill its obligations within international laws, ultimately culminating in the July 2015 signing of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). Other initiatives and programs of Rouhani's conciliatory and moderate government included the "Hope Coalition" or "Hormuz Peace Endeavor ", based on security doctrines to maintain peace and stability in the Persian Gulf region in 2019. According to the Government of Prudence and Hope, such international agreements were based on crucial principles like adherence to commitments, dialogue, mutual respect, non-aggression, and the peaceful resolution of disputes (Pourghoushchi and Maqsudi, 2019). However, this situation proved unstable; with renewed political disputes between supporters and opponents of the JCPOA, political tensions and economic sanctions against the Islamic Republic intensified. Some causes of the Post-JCPOA unsustainability encompass:

1. The failure of political fractions and groups to employ peace and tolerance strategies with domestic and international rivals;
2. The anti-imperialist stance, particularly animosity towards the US, as a dominant discourse since the revolution;
3. The revolutionary idealistic approach prioritizing revolutionary-Islamic interests, promoting an ideology of resistance and refraining from adopting peace and compromise (Ghanbarlou, 2017).

Problematization of Religious Peace-Oriented Thoughts

In this section, which could represent the most significant part of the thought research, we will address the issues and anxieties of thinkers of religious peace-oriented thoughts. Thoughts emerge in response to challenges, crises, and problems, and thinkers first identify these issues and propose solutions for their resolution. Some of the concerns of peace-oriented religious thoughts include:

1.: political disputes and conflicts among individuals and groups

One of the thinkers who considered political disputes and conflicts among individuals, groups, and movements as an intellectual issue contributing to the unsustainable atmosphere following the Islamic Republic was "Mahdi Bazargan." According to Bazargan, before the Islamic Revolution, there was coordination, cooperation, coalition, and unity among the involved individuals, groups, and political currents of the revolution. He uses the term "centripetal", drawn from physics", to describe the socio-political situation during that period. However, after the success of the revolution and the establishment of the provisional government, division, strife, conflict, and exclusion replaced unity, which Bazargan describes as "centrifuge " He observes:

"Our revolutionary society gradually drifted away from coalition and unity, with everyone and every group following its own path, considering only itself justified and obligated, seeking to eliminate or merge other beliefs, individuals, and groups. The initial slogan of 'everyone together' turned into 'everyone with me'." (Bazargan, 1984: 14-11).

Bazargan does not deny legal opposition and criticism; rather, he sees it as essential for the survival and growth of a just system (Bazargan, 2010, Vol 1: 127-126).

From Bazargan's perspective, one of the consequences of conflicts among individuals and groups after the revolution was the "superiority and monopolization of the political parties of the Islamists or Maktabi"¹ (Bazargan, 1984: 128). According to supporters of these groups, the meaning of Islam was not its broader definition, but rather a specific school of thought that existed above other schools and sects, higher than "Iran and Iranianness," and functioned as a political ideology.

According to this ideology, both the government and the people should adhere to this school and think in these terms; religion in the particular jurisprudential branch must govern the thoughts and internal and external laws of society. For these groups, the goal of the revolution and the duty of the government was something akin to or exceeding the mission of prophets; its execution and dissemination were equally imperative (Bazargan, 1984: 130-128). In Bazargan's view, stripping opponents of their dignity, claiming superiority, dominance, and ownership over the lives and faith of the people represented "superiority," an act far worse than exploitation and colonialism, more advanced than tyranny; the characteristics he likened in the Quran to "Pharaoh" and "the Pharaohs"(Qur'an, 28: 4).

From Bazargan's perspective, another effect of the militant approach of Islamist groups was the formation of a climate of "otherness" and "anti-imperialism" in foreign policy, which was mirrored in the Marxist International's school of thought's fight against imperialism and animosity toward America needing to be destroyed through revolutionary antitheses. For him, the peak of such an approach was seen during the US embassy takeover, whereby an atmosphere of "borrowing," "astonishment," and "ambiguity" emerged against the Islamic Revolution internationally, while domestically, it led to conflict and division among individuals and groups; promoting the idea of exporting the revolution, exclusivity, sectarianism, and glorification of martyrdom and self-sacrifice became ingrained (Bazargan, 1984: 105-96). Bazargan highlights the negative consequences of such approaches across political, social,

economic, and cultural dimensions for the country, a phenomenon he terms "self-destruction" (Bazargan, 2010, Vol 1: 182-181).

2. militant interpretations of Islam

One of the issues that peace-oriented religious thinkers have contemplated is the "militant reading of Islam," which portrays Islam as a religion of the sword. In this regard, thinkers such as Ayatollah Salehi Najafi, Mahdi Bazargan, Ayatollah Mohaqiq Damad, Mohsen Kadivar, and Ali Akbar Alikhani have addressed it. There are two overarching approaches in this matter:

First Approach: It includes thinkers who engage with religious texts such as Quranic verses, the Prophet's (PBUH) traditions, and those of the Shia Imams (PBUH), employing rational interpretation to discuss religious peace-seeking. This group of scholars engages in examining the term jihad in the Quran, utilizing "interpretative"² and "rational deduction" methods to present a merciful image of Islam. They argue that the concept of jihad is much broader than terms like "combat" and "terrorism," and by examining other religious sources, including the Prophet's (PBUH) traditions and the sayings of Shia Imams (PBUH), they contend that specific rules accompany the concept of jihad, which must be followed during warfare. Examples of these rules include:

1. In accordance with human nature and conscience, and jurisprudential principles, Islam opposes offensive jihad, as peace is fundamentally seen as a natural state in human societies while war is secondary and exceptional. Islamic sources demonstrate human dignity as a fundamental principle in creation and the Islamic faith that must not be compromised under any circumstances (Alikhani, 2006).

2. Reviewing Islamic rules indicates that all wars in Islam were of a "defensive" nature, referred to as "morally defensive jihad" (Kadivar, 2024). Thus, war is permissible only for divine causes, the protection of one's life and property, and repelling enemy upheaval but not for expansion, vengeance, or the superiority of the oppressor (Bazargan, 1984; 162-157). Escalating violent confrontation in international relations contravenes human rights, as violence in Islam is fundamentally deemed immoral and illegal, without any justifications.

3. In Islam, warfare is also impermissible for imposing beliefs and religion; indeed, belief is an internal and innate matter attained through advice and wisdom (surah (Qur'an, 16: 125), not coerced through force (Qur'an, 2: 256), "Furthermore, war is an emergency situation and can be considered a last resort (Nahj al- Balagha, sermon 167: 547); once the enemy's discord is resolved, its continuation is no longer necessary and must be concluded immediately" (Qur'an, 2: 193) (Salehi Najafi, 2003: 15-27; Bazargan, 1984: 162-157).

4. Not only does Islam not forbid peaceful coexistence with non-believers who do not cause disturbance (Qur'an, 60: 8), but it also invites international coexistence (Bazargan, 2010, Vol 2: 271-268; Alikhani, 2011: 30-27). Islam prohibits any military attacks against non-Muslims due to their disbelief or under the pretext of converting them to Islam, a concept referred to as "religious jihad." In this regard, some thinkers believe that a hermeneutical return from ancient texts to the modern era can be used to analyze contemporary international relations (Haqiqat, 2021). However, other religious thinkers oppose such an approach, arguing that the doubt some individuals express today concerning the permissibility of initiatory jihad in Islam arises from "a loss of self in the face of absolute Western culture" (Mesbah Yazdi, 2015: 91).

5. In Islam, peace is regarded as a fundamental and foundational principle in social relations, which must be actively pursued in both its establishment and maintenance. Therefore, as long as non-Muslims seek peace and coexistence with Muslims, they must act according to this principle, and violation of it is not permissible (Surah Anfal (8): 61). Even if an attacking enemy shows a willingness for peace after a period of time, it should be welcomed, and efforts should be made to establish peace between the conflicting parties (Qur'an, 49: 9), thereby saving the community from falling into "social disease" (Salehi Najaf Abadi, 2018: 446-452).

Second Approach: This perspective refers to the foundations of "Islamic Law" and addresses the militaristic interpretation of Islam through "Islamic humanitarian law" proposed by Seyyed Mostafa Mohaqiq Damad. Although some scholars disagree with this title as they contend that not all parts of Islamic international law can be precisely

labeled "humanitarian," Mohaqiq Damad argues that despite all Islamic laws being humanitarian and peace-oriented, peace is not the sole reality of human societies; competition among humans and massacres by one another are undoubtedly undeniable realities as well (Mohaqiq Damad, 2019: 71-69). Differentiating between "human rights" and "humanitarian law," he argues that human rights pertain to humanitarianism whilst laws about humanity correspond to "human dignity." He insists that the first humanitarian rules were drafted in Islam and later brought to Europe, substantiated by the narrative of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), who stated: "I am the Prophet of compassion, and I am the Prophet of the epic..."(Tabaqat al Kubra, vol 1: 105), reflecting these humanitarian laws and emphasizing mercy and compassion over warfare. Consequently, he argues that Muslims have not adequately utilized the valuable teachings of Islam in their interpretations and applications (Mohaqiq Damad, 1996).

3. The application of certain Jurisprudential Rules in Justifying Killing

According to Mohaqiq Damad, certain Islamic jurisprudential rules, such as the notion of "necessity," have negatively influenced the application of various war regulations, leading some political or religious figures to issue religious orders justifying violence and even massacre. This scenario permits certain prohibited acts, like employing mass destruction weaponry in war and targeting civilians in urban and rural areas and harming the environment under specific conditions. Regarding some aspects of specific verses such as Surah Al-Anfal, verse 60, some believe that the manufacture, equipping, and usage of mass destruction weaponry is permissible even in non-essential conditions (Zakariyaei, 2000)³. However, in light of these verses along with prohibitions of "aggression" and "corruption," their applicability becomes conditional, as such an interpretation cannot legitimize the use of mass destruction weapons. In Islamic ideology, the aims of forming a state should encompass reviving and establishing rights, deterring evil, achieving justice, and safeguarding human dignity (Mohaqiq Damad and colleagues, 2021). It seems that the roots of such warlike and violence-prone interpretations in Islam can be explored through three approaches: the narrative approach, the theological approach, and the jurisprudential approach (Alikhani and Kouzeh Gari, 2021)⁴.

4. official religious interpretations

Another issue contributing to the conditions of unrest and the emergence of political and social violence in post-revolution Islamic Iran arises from the "official religious interpretations," as proposed by Mohammad Mojtabeh Shabestari. He argues that the official interpretation of religion presents several types of damage, the most significant of which includes:

1. It presents an absolute and universal interpretation of religion, interpreting it as having a fixed and eternal system in political, economic, and legal matters derived from jurisprudence. This type of interpretation claims that the government's duty among Muslims is to implement Islamic laws not based on rational approaches, but solely on the Quran and Sunnah; such an interpretation of religion will conflict with the proper processes of democracy and political participation. The official interpretation of religion, due to the belief that the government's role is to enforce Islamic laws and uphold religious values, has pursued the "theorization of violence" in society against the younger generation, including women, thinkers, intellectuals, dissenters, artists, and academics. Contrary to the content of the constitution and the messages and goals of the Islamic Revolution, a theory known as "divine legitimacy and popular acceptance" was proposed, which, in practice, divided society into two segments: "insiders" and "outsiders" (Mojtabeh Shabestari, 2011: 36-30).

2. Regarding human knowledge as a singular source that overshadows all other forms of knowledge; assessing the truth and falsehood of all other knowledge against the criteria of religious knowledge, thereby ignoring humans' differing understandings of religion (lack of hermeneutic knowledge or interpretative understanding of scriptures, religious rationality, and critique) while focusing on proving a single truth without considering the foundational philosophical, theological, epistemological, sociological, psychological bases, and more (Mojtabeh Shabestari, 2011: 36-30).

5. ideological extremism

Within the discussion of violent ideologies, Mahdi Bazargan, Abdul Karim Soroush, and Ali Akbar Alikhani highlight how individuals,

groups, and political currents holding ideological viewpoints can lead to unsustainable and violent circumstances in various forms. Overall, ideological approaches exhibit certain indicators such as:

1. Lacking foundational philosophical and scientific grounds while being inflexible, absolute-minded, dogmatic, and delineating boundaries between themselves and others and refrain from vilifying, slandering, denigrating, and degrading those regarded as disruptive or incorrect; (Alikhani, 2022: 172-171).

2. Interpreting and co-opting religion, ethics, human rights, and human values toward their ideological goals and justifying their means (Alikhani, 2022: 172-171).

3. Operating as a weapon; as Lenin stated, ideological individuals seek to craft a "hostile adversary" because without an enemy, survival is untenable (Soroush, 1993b). Thus, individuals advocating rational dialogue between Iran and the West face risks of being labeled as Islamic appeasers or promoters of Western imperialism (Vakili Vala, 1997).

4. Preferring revolutionary movements and foundational periods over stability; operating abruptly and revolutionarily instead of adopting a more gradual approach to political and social paths (Bazargan, 1984: 91-90; Bazargan, 2010: 134).

5. Anti-intellectualism, where emotion prevails over reason (Soroush, 1993a) and imitation supersedes investigation, stripping humanity of its capacity for reflective thought (Soroush, 1993b).

For peace-oriented religious thinkers, the roots of extremism, radicalism, and ideological violence in society and Iranian political culture, including phenomena such as "otherness," the binary of "self-other," and "insider-outsider," can be categorized under several primary causes below:

First, "Islamic motivations," interpreted as ideological religious bases, convey a harsh, inflexible, anti-rational, and "othering" image of Islam, depicting no outcome besides "decaying and imprisoning" it. Abdul Karim Soroush asserts that such perceptions of religion do little to enrich or liberate it (Soroush, 1993b).

Secondly, the ideology of commu-socialism⁵, which is a deeply rooted Marxist and communist leftist culture, has penetrated Iranian society and has influenced the culture, religion, faith, and socio-political views of Iran. According to Alikhani, this ideology has entered the minds and consciousness of Iranians and appears completely local for two reasons:

Third, another factor fueling radicalism and intolerance in contemporary Iranian political culture is the influence of contemporary Arab thinkers whose works and ideas have emerged in Iranian society through translations and interactions (Alikhani, 2023: 264-255).

6. infiltration of pre-Islamic tribal violence into Islamic culture

A fundamental issue posed by Ali Akbar Alikhani concerns the "encroachment of pre-Islamic violence in Islamic culture" following the death of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). He argues that although numerous modalities are provided for peace and coexistence in the Quran and Sunnah, every war and jihad in the Quran is defensive, with no verse permitting the initiation of warfare or violence. However, since the Prophet's passing, the Islamic world has experienced various wars, violence, and bloodshed in Islam's name, which continue to this day. Alikhani in his book "Islam and Peaceful Coexistence" strives to demonstrate that violent approaches are ingrained in Islam from pre-Islamic times and propagated over centuries, interlinked with centers of power and wealth, and where the despotism of rulers plays a crucial role in replicating such violence (Alikhani, 2014: 240-234).

He determines that the roots of radicalism, extremism, and violence in several Islamic countries stem from these cultures, which do not correlate with early Islam, reflecting the Quran and Sunnah but are subjected to contemporary political and socio-cultural interpretations and manipulations. It is also typical for political groups to utilize the capacities of religion and sacred beliefs for mobilizing supporters and justifying their behaviors (Alikhani, 2022).

7. Epistemological Confusions in Understanding Religion

Another cause for violence and extremism within religious communities and the Muslim world arises from theoretical and conceptual confusions addressing cognitive aspects, as discussed by

Abdul Karim Soroush, Mohsen Kadivar, and Ali Akbar Alikhani. In this instance, Soroush identifies roots in failing to distinguish between the substantial and accidental qualities of religion (Soroush, 1998b) and possessing a predominant perception of religion rather than focusing on the minority perspective.

Religion, with all its comprehensiveness (Qur'an and tradition), is not wholly accessible to us, signifying significant gaps (Soroush, 1998a). Soroush posits that human understanding is ever-evolving, suggesting that future generations may attain a more purified and precise comprehension than previous ones (Soroush, 1998a). Alikhani discusses ten cognitive confusions that have led to violence and extremism. These ten cognitive distinctions include:

1. Distinction between Islam and Muslims;
2. Distinction between Islam and Islamic culture;
3. Distinction between Islam and Islamic sciences;
4. Distinction between historical Islam and overarching Islam;
5. Distinction between worldly Islam and otherworldly Islam;
6. Distinction between systematic Islam and contradictory Islam;
7. Distinction between Islam and issues of Islamic countries;
8. Distinction between Islam and logical/human subjects;
9. Distinction between the Prophet (PBUH) and the believers;
10. Distinction between the conditions of the Prophet's presence and non-presence (Alikhani, 2023: 264-255).

Another issue raised correlates to the contradiction between the ideological foundations of modernist religious thinkers and traditionalists, derived from texts and emphatically aligned with traditional theological and jurisprudential paradigms infused with rational interpretative and human rights perspectives. Here, two issues arise: First, traditionalists hinder the proposed foundational knowledge compatible with a democratic political structure due to not rectifying previous authoritarian thought, thus preventing the transition to democratic structures-identified as a factor contributing to violence

(Soroush, 1998b). Second, it is plausible that traditional foundations encompassing ontological, epistemological, religion-based, and theological elements inherently lack peace, coexistence, and tolerance; for instance, the views about God they hold, either "Severe in Punishment" or "Wrote Mercy for Himself" can change their worldviews. Notably, if their portrayal of the world depicts it as a punitive realm filled with retribution and not just a preparation for the afterlife, this framing fosters a climate conducive to religious violence and extremism (Kadivar, 2000: 798-784).

8. misguided and sanctified ignorance of religion

From the perspective of Mohaqiq Damad, one reason behind the emergence of violent interpretations of Islam is the "religious ignorance" or "sacred ignorance" enacted by figures such as Tocqueville and Goldziher. This ignorance allows some individuals to commit massacres and slaughter in the name of God. These violent behaviors stem from theories obscuring the beautiful and merciful aspects of Islam, thereby isolating it. Other factors include the instrumental reading of religious power, where theological and legal institutions are exploited. Mohaqiq Damad believes the historical roots of such violent interpretations of Islam extend from the era of the Ottoman Empire based on the viewpoint of "victory through terror." According to this perspective, creating fear and terror in enemies arises from warfare, followed by seizing power. This perspective theorizes about wielding power and expanding Islam through any means possible, underscoring encroachments on elected sovereignty without sustainability (Mohaqiq Damad, 2019: 169-167). Within Iran, some individuals beat the drum of violence, responding harshly when others speak of a merciful Islam or coexistence rooted in Quranic principles of collective compassion. Such behaviors emerge from their twisted cognitive and interpretative frameworks (Mohaqiq Damad, 2013: 57-31).

Solutions Proposed by Thinkers of Religious Peace-Oriented Thoughts

Based on the theoretical framework and layered method of research; after identifying the causes of unrest and violence within society, thinkers of religious peace-oriented thoughts have proposed various solutions

pertaining to the establishment of peace and coexistence among humanity, which include:

1. Unity

In the early years after the revolution, conflicts and disagreements among individuals and political factions were key issues for thinkers of religious peace-oriented thoughts, which Mahdi Bazargan and members of the Freedom Movement termed an "urgent need." Bazargan's proposed solution can be conceptually divided into theoretical and practical dimensions. From a theoretical point, he emphasizes the concept of "unity" based on religious teachings, illustrating the paths toward a unified community through the words of Allah, especially the phrase "There is no god but Allah." He relates resolving societal differences to emulating the behavior of the Prophet Muhammad and the ethos of "Mercy to the World" with adversaries, as well as the conciliatory policies of Imam Ali (PBUH) towards opponents (even toward Ibn Muljam) as models for governance and political engagement (Bazargan, 1984: 81-80).

In the practical dimension, Bazargan utilizes the phrase "Infinitesimals"⁶ to foster collaborative "integrating" efforts within society to construct a healthy community unhindered by divisions and disputes. His pragmatic solution to this issue is forming the "Commodity Society" through creating organizations, institutions, and educational entities aimed at reforming society under the influence of religion. Following his 1951 prison release, Bazargan experienced setting up such organizations, successfully collaborating with Ayatollah Seyyid Mahmoud Taleghani, establishing the Islamic Engineering Association, the Publishing Company, Yad Company, etc. He views these civil institutions as prerequisites for democracy, ensuring the freedom and dignity of individuals (Tavassoli, 2005: 147-138; Bazargan, 1984: 151).

To address foreign policy issues, especially regarding the USA, Bazargan criticizes the discourse of "anti-imperialism" and blaming all domestic problems on external factors. He maintains that during engagements with foreign nations, whether "noticing external situations" or "focusing internally," the beginning and center of all movements should be explored within "ourselves"; in the first instance, we essentially deny the verse that states: "Indeed Allah does not change the condition of a

people until they change their own condition," (Qur'an, 13: 11) and if our motto is that all misfortunes arise from Britain, America, or Russia, it contradicts Imam Ali's (PBUH) words: "Your cure and ailments lie within you" (Bazargan, 2010, Vol 1: 96).

2. Religious Democracy

Another suggested solution for fostering peace and coexistence in society, advocated by the thinkers of religious peace-oriented thoughts, hinges on the integration of religion and democracy or "Islamic democracy." Abdul Karim Soroush views religion and democracy as intertwined, considering their combined essence to be a super-religious strategy represented in merging knowledge and religion concepts. He believes that to achieve individuals' natural rights, assess the rulers' power, and attain justice, religion must be aligned with democracy rather than the reverse. He further stresses that justice cannot be strictly religious; religion should then be founded upon principles of justice (Soroush, 1998a). However, some reject this theory, asserting that harmonizing Islam with democracy can only be plausible if Islam capitulates completely to secularization (Paydar, 1994).

According to Soroush, the realization of democracy necessitates acceptance of principles such as truth relativity, awareness, rationality, freedom, and satisfaction. The element of "rationality" will generate balance between internal and external dimensions of religion, transform understanding toward diverse and varied interpretations of faith, and recognize these differences by fostering flexibility, tolerance, and coexistence amongst relationships between authority and the people. A democracy devoid of others and ethics will never be established; rather, the essence of democracy demands embracing the thoughts and beliefs of others, and that spirit of accommodation toward thinkers and dissenting views is pivotal (Soroush, 1997b).

3. application of war and peace principles based on Shia teachings

One approach among peace-oriented religious thinkers concerning jihad is applying critical views based on Shia teachings. Shia jurisprudential rules emphasize the role of the Prophet's (PBUH) traditions and those of Shia Imams (PBUH) in interpreting similar Quranic verses. Research and issuing jurisprudential rules concerning jihad and

defense also fall under these fundamental guidelines. Given the fundamental differing principles between Shia and Sunni views on jihad, the influence of critical modernist thinkers in Islamic jurisprudence holds significant value today. Notably, Thinker Ni'matollah Salehi Najafi in his book "Jihad in Islam" provides innovative and critical perspectives on wartime issues, noting that his motivation stemmed from experiencing the tragedies of the Iran-Iraq war. Conclusively, he identifies that the jihad depicted in the Quran and the Prophet's (PBUH) traditions starkly contrasts with the interpretations proffered within jurisprudential texts, a divergence as pronounced as "one hundred and eighty degrees." He argues that this misunderstanding is what provides grounds for western critiques claiming Islam to be a religion of violence and warfare. He further emphasizes the important responsibility resting on jurists and religious modernists to endeavor in critical, evaluative engagements with traditional texts, aligning them more closely with the dictates of the Quran and the Prophet's (PBUH) and infallible imams (PBUH). Jurists must reconceptualize jurisprudential texts concerning Quranic principles and the Prophet's (PBUH) and infallible Imams' (PBUH) traditions to separate impure interpretations and manifest the authentic humanitarian image of Islamic jihad. He also deduces from his analysis of peace practices of Imam Hasan (PBUH) and the battle of Imam Hussein (PBUH), that the latter's war was defensive in reaction to Yazid's aggression, while Imam Hasan's peace policy conformed with prophetic tradition and the true essence of Islam, asserting that suppressing the tyranny of the aggressor can only be justified if there's an unprecedented chance for success (Salehi Najafi, 2018: 463-461).

In his book "Open Letter Regarding the Taif Conference and the War Issue," he elaborates on the importance of negotiation and the mediation of the Algerian delegation for establishing peace with Iraq, in relation to the statements made by the Speaker of the Parliament on Monday, February 25, 1980, regarding Iran's non-participation in the Islamic Conference in Taif. Salehi Najafabadi believes that negotiating for the establishment of peace and ending aggression is neither a sign of surrender nor an indication of weakness, and it does not require a reduction in the military readiness of the aggrieved party. Rather, negotiation, in accordance with the dictates of reason and Islamic

principles, the practices of the Prophet (PBUH), and the infallible Imams (PBUH), is aimed at halting the continuation of war, in order to restore Iran's rights, and to pursue the most rational path for ending aggression and establishing security (Salahi Najafabadi, 2008: 14). He argues that refusing the invitation for mediation and peace not only goes against Article 11 of the Constitution⁷, but also leads to misunderstandings about Iran being perceived as an aggressor in the international arena. This issue, instead of achieving the unity of the Islamic nations, would result in the political isolation of Iran (Salahi Najafabadi, 2008: 30-26).

4. Pluralism

A theoretical discourse framing power distribution is the model of pluralism or multiplicity, a US-origin theory that examines the impacts of group and local conflicts on policymaking. This concept gained prominence in political discussions during the 1950s and 1960s, subsequently spreading globally. The discussion of pluralism within the context of religious peace-oriented thoughts initially stems from religious pluralism discussions prevalent within academic and political circles during the 1960s and 1970s, particularly published in the *Kyan* journal (*Kiyan Magazine*, issues 28, 36, 40). Among thinkers of peace-oriented religious thoughts proposing thorough discussions on pluralism, Abdul Karim Soroush, Mohammad Mojtahed Shabestari, and Mohsen Kadivar can be highlighted. Soroush initiates his discussion on "pluralism" by addressing "religious pluralism" before transitioning into "political pluralism," laying the groundwork for discussions related to "democracy." According to Soroush:

"Recognizing multiplicity and diversity, declaring the irreducibility and incomparable nature of cultures, religions, languages, and human experiences represents an ideal human condition characterized by a fragrant and colorful garden—a modern conception of humanity, primarily articulated within the realms of culture and society" (Soroush, 1997b). Soroush, in his theoretical treatise on jurisprudence, emphasizes that our understanding of religious texts must inherently be diverse and pluralistic, rejecting the notion of a singular interpretation; and that interpretations are fluid, since the religious text itself is silent, and our expectations, inquiries, and presumptions from the sources produce

various meanings (Soroush, 1995). Religious pluralism advocates for interfaith dialogue, recognition of belief diversity, tolerance, and non-coercion towards others' beliefs. Consequently, endorsing religious pluralism as a reality cultivates non-monopolistic pursuits of truth, thereby facilitating compatibility between faith and fluid experiences in a multi-faith environment (Mojtahed Shabestari et al., 1995).

5. the proposal of faith-based and monotheistic peace

Peace, while avoiding conflict among humans, encompasses positive aspects and meanings. One positive facet in peace-building is the proposal of "faith-based or monotheistic peace initiatives," as suggested by Mohaqiq Damad. From his viewpoint, faith-based peace does not arise from human-centric understandings but reflects a submission to the one God. This knowledge does not partition humanity into self and other constructs or categorize the world into sentient and inanimate domains; instead, it outlines peace in four dimensions: "the peace of humans with God," "the peace of humans with themselves," "peace with others," and "peace with the surrounding world." This type of knowledge prioritizes establishing harmony with God, defined as faith, bridging two inseparable principles: faith as the cause and righteous action as the manifestation of that faith.

In the second layer, individuals should conquer their the most ultimate selves, represented by their caprices. The peace-oriented knowledge framework designed by God endows humans with a particular worldview whereby every human serves as a link to the divine and the flow of existence. When God, Humanity, and the Universe converge in unity, notions such as "I" versus "You" and "insider" versus "outsider" dissipate, echoing the Quran's verse: "O humanity! We have created you from a male and female...the most honorable among you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous" (Qur'an, 49:13). A person in concord with their environment will egregiously avoid harming natural ecosystems or the Earth itself, as their understanding is rooted in the harmony of existence. As the teachings of transcendent wisdom indicate, the universe is one, with an indivisible God; thus, humans are inseparable from nature and existence. One outcome of monotheistic knowledge is that all heavenly religions propagate a loving and compassionate God, not a terrifying

deity, affirming God's will of: "Allah desires ease for you, not hardship" (Qur'an, 2:185). The principle of ease is pivotal within the faith narrative, where God seeks to relieve burdens through religion while shaping it primarily around ease and benevolence (Mohaqiq Damad, 2020).

6. development of peace theology

One of the vital necessities for theorizing peace revolves around the development of "peace theology," as posited by Mohammad Jafar Amirie Mohalati. He emphasizes that peace theology unfolds within three realms: 1. Ethics of war suppression, constituting primary or negative peace; 2. Ethics of forgiveness and reconciliation, representing intermediary peace that leads to neutrality; and 3. Ethics of friendship, embodying positive or advanced peace. In the first realm, resources for knowledge regarding war suppression are essential, drawing from both the historical cultural heritage of Iran (Amirie Mohalati a, 2021) and religious sources, chiefly including the Quran, the traditions of the Prophet, and the conduct of the infallible Imams (PBUH) (Amirie Mohalati, 2020).

In the second realm, acknowledging the necessity of ethics, it entirely repudiates any form of violence, warfare, and hatred within human interactions. At the core of peace theology lies "forgiveness," a keyword warranting meticulous exploration within Islamic practices alongside comparative studies with other religions. The significance of Shia thought concerning concepts like forgiveness, compassion, and mercy (Amir Mahallati, 2018), particularly within the context of the concept of intercession (Amir Mahallati, 2018), serves as a valuable resource for promoting peace and coexistence within political and societal dimensions.

In the third realm, he articulates the paradigm of "friendship" as a crucial cultural paradigm needed by humanity; it facilitates the delineation of superior ethical and, correspondingly, a superior religious framework (Amir Mahallati, 2021b). Conversely, enmity among humans, societies, nations, and between humanity and the environment is not a natural or inherent aspect of existence—rather, it portrays a massive cost imposed upon humanity due to erroneous worldviews and ideologies that bend its stature. Warfare claims human lives, hate-centered ideologies ravage the spirit of humanity, and enmity strips life, intellect, heart, and soul of meaning and happiness (Amir Mahallati, 2021c).

7. Ten Cognitive Distinctions in Understanding Religion

In earlier discussions, it was indicated that Alikhani sees ten cognitive confusions in religious understanding as one of the primary causes of violence in the Islamic world misrepresented as Islam. In the same discussion, he presents ten distinctions he believes crucial for expanding peace and coexistence within society and the Islamic world, including the following (Alikhani, 2023):

1. Distinction between Islam and Muslims;
2. Distinction between Islam and Islamic culture;
3. Distinction between Islam and Islamic sciences;
4. Distinction between historical Islam and transcendent Islam;
5. Distinction between worldly Islam and otherworldly Islam;
6. Distinction between systematic Islam and contradictory Islam;
7. Distinction between Islam and the issues of Islamic nations;
8. Distinction between Islam and rational or humanitarian subjects;
9. Distinction between the Prophet (PBUH) and believers;
10. Distinction between the conditions of the Prophet's presence and absence.

Conclusion

Today, the factors contributing to the atmosphere of unrest and violence in Iranian society are diverse and multifaceted, shaped by political, social, economic, ethnic, and cultural objectives and motivations, yielding a range of negative domestic and international consequences for the country. The peace-oriented religious approach grounded in epistemological and ethical foundations rejects all forms of violence and slaughter, aiming first to present a merciful reading of Islam based on Islamic texts and thereafter to recommend, prescribe, and institutionalize solutions for fostering peace and peaceful coexistence within the society. However, centers of power and wealth, combined with distorted and violent interpretations by various political and social factions, have formed significant hurdles in actualizing and institutionalizing these

thoughts within society. Moreover, rapid changes in the age of globalization, spanning political and social dimensions alongside technology, have further heightened the possibility of warfare and violence in various global regions. These factors simultaneously facilitate the practical execution of Islam's cognitive strategies yet also complicate them. Therefore, the prominence and significance of peace-oriented religious thinkers in society become evident, underscoring the urgent necessity for cultural policymakers in the nation to place special emphasis on fostering and nurturing such ideologies in the future.

Footnotes

1. Regarding the division into two groups, ideological and non-ideological, the newspaper "Jomhuri Eslami" dated February 24, 1982, states: "The Revolutionary Council can be divided into two currents; one is the current that trusts in the line of jurisprudence and Islam, and the other is the current that is either non-committed to the line of jurisprudence or at least indifferent to it..."

2. According to the legal principle, absolute verses should be interpreted in light of the conditional verses, which in fact explain the verses without conditions; Khoe'i, Abu al-Qasim, Lectures on the Principles of Jurisprudence, Volume 5, pages 374; <https://lib.eshia.ir/13106/5/374>.

3. Ayatollah Mohammad Taqi Misbah Yazdi, in a speech prior to the Friday prayers in Tehran on July 6, 1999, said: "We have the instruction of 'Irhab' in the Quran, and those who are familiar with Arabic literature should go and find the equivalent of Irhab. Now, if I say what it means, tomorrow the newspapers will headline that this person supports terrorism," as reported by the Khorad newspaper on August 7, 1999.

4. **Islamic literalism or the Islam of the Ahl al-Hadith**, or literalists, relies on the apparent meanings of the Qur'an and the hadiths and narratives transmitted from the Prophet of Islam (PBUH); in Shiism, the traditions and teachings of the Twelve Imams (PBUH) must also be added to this.

The science of theology is an internal religious science based on the principles and foundations of the Qur'an and Sunnah, focusing on transmission to defend the religion and respond to doubts.

The legal and judicial system of Islam is based on jurisprudence (fiqh), and throughout history, the science of jurisprudence has been responsible for providing rules and legal and Shari'ah laws for governing Islamic societies (Ali Khatani, Ali Akbar (2020), "Islam and Violence in the Islamic World; From Theoretical Backgrounds to Practical Actions," *Quarterly Journal of International Relations Research*, Vol. 9, Issue 34, pp. 172-147).

5. This term was introduced by Ali Akbar Alikhani, and it is a synthesis of communism and socialism. He considers communism as the political aspect of Marxism and socialism as its economic and social component (Alikhani, 2023: 264-255).

6. It is a term from the field of mathematics.

7. The eleventh principle of the Constitution states: According to the noble verse "Indeed, this is your nation, one nation, and I am your Lord; therefore, worship Me," all Muslims are one community. The government of the Islamic Republic of Iran is obligated to base its overall policy on the coalition and unity of Muslim nations and to make efforts to achieve political, economic, and cultural unity in the Islamic world.

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Original Research Paper

Universelle Botschaften des Friedens: Das bleibende Vermächtnis von Jalal ad-Din Muhammad Balkhi (bekannt als Rumi oder Mawlana) und Hakim Abul-Qasim Ferdowsi im globalen Diskurs

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Zusammenfassung:

Dieser Artikel untersucht die universellen Friedensbotschaften, die in den Werken zweier bedeutender persischer Dichter, Jalal ad-Din Muhammad Balkhi (allgemein bekannt als Mawlana oder Rumi) und Hakim Abul-Qasim Ferdowsi, zum Ausdruck kommen. Dabei werden ihre wesentlichen Beiträge zum globalen Diskurs über Frieden hervorgehoben. Durch eine thematische Analyse werden Rumis Fokus auf inneren Frieden und Selbstbewusstsein mit Ferdowsis Betonung von sozialer Gerechtigkeit und den moralischen Verpflichtungen der Führung verglichen. Rumis mystische Poesie plädiert für persönliche Versöhnung als Voraussetzung für Harmonie mit dem Universum und hebt Liebe und Verständnis als wesentliche Wege zum Frieden hervor. Im Gegensatz dazu präsentiert Ferdowsis Epos, das Shahnameh, Frieden im Kontext kollektiver Identität, wobei gerechte Regierungsführung und moralische Integrität als entscheidend für die gesellschaftliche Harmonie gelten. Die Botschaften beider Dichter wirken kulturübergreifend und betonen Einheit, Empathie und die anhaltende Relevanz ihrer Lehren in aktuellen Bemühungen zur Konfliktlösung. Diese Forschung zeigt, wie die Reflexionen von Rumi und Ferdowsi über Frieden wichtige Einblicke für die Förderung von Dialog, Toleranz und Koexistenz in einer zunehmend durch Spaltungen geprägten Welt bieten. Darüber hinaus dienen ihre Werke als historische Perspektiven, um menschliche Erfahrungen während ihrer jeweiligen Epochen zu verstehen – Rumi in der Zeit der Mongoleneinfälle im 13. Jahrhundert und Ferdowsi während der arabischen Eroberung im 11. Jahrhundert. Schließlich positioniert diese Studie Rumi und Ferdowsi als entscheidende Quellen zur Gestaltung des globalen historischen Images Irans und hebt ihre anhaltende "Soft Power" innerhalb der iranischen Kultursphäre und darüber hinaus hervor. Durch eine kritische Untersuchung ihrer Beiträge im weiteren Rahmen der persischen Welt können wir ihren nachhaltigen Einfluss auf regionale Identitäten und globale kulturelle Dialoge würdigen.

Schlüsselwörter: Mawlana/Rumi, Ferdowsi, iranischer kultureller Diskurs, Empathie, persische Welt, universelle Themen

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مولانا جلال‌الدین محمد بلخی (رومی) و حکیم ابوالقاسم فردوسی در گفتمان جهانی صلح

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چکیده:

این مقاله به بررسی پیام‌های جهانی صلح در آثار دو شاعر برجسته فارسی یعنی مولانا جلال‌الدین محمد بلخی (رومی) و حکیم ابوالقاسم فردوسی می‌پردازد و سهم آن‌ها را در گفتمان جهانی صلح مورد تأکید قرار می‌دهد. این مطالعه، تمرکز مولانا جلال‌الدین محمد بلخی (رومی) بر صلح درونی و خودآگاهی را با تأکید فردوسی بر عدالت اجتماعی و مسئولیت‌های اخلاقی رهبری مقایسه می‌کند. شعر عرفانی رومی، آشتی فردی را به عنوان پیش‌نیاز دستیابی به هماهنگی با جهان و صلح مورد تأکید قرار داده و عشق و مدارا با خویشان را به عنوان راه‌های اساسی برای رسیدن به صلح مورد توجه قرار می‌دهد. در مقابل، فردوسی در اثر ارزشمند خود شاهنامه، تحقق صلح را در بستر هویت جمعی ممکن می‌داند و بر این نظر است که حکومت عادلانه و یکپارچگی اخلاقی برای هماهنگی اجتماعی و صلح حیاتی است. پیام‌های هر دو شاعر در فرهنگ‌های دیگر نیز طنین‌انداز شده است، زیرا بر وحدت، همدلی و تلاش برای حل تعارض که آموزه‌های معاصر بین‌المللی هستند تأکید می‌کنند. این پژوهش نشان می‌دهد که چگونه تأملات رومی و فردوسی درباره صلح، آموزه‌هایی حیاتی برای تقویت گفت‌وگو، تحمل و همزیستی در جهانی که به طور فزاینده‌ای با واگرایی مواجه است، ارائه می‌دهد. علاوه بر این، آثار آن‌ها همچون لنزهای تاریخی عمل می‌کنند که از طریق آن‌ها می‌توان تجربیات انسانی را در زمانه مربوط به خودشان—رومی در دوران آشفتگی حملات مغول در قرن سیزدهم و فردوسی در میان فتح عرب در قرن یازدهم—درک کرد. یافته‌های این مقاله نشان می‌دهد که چگونه تفسیرهای آن‌ها از صلح، پیام‌هایی با اثرگذاری جهانی را ارائه می‌کند که همچنان در بحث‌های معاصر درباره حل تعارض و همزیستی باقی مانده و به آنها توجه می‌شود. در نهایت، این مطالعه، رومی و فردوسی را به عنوان منابع مؤثر در شکل‌دهی به تصویر تاریخی جهانی ایران معرفی کرده و قدرت نرم ماندگار آن‌ها را در حوزه ایران فرهنگی و فراتر از آن مورد توجه قرار می‌دهد. بنابراین با بررسی سهم این دو شاعر بزرگ در چارچوب وسیع‌تر کشورهای فارسی‌زبان و حوزه تمدنی ایران، می‌توان تأثیر ماندگار آن‌ها را بر هویت‌های منطقه‌ای و گفت‌وگوهای فرهنگی جهانی مشاهده کرد.

واژگان کلیدی: مولانا/رومی، فردوسی، گفتمان فرهنگی ایرانی، همدلی، جهان فارسی‌زبان، مضامین جهانی، صلح

Original Research Paper

Universal Messages of Peace: The Enduring Legacy of Jalal ad-Din Muhammad Balkhi (widely known as Rumi or Mawlana) and Hakim Abul-Qasim Ferdowsi in Global Discourse

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Abstract

This article explores the universal messages of peace articulated in the works of two seminal Persian poets, Jalal ad-Din Muhammad Balkhi (commonly known as Mawlana or Rumi) and Hakim Abul-Qasim Ferdowsi, highlighting their significant contributions to global discourse on peace. Through a thematic analysis, the study contrasts Rumi's focus on inner peace and self-awareness with Ferdowsi's emphasis on social justice and the moral responsibilities of leadership. Rumi's mystical poetry advocates for personal reconciliation as a prerequisite for achieving harmony with the universe, emphasizing love and understanding as essential pathways to peace. Conversely, Ferdowsi's epic, the Shahnameh, presents peace within the context of collective identity, where just governance and moral integrity are vital for societal harmony. Both poets' messages resonate across cultures, emphasizing unity, empathy, and the enduring relevance of their teachings in contemporary conflict resolution efforts. This research underscores how Rumi and Ferdowsi's reflections on peace offer vital insights for fostering dialogue, tolerance, and coexistence in a world increasingly marked by divisions. Additionally, their works serve as historical lenses through which we can understand human experiences during their respective periods – Rumi during the turmoil of the Mongol invasions in the 13th century and Ferdowsi amidst the Arab conquest in the 11th century. The findings of this analysis will elucidate how their interpretations of peace convey universal messages that remain relevant in contemporary discussions on conflict resolution and coexistence. Ultimately, this study positions Rumi and Ferdowsi as instrumental sources in shaping Iran's global historical image while underscoring their enduring soft power within the Iranian cultural sphere and beyond. By critically examining their contributions within a broader Persianate framework, we can appreciate their lasting impact on both regional identities and global cultural dialogues.

Keywords: Mawlana/Rumi, Ferdowsi, Iranian cultural discourse, empathy, Persianate World, universal themes.

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Introduction

In his study of the Buddhist kingdom of Thailand, Southeast Asian scholar Raymond Scupin (1980: 66-67) examines the significance of medieval translations of the Persian epic *Shahnameh* (i.e., the *Book of Kings*), authored by the 11th-century poet Abolqasem Ferdowsi, and their impact on the Thai-Siamese royal house and literary traditions. These translations played a crucial role in shaping the Thai royal ideology, notably evident in sources like the 1752 CE royal text *Rajadhamma* or *Nithan Sibsawng Liam*. This incorporation of Ferdowsi's work is particularly noteworthy considering Thailand's historical positioning as a proud Buddhist nation, which has traditionally fallen outside of the Persian cultural sphere. It suggests that the Persian royal system's methodologies of statecraft and protocol significantly influenced the Thai political framework, including its practices related to peace and conflict resolution.

Peace, as a multifaceted concept, is interpreted through various intellectual traditions, encompassing philosophy, political thought, international relations, ethics, and psychology. Across cultures and civilizations, peace has inspired diverse interpretations, often regarded as a fundamental concern in global politics, economic development, and international relations. This article explores the significance of peace in the poetry of Jalal ad-Din Muhammad Balkhi (better known outside the Persian speaking world as Mawlana/Maulana or Rumi) (1207-1273 CE) and Abolqasem Ferdowsi (940-1020 CE). These two eminent figures have produced works that resonate not only within the Iranian cultural sphere but also extend their influence across the broader Persianate world, Islamic civilization, and beyond.

The contributions of Rumi and Ferdowsi to the discourse on peace are globally significant. According to the *Financial Tribune*, Rumi's translated works have recently become bestsellers worldwide, particularly in the United States, underscoring his universal appeal and the resonance of his themes of love and spirituality (*Financial Tribune*, 2015). Similarly, the *Shahnameh*, the longest poem ever written by a single author, extends beyond mere length; Ferdowsi's role in shaping the Persian language and literary culture is comparable to that of Goethe for the Germans, Pushkin for the Russians, or Shakespeare for the English-speaking world

(Shahnameh Project, 2015). Ferdowsi's ideals—such as just rulership, statecraft, kingship, chivalry, forgiveness, and harmony—have imparted profound influences on traditional political systems in the Islamic world and beyond, impacting the Indian subcontinent, the Malay-Indonesian world, and regions influenced by the Chinese and Thai royal families (Marrison, 1955: 52-69; Lambton, 1962: 91-119; Brewster, 1972: 115-122; Milner, 1981: 46-70; Chambert-Loir, 2005: 135, 139-141; Thant Myint-U, 2006: 74-75).

To address the central question—what significance does peace hold in the works of these two iconic poets, and how do they interpret it?—this study will employ qualitative research methods through thematic analysis. As part of a larger project, it will focus on the immediate perspectives of these influential scholars and poets while briefly discussing their broader geographic contexts and the impacts on ruling elites and indigenous systems.

The first section will review relevant research background on this topic. Subsequently, the conceptual framework will address notions of Cultural Iran and the Iranian civilizational area, examining regions influenced by these ideas in a broader context. The third section will be the core of the article, analyzing the role of peace in the poetry of Rumi and Ferdowsi. Their works serve as vital historical lenses through which we can understand human experiences during their respective periods: Rumi's reflections emerged amidst the turmoil of the Mongol invasions in the 13th century, while Ferdowsi's epic narratives sought to preserve and reaffirm Iranian identity during the Arab conquest in the 11th century. The findings of this analysis will elucidate how their interpretations of peace convey universal messages that remain relevant in contemporary discussions on conflict resolution and coexistence. Ultimately, this study positions Rumi and Ferdowsi as instrumental sources in shaping Iran's global historical image and underscores their enduring soft power within the Iranian cultural sphere and the broader Persianate world.

Research Background

Iranian scholars have long emphasized the effectiveness of Persian cultural legacies as a form of soft power in both historical and contemporary contexts. They contend that Persian literary sources have

traditionally played a significant role in expanding cultural influence, particularly in regions closely connected to Iran that share similar socio-cultural traits, such as the celebration of the Persian New Year, or Nawruz. Richard N. Fry, the late Harvard University Persian scholar, articulated this idea in his book *The Heritage of Iran* (1962: 344), stating, "New Persian has become, along with Arabic, the language of Islam, and Islam itself has far outgrown its Arabic basis, turning into a multi-ethnic and multilingual culture and religion. Iran has played a leading role in this metamorphosis. We can assume that Islam had to change even before its adoption by the Persians, but the Iranian civilization played the same role in the development of Muslim culture as the Greek civilization in the formation of Christianity and its culture."

Significant contributions to the discourse on Persian literature and its implications for peace from the perspectives of Rumi and Ferdowsi in the Farsi-Persian language can be found in various scholarly works. Notable among these is Ali Tamizal's *Peace and Friendship from the Perspective of Rumi* (1399 [2020]), which explores Rumi's philosophical insights into interpersonal relationships and the foundations of peaceful coexistence. Faranak Soleimani's *Manifestations of Peace and Humanity in the Poems of Rumi, Hafez, and Saadi* (1388 [2009]) further enriches this discourse by examining how these poets collectively articulate themes of compassion and humanity in their works. Additionally, Simiari et al.'s *A Dissection of the Elements of Peace in Rumi's Thought Based on the Masnavi* (1400 [2021]) provides a detailed analysis of Rumi's seminal text, elucidating the intricate elements that contribute to his vision of peace. In relation to Ferdowsi, Akram Gholami Zareh Zadeh's *Aspects of Peace and Reconciliation in the Poems of Ferdowsi* (1399 [2020]) highlights the poet's emphasis on moral virtues and just leadership as essential components for achieving societal harmony. Farhad Darvishi's *Peace in Ferdowsi's Thought* (1398 [2019]) complements this by examining how Ferdowsi's narratives advocate for reconciliation and ethical governance within the context of his epic work, the *Shahnameh*. These studies collectively underscore the importance of both Rumi and Ferdowsi in shaping a discourse on peace that transcends cultural boundaries. Their reflections not only contribute to Persian literature but also resonate with universal themes relevant to contemporary discussions on conflict resolution and coexistence. By

analyzing their works, we gain valuable insights into how their poetic legacies continue to inspire efforts toward fostering understanding and harmony in an increasingly fragmented world.

The exploration of peace and amicable conflict resolution in the works of Rumi and Ferdowsi is thus essential for understanding their cultural legacies and the global implications of their messages in contemporary society. However, existing research has not comprehensively examined the concept of peace as articulated by both poets within the Iranian civilizational context or its potential influence on broader regions. This study aims to bridge that gap by investigating how Rumi's mystical poetry emphasizes themes of inner peace and love, while Ferdowsi's epic narratives celebrate national identity and moral virtues. Despite their differing styles—Rumi's lyrical approach juxtaposed with Ferdowsi's grand narrative—both poets converge on themes of unity and empathy that reflect a shared cultural ethos transcending their individual contexts. Their works contribute not only to Iranian literature but also resonate with universal themes that address human experiences across cultures. Moreover, the importance of this research extends beyond Iran; it highlights how the messages of Rumi and Ferdowsi can inform global discussions on peace, tolerance, and coexistence. By critically examining their contributions within a broader Persianate framework, we can appreciate their lasting impact on both regional identities and global cultural dialogues. This analysis will underscore how their poetic legacies continue to inspire contemporary efforts toward reconciliation in an increasingly fragmented world.

Conceptual Framework of the Research: The Concept of 'Cultural Iran'¹

The concept of 'Cultural Iran' has gained significant recognition as a vital cultural and civilizational domain within the global geographic identity, attracting scholarly attention from researchers, including prominent Iranian scholars such as Hakem Ghasemi, Ali Ashraf Nazari, and T. Atabaki. This indigenous perspective emphasizes the enduring influence of Iranian culture across various regions, demonstrating resilience amid historical transformations and fluctuations. The increasing richness of

¹ ایران فرهنگی

academic discourse surrounding Cultural Iran underscores its relevance in contemporary international relations and geopolitical contexts.

Cultural Iran encompasses a collection of nations sharing a common cultural heritage. While political differences and borders exist, these nations are interconnected through a largely unified lifestyle and value system. This cultural commonality fosters a collective spirit, cultivating a shared identity among the peoples of the region and distinctly separating them from others. Such an identity serves as a foundation for unity, reinforcing the notion that cultural heritage transcends contemporary political boundaries.

Conceptually, Cultural Iran reflects the identity and civilizational exchanges of Iranians across neighboring countries, interwoven with their cultural and civilizational legacies. The shared framework that emerges from common linguistic, cultural, and social elements stems from profound historical experiences, yielding what can be termed "civilizational self-awareness." Geographically, Cultural Iran refers to the regions where Iranian culture and civilization thrive. While some literature defines this geography as the domain of Iranian civilization—encompassing territories where Persian is predominantly spoken, such as Iran, Afghanistan, and Tajikistan—it also includes areas influenced by the vast Persian Empire throughout history. This broader definition encompasses the Iranian plateau in Western Asia, Central Asia, the Caucasus region, Mesopotamia, parts of the Persian Gulf, and significant portions of the Indian subcontinent (Ghasemi, 1390 [2011]: 48).

The domain of Cultural Iran acts as a mirror reflecting "merging horizons" within a shared cultural-identity space. Numerous points of consensus exist across various fields, where an authentic shared identity can be delineated. The cultural geography of Iran extends beyond current boundaries and has historically influenced large sections of Asia Minor, Mesopotamia, India, and Central Asia. The potential for Iranian civilizational influence remains significant across vast regions of the world.

Historically, powerful Iranian governments expanded their geographic borders through military campaigns, which facilitated cultural dominance in conquered regions. The effects of this expansion are observable in

language, history, literature, rituals, and festivals among the peoples in these areas (Nazari, 1390 [2011]: 28). It can thus be asserted that the scope of Cultural Iran extends from Central Asia to the Caucasus in the north; to Pakistan, Afghanistan, and China in the east; to Iraq, Turkey, and Syria in the west; and to the Persian Gulf region and the Indian subcontinent in the south.

Cultural Iran comprises diverse countries with varying political systems exhibiting conflicting orientations—from strictly religious to secular, or pro-Western to pro-Eastern. Economically, while there exists broad market potential among these nations, underdevelopment often characterizes regional economies, leading to dependency on external support. The region is marked by ethnic diversity, with various groups coexisting alongside multiple religious communities, including both Muslims and Christians, as well as Shia and Sunni Muslims living in proximity to one another. This diversity can certainly lead to tensions; following independence movements in Central Asia and the Caucasus, ethnic and religious factors have contributed to violence both within and between these states (Nazari, 1390 [2011]: 28). Despite these challenges, shared cultural elements continue to bind these peoples together.

The existence of cultural commonalities within the civilizational domain of Cultural Iran—coupled with an increasing recognition of culture's pivotal role in international interactions—can create opportunities for cultural convergence. In today's global society shaped by globalization, actors with cultural power can envision broader roles on the world stage while engaging in cultural competition as a new domain for generating influence in international relations (Goudarzi, 1387 [2008]).

Understanding Iran's cultural identity requires consideration of realms that extend beyond contemporary national boundaries. This ancient identity predates modern political divisions and spans vast regions over millennia. For Iranians, "Iran" embodies a cultural meaning that transcends mere political or social constructs. Grazia Tucci, an Italian architect and academic, articulates this duality: "Iran as thought" conveys greatness and authenticity dispersed throughout the Iranian plateau; whereas "Iran as a political concept" has evolved through multiple borders over three millennia (cited at length in Khan Mohammadi, 1388

[2009]: 7). The elements constituting Iran's cultural identity have evolved over generations, fostering a mindset that emphasizes love and empathy rather than division or hatred.

The prominence of identity and civilizational aspects within Cultural Iran enhances its permanence and influence. Intellectual investment in these areas can facilitate reconstruction and revitalization efforts. The possession of diverse capacities within Cultural Iran creates substantial foundations for cooperation, enriched by shared language, religion, history, cross-border figures, customs, and varying levels of development. The historical depth associated with Cultural Iran fosters self-confidence among its peoples, enabling the envisioning of a powerful cultural identity capable of engaging effectively with other identities. Furthermore, the extension of cultural and geographical borders facilitates ongoing integration among countries within this domain, as a sense of geographical antiquity diminishes feelings of alienation and fosters a sense of belonging to a shared cultural geography.

The implications of Cultural Iran extend far beyond its immediate geographical confines, reverberating across many regions historically influenced by Iranian culture. Esteemed scholars such as Sheldon Pollock (2009), Richard Eaton (2013), Nile Green (2019), Owen Cornwall (2015), and Jennifer Nourse (2013) have elucidated the expansive cultural framework known as the Persianate Cosmopolis. This concept transcends geographical boundaries, encompassing areas from East Asia to South Asia, Southeast Asia, Africa, and even Europe.

Pollock and Eaton argue that the Persian Cosmopolis played a crucial role in partially supplanting the Sanskrit Cosmopolis while establishing dominance across regions stretching from present-day Afghanistan to Champa (central and southern Vietnam) and Indian-influenced kingdoms within the Indonesian archipelago (Tomas 2016). However, they also contend that Iranian influence has often been marginalized within broader narratives of Arabo-Islamic civilization. Petru Tomas (2016) emphasizes the need for a reevaluation of Iranian cultural influence's significance across various regions. He advocates for deeper analyses regarding the mechanisms of cultural transmission between Iran and these areas, as well as the socio-political dynamics shaping these interactions.

Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh*, composed in the early 11th century, thus serves as a foundational text that has profoundly shaped ideas of statecraft, political systems, and kingship across diverse cultures. Its enduring narratives have influenced governance and royal ideologies not only in Iran but also in regions such as South Asia and beyond (Milner 1981). The epic's themes resonate with concepts of leadership and legitimacy that have found relevance in various political contexts. Similarly, Rumi's works have had a profound impact on Sufi, mystical, and gnostic literature worldwide. His poetry transcends cultural boundaries, reaching diverse audiences through numerous translations. Notably, the esteemed 17th -century Malay-Indonesian mystic Hamzah Pansuri (or Fansuri) is reported to have been acquainted with Rumi's work, even citing his poetry within his own compositions (al-Attas, 1970: 14). This connection highlights the organic interweaving of Iranian culture with other societies, as evidenced by the discovery of Ferdowsi's poetry inscribed on a 14th -century grave in Sumatra, Indonesia (Mozaffari Falarti, 2012: 48-49; Daneshgar et al., 2023). Such findings reinforce the notion that these regions were not isolated peripheries but integral parts of broader historical narratives shaped by Iranian literary traditions. It also emphasizes that Rumi's influence extends beyond mere literary appreciation; it serves as a testament to the enduring dialogue between cultures and spiritual traditions. His exploration of universal themes such as love, unity, and the quest for truth resonates across various spiritual movements, illustrating how his works act as conduits for deeper understanding and connection among diverse peoples.

By exploring Iranian influences, scholars can gain valuable insights into the historical connections that have contributed to the dynamics within the Persianate Cosmopolis framework, thereby allowing for a deeper appreciation of regional heritage alongside substantive contributions made by Iran to development within that heritage. Understanding these nuances enriches the collective comprehension of diverse regional heritage, affirming Iran's role as a form of soft power in its socio-political interactions with nations worldwide.

Peace in the Poetry of the Poets of the Iranian Cultural Sphere

In exploring the significance of peace within the poetic works of Jalal ad-Din Muhammad Rumi (Mawlana) (1207–1273 CE) and Abolqasem Ferdowsi (940–1020 CE), it becomes evident that their contributions extend beyond the Iranian cultural sphere to resonate globally. Both poets employ reflections on peace to illuminate profound insights into human experiences and morality that transcend time and geographical boundaries.

In his *Masnavi-ye Ma'navi* and *Divan-e Shams*, Rumi addresses mystical peace and reconciliation, placing a strong emphasis on inner peace as the foundation for self-awareness and spiritual growth (Soleimani, 1388 [2009]: 54). Rumi's exploration of peace culminates in the notion that understanding oneself leads to a deeper comprehension of divine love. He articulates this concept through the verse:

"Do not say that everyone is at war; what do I care for peace?
You are not one; you are a thousand; illuminate your own lamp."

Rumi's mystical thought suggests that achieving self-awareness reveals love as the underlying philosophy of human existence. He encourages individuals to approach God and the world with a lover's gaze, appreciating the truth contained within every religion. Rumi asserts that each faith contains a fragment of truth and is therefore deserving of respect. By recognizing that every individual is part of a greater whole, he emphasizes that every beauty in the world reflects God's beauty.

Rumi's worldview is inclusive and expansive; he posits that no one can claim absolute ownership of God's truth. This collective understanding necessitates that individuals engage with others through reconciliation and peace, employing knowledge and wisdom as instruments for understanding. While Rumi respects all religions, he holds that the highest form of faith is based on love:

"The religion of the lover is distinct from other religions;
For lovers, the nation and religion are God."

Thus, Rumi warns that adopting intolerance towards others' beliefs amounts to a denial of truth, which in turn fosters conflict. Engaging in

bigotry without awareness ultimately detracts from understanding and compassion.

Within Rumi's mystical framework, achieving *Wahdat Erfani*² (i.e. unity of mystical experience) or *Fana fil Allah wa baqa b'allah*³ (i.e. annihilation in God and subsistence through God) – the ultimate stages of mysticism – requires the elimination of differences, grudges, and conflicts. This philosophy is illustrated in Rumi's narrative of Solomon in the *Masnawi*, where Solomon exemplifies coexistence and tolerance:

"O Solomon, amidst the crow and the falcon,
Be patient with all the birds; coexist."

Rumi's message suggests that lack of tolerance, especially towards those with ill temper, leads to enmity and conflict. He identifies the root causes of human disputes as stemming from shortsightedness and superficial understanding:

"From your perspective, O essence of existence,
The conflict between believers and heathens is evident."

Moreover, Rumi regards Islam as a pivotal reference for overcoming conflicts. He recounts the historical enmity between the tribes of Aws and Khazraj, who were mired in warfare before Islam. With the advent of the faith, their animosities transformed into friendship and unity:

"Two tribes were named Aws and Khazraj,
They bore one another's throats like bloodthirsty beasts.
Their ancient resentments dissolved in the light of Islam and purity,
They shattered their divisions and became a single body,
As if they pressed a single grape, they became one."

Following Quranic principles, Rumi denounces racism, linguistic elitism, and tribalism as byproducts of ignorance and emotional biases. He attributes these sentiments to a superficial attachment to appearances, asserting that true connection stems from knowledge and understanding:

² وحدت عرفانی

³ فنا فی الله و بقا بالله

"Differences among people disappeared from the name,
When they moved toward meaning, tranquility dawned."

Rumi emphasizes the importance of empathy over mere linguistic kinship, viewing it as a bridge to unity among diverse peoples. He suggests that Turks, Persians, Hindus, and Arabs hold no inherent superiority over one another, and shared language does not guarantee understanding:

"O many Hindus and Turks who share a tongue,
O many pairs of Turks behaving like strangers.
Thus, the language is merely a confidant;
Empathy is better than mere linguistic kinship."

He urges that prejudice is a sign of immaturity and that true emotional growth requires overcoming these biases:

"Strictness and prejudice are signs of immaturity,
Until gestation is completed, it is a bloody endeavor."

Rumi underscores the importance of disarming conflict to foster peace, positing that peace cannot exist where weaponry prevails:

"Withdraw the weapon from the hand of the insane,
So that justice and righteousness may be satisfied by you.
As long as he has a weapon and lacks reason,
Bind his hand, otherwise he will bring a hundred harms."

He likens human conflicts to the games of children, devoid of substance, suggesting that many of life's wars are ultimately meaningless:

"The wars of people are like the wars of children,
All meaningless and devoid of substance and purpose.
All fight with wooden swords,
None advancing towards any beneficial goal."

Rumi's teachings guide individuals toward a profound love for Truth and Creation, nurturing a society where peace, progress, and comfort hold significance.

In Rumi's view, humanity's primary enemy lies within the self. To escape this foe, one must listen to others' pains, reflecting Rumi's belief that true peace begins within (Molavi, 1387 [2008]: 1139, Verse 3):

“In you, there is an enemy that is hidden;
Besides cruelty, there is no way to dispel that dog of yours.”

Rumi asserts outer conflicts are insignificant compared to the internal struggles one faces. In his allegorical tale about Pharaoh, he illustrates how individuals can misunderstand their true enemy:

“The human devised a cunning plan, and his cunning was a snare;
He who thought his soul was a bloodsucker.
He closed the door while the enemy was inside the house;
The scheme of Pharaoh was derived from this tale.”

In Ghazal No. 495 of *Divan-e Shams*, Rumi conveys the importance of peace:

“If you have no desire for peace,
Then I, O my soul, have no desire for war with you.
You come to war, I will go to peace;
The Lord of the world does not find the world constrained.
There is a world of war and a world of peace;
The world of meanings is not measured by distance.”

In summary, Rumi's thought emphasizes that understanding humanity and the dimensions of existence is fundamental to achieving lasting peace and tranquility, with love serving as the central point. He advocates for the cessation of conflict in all its forms, asserting that wars arise from ignorance and superficiality. Rumi's mission is to foster reconciliation both within the individual and in relation to the universe, transforming hostilities and dualities into peace, harmony, and unity. Achieving peace within oneself is a prerequisite for cultivating outer peace, intertwining the individual's relationship with God, others, and nature (Simiyari et al., 1400 [2021]: 33).

Ferdowsi significantly contributes to the discourse on peace in his epic work, the *Shahnameh*. This monumental text transcends a mere narrative

of historical events and heroic deeds; it embeds a philosophy that advocates for peace over violence. Central to Ferdowsi's portrayal of heroism is the emphasis on defense and justice rather than conquest. The valor of Iranian warriors emerges predominantly in response to treachery and aggression, rather than as instigators of conflict.

One illustrative example is the story of Iraj, who embodies a profound desire for peace. When he approaches his brothers seeking reconciliation, he offers to renounce his claim to the throne in hopes of ending their rivalry. However, he is met with betrayal and violence, which highlights Ferdowsi's belief in the interconnectedness of humanity – asserting that, regardless of actions, all people share a common heritage. As Ferdowsi poignantly writes:

"When they come for peace, and your heart is firm,
Do you yield your noble head, and let them strike?"

This narrative serves as a condemnation of the ambition and tyranny of rulers that precipitate conflict and suffering. Ferdowsi's portrayal of kings' reveals that the true enemy often lies within – the self-serving desires of those in power. His emphasis on the consequences of unchecked ambition and bloodshed reflects a call for just wars that defend the homeland and protect the innocent rather than seek unjust conquest. He implores leaders to pursue resolutions through understanding and wisdom instead of violence:

"Whoever takes to the shedding of blood,
His enemies' hearts are filled with thought of him."

Ferdowsi articulates that the tyranny, self-will, and despotism of kings throughout the *Shahnameh* are principal causes of the harm inflicted upon the land of Iran. Even when characters such as Rostam engage in battles – such as his invasion of the land of the demons – their motivations often extend beyond mere allegiance to a monarch. They are driven by a broader objective, seeking justice and preserving the dignity of the nation. This is highlighted in the narrative where Rostam's actions are ultimately framed in the context of defending Iran against the follies of its rulers. The poet's steadfast stance throughout the work places significant moral weight on condemning evil, aggression, and unbridled ambition, regardless of the actor's pedigree (Rustam Pour, 1394 [2015]).

Ferdowsi advocates for just wars—those waged in defense of the homeland and the people from foreign attacks. He accepts the necessity of war only when it serves to eradicate evil or deliver justice. Nevertheless, he remains generally opposed to war and underscores the futility of bloodshed. This perspective is articulated through the words of the Turk prince Parmood, who reflects on the futility of conflict as he prepares to avenge his father, King Saweh:

“Whoever takes to the shedding of blood,
His enemies' hearts are filled with thought of him.
His blood will flow as a sign of the same
That he shed the blood of the heads of the rebellious.
If from the land of Turks you bring ruin,
That vengeance will also demand the end of affairs.”

Moreover, he places a premium on preserving innocent life, advising rulers against unnecessary bloodshed. The Chinese king's sentiments in the text resonate with this ethos:

“Bloodshed is not my way,
Nor is harming others in accordance with my faith.”

Ferdowsi calls for restraint even in the face of overwhelming circumstances, emphasizing that true nobility lies in protecting the innocent:

“When you are victorious, do not shed the blood of the innocent;
Do not engage in fierce war with the celestial sphere.”

The moral lessons extend to the consequences of violence on society as a whole, particularly on the youth, as he laments the decline of moral values in the wake of frequent wars:

“Due to so much war and bloodshed in the world,
The youth do not understand the value of the noble.”

Ferdowsi's commitment to peace is further echoed in his counsel to avoid hasty and reckless engagements in war. In a letter, Kaikhosrow admonishes Fariborz against the impulsive lead-up to conflict:

“Do not rush into war at all;
Stay far from drink and do not pursue sleep.

Do not seek the tumult of battle from the beginning;
Be patient until what you desire is accomplished”

(Mullah Ahmad, 1382 [2003]: 59-61).

In summation, Ferdowsi's narratives echo a profound understanding that emphasizes the maintenance of peace over the glorification of battle. His insistence on empathy, moral integrity, and human connection reflects a vision of unity and harmony that aligns closely with Rumi's teachings. Both poets advocate for tolerance and reconciliation, enriching our understanding of peace within their respective cultural contexts. Their works maintain universal relevance in contemporary discussions on conflict resolution, inspiring individuals to strive for harmony and understanding in a divinely tumultuous world.

Conclusion

This article has endeavored to illuminate the contrasting yet complementary perspectives of two pivotal figures in the Iranian cultural sphere—Jalal ad-Din Muhammad Rumi (Mawlana) and Abolqasem Ferdowsi—regarding the multifaceted concept of peace. Through a close comparative analysis of their works, we find that both poets grapple with the theme of peace but from distinct vantage points shaped by their unique historical contexts, literary styles, and philosophical frameworks.

Rumi's vision of peace is fundamentally introspective, emphasizing the necessity of reconciliation within the self as a prerequisite for achieving harmony with the broader cosmos. His mystical poetry, particularly in the *Masnavi-ye Ma'navi* and *Divan-e Shams*, advocates for an inner transformation that allows individuals to transcend dualities and conflicts inherent in the human condition. Rumi articulates a philosophy wherein self-awareness, love, and understanding of the divine enable one to experience a state of tranquility and friendship that pervades all existence. His assertion that “peace with oneself is a prerequisite for achieving external peace” underscores this intrinsic link between the internal and the external, suggesting that only through self-knowledge can one foster genuine connections with others and with the world.

In stark contrast, Ferdowsi's approach, exemplified in his epic work *Shahnameh*, contextualizes peace within the social fabric of society. He

examines the interplay of war and peace through the lens of collective identity, national pride, and the moral complexities of kingship. Ferdowsi presents a world where battles are fought not only for conquest but also in defense of the homeland and the principles of justice. His narratives highlight the profound consequences of tyranny and ambition, portraying peace as something that can only be achieved through just governance and the moral integrity of leaders. For Ferdowsi, the triumph of good often involves external struggles against oppression and violence, advocating for a noble and empathetic leadership that seeks to protect the innocent and maintain social harmony.

Despite their differing focuses – Rumi’s emphasis on the inner self and Ferdowsi’s on collective heroism – their works converge on the essential outcome: the establishment of peace as a foundational principle for human existence. Both poets advocate for empathy and understanding as the cornerstones of reconciliatory efforts, affirming the universal relevance of their messages in contemporary discourses on conflict resolution.

Rumi and Ferdowsi’s contributions to the discourse on peace serve as vital lenses for understanding not only Iranian cultural history but also broader human experiences that transcend temporal and geographical boundaries. In a world increasingly marked by fragmentation and division, the teachings of these poets offer a profound reminder of the enduring power of literature in shaping cultural values and fostering global dialogues centered on peace and coexistence.

Rumi’s poetic philosophy, emphasizing love as the ultimate force for reconciliation, resonates with contemporary movements aspiring for peace in diverse sociopolitical contexts. His teachings on empathy and understanding transcend specific religious or cultural affiliations, suggesting that the quest for inner peace is a universal endeavor. In an age characterized by polarization, Rumi’s insights encourage individuals to seek common ground and foster compassionate relationships, reinforcing the notion that true peace emanates from within.

On the other hand, Ferdowsi’s historical narratives provide critical lessons on the implications of leadership, justice, and the moral responsibilities of those in power. His portrayal of the consequences of tyranny serves as a cautionary tale for contemporary leaders, urging them to prioritize the

welfare of their constituents over personal ambitions. Ferdowsi's work underlines the importance of a just society where peace is maintained through ethical governance, resonating with modern discussions surrounding good governance and human rights.

The distinctions and parallels drawn between Rumi and Ferdowsi elucidate significant implications for ongoing efforts in peacebuilding and conflict resolution. Their works collectively call for a dual approach that encompasses both individual inner transformation and the necessity of moral integrity in leadership. This duality aligns with contemporary peacebuilding frameworks that advocate for both micro-level (individual) and macro-level (societal) interventions in addressing conflicts.

In practical terms, integrating Rumi's emphasis on inner peace into community-based peace initiatives can empower individuals to engage more constructively in conflict resolution. Programs fostering emotional intelligence, forgiveness, and self-awareness can help counteract cycles of violence and revenge, promoting a culture of peace. Similarly, Ferdowsi's insights into the importance of just leadership can inform political structures aimed at fostering inclusivity and accountability. By advocating for equitable systems that prioritize social justice, contemporary movements can work towards a more harmonious society that reflects Ferdowsi's call for empathy and moral duty in governance.

Ultimately, the enduring legacy of Rumi and Ferdowsi lies in their shared vision of a peaceful and harmonious existence. Their poetry not only captures the complexities of human emotions but also serves as a reservoir of wisdom applicable to contemporary challenges. In their respective forms – Rumi's lyrical mysticism and Ferdowsi's grand narratives – both poets encapsulate the human yearning for peace, understanding, and reconciliation.

As the world grapples with increasing cultural and ideological divides, the teachings of Rumi and Ferdowsi offer timeless insights that inspire individuals to transcend their differences. Their works remind us that peace is not merely an absence of conflict but a dynamic state of being that encompasses love, understanding, and the affirmation of our shared humanity. In revisiting their contributions, we are encouraged to foster a holistic approach to peace – a synthesis of both internal reflection and the

pursuit of justice—thereby enriching our collective journey toward a more peaceful and compassionate world.

In conclusion, this study reaffirms the relevance of Rumi and Ferdowsi's insights within the broader discourse on peace, underscoring the vital role literature plays in shaping our understanding of human relationships and the quest for coexistence. Their poetic legacies not only enrich Iranian heritage but also offer valuable lessons for fostering understanding among diverse cultures globally. As we continue to navigate the complexities of our time, the wisdom embedded in their verses serves as a guiding light, reinforcing the critical imperative of cultivating peace within ourselves and the societies we inhabit.

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Original Research Paper

Erforschung von Frieden und Gewalt im Islam durch den Quantenfluss von Informationen in einer Chaos-Haltung

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Zusammenfassung:

Interaktionen zwischen islamischen Ländern, die von Wettbewerb um verschiedene Themen und unterschiedlichen Interpretationen islamischer Texte geprägt sind, haben historisch zu erheblichen Auseinandersetzungen unter Muslimen geführt. Diese Uneinigkeit hat sich in zahlreichen Formen manifestiert, darunter gewaltsame Konfrontationen zwischen Gruppen, die sich mit dem Islam identifizieren. Die meisten Streitigkeiten innerhalb der islamischen Welt sind durch religiöse Faktoren bedingt und resultieren hauptsächlich aus unterschiedlichen und manchmal widersprüchlichen Interpretationen islamischer Lehren. Diese Forschung zielt darauf ab, die Frage zu beantworten: Wie entstehen Friedens- und Gewaltansätze im Islam? Durch die Untersuchung von Verhaltensweisen innerhalb sozialer Systeme erkennen wir, dass diese Systeme in dreidimensionalen Rahmenwerken auf der Grundlage von Informationen operieren und chaotische Verhaltensweisen aufweisen. Diese Studie verwendet den Quantenfluss von Informationen aus einer Chaos-Perspektive. Die Ergebnisse zeigen, dass gewalttätige Verhaltensweisen aus drei primären Interpretationen entstehen: narrativ, theologisch und juristisch. Im Gegensatz dazu entstehen friedensorientierte Verhaltensweisen aus philosophischen, ethischen und mystischen Interpretationen des Islam. Die Variabilität dieser Ansätze wird auf Unterschiede in den internen Mustern der Offenheit und Aggregation von Informationen zurückgeführt, die aus unterschiedlichen Interpretationen innerhalb des Quantenflusses von Informationen resultieren.

Schlüsselwörter: Frieden, Gewalt, Islam, Chaos, Quantenfluss von Informationen

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بررسی رویکردهای صلح و خشونت در اسلام بر اساس جریان کوانتومی اطلاعات در

نگرش آشوب

سعیده کوزه‌گری

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چکیده:

تعاملات میان کشورهای اسلامی و رقابت آنها بر سر مسائل مختلف و تعابیر متفاوت آنها از متون و آموزه‌های اسلام همواره محل مناقشه میان مسلمانان و به تبع آن رفتارهای مختلف شده است، به طوری که شاهد رویارویی‌های خشونت آمیز میان گروه‌هایی که خود را منتسب به اسلام می‌دانند، هستیم. در اغلب مناقشات موجود در جهان اسلام انگیزه‌های دینی وجود دارد و عمده این منازعات به دلیل برداشتهای متعدد و گاهی متناقض از اسلام است. هدف این پژوهش پاسخ به این سوال است که رویکردهای صلح و خشونت در اسلام چگونه پدید می‌آیند؟ با بررسی رفتارهای درون سیستم‌های اجتماعی، در می‌یابیم که: سیستم‌های اجتماعی و انسانی سیستم‌هایی سه وجهی و مبتنی بر اطلاعات هستند و رفتار این سیستم‌ها آشوبگون است. در این بررسی از جریان کوانتومی اطلاعات در نگرش آشوب استفاده شده است. بررسی‌ها نشان می‌دهد رفتارهای خشونت‌آمیز از سه تفسیر: نقلی، کلامی و فقهی، در مقابل رفتارهای صلح‌محور از تفاسیر: فلسفی، اخلاقی و عرفانی از اسلام سرچشمه می‌گیرد. تنوع در این رویکردها به تفاوت در الگوی درونی، باز بودگی و جمع‌شدگی نسبت به اطلاعات به وجود می‌آیند که ناشی از تفاسیر متفاوت در جریان کوانتومی اطلاعات است.

واژگان کلیدی: صلح، خشونت، اسلام، آشوب، جریان کوانتومی اطلاعات.

Original Research Paper

Exploring Peace and Violence in Islam Through the Quantum flow of Information in a Chaos Attitude

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Abstract

Interactions among Islamic countries, marked by competition over diverse issues and varied interpretations of Islamic texts, have historically led to significant contention among Muslims. This discord has manifested in numerous forms, including violent confrontations among groups identifying with Islam. Most disputes within the Islamic world are driven by religious factors, primarily arising from diverse and sometimes contradictory interpretations of Islamic teachings. This research aims to address the question: How do peace and violence approaches in Islam emerge? By examining behaviors within social systems, we recognize that these systems operate within three-dimensional frameworks based on information and exhibit chaotic behaviors. This study employs the quantum flow of information from a chaos perspective. Findings indicate that violent behaviors arise from three primary interpretations: narrational, theological, and jurisprudential. In contrast, peace-oriented behaviors emerge from philosophical, ethical, and mystical interpretations of Islam. The variability in these approaches is attributed to differences in internal patterns of openness and aggregation concerning information, stemming from diverse interpretations within the quantum flow of information.

Keywords: Peace, Violence, Islam, Chaos, Quantum flow of Information.

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Introduction

For decades, individuals and groups identifying as Islamists have played significant roles in politics and international relations, advocating for Islamic governance and divine values. Interactions among Islamic countries and their competition over various issues, coupled with differing interpretations of Islamic texts, have consistently been focal points of dispute among Muslims. This situation has led to confrontations among various groups claiming an Islamic identity. A critical question arises: How can a single text result in such varied behaviors? How do individuals derive different interpretations from the same information? Most disputes in the Islamic world stem from religious motivations, primarily due to multiple, sometimes contradictory, interpretations of Islam. The epistemological roots of violence in the Islamic context can generally be traced back to these diverse readings of Islam that have shaped scholarly and intellectual circles over centuries. The question remains: How can multiple interpretations arise from a singular text and doctrine? How can these interpretations lead to behaviors of peace or violence? To answer this question, I adopt a chaos perspective on human interactions. Chaos refers to specific aspects of the behavior of natural and living systems over time, arising from their interactions. Behaviors may appear complex and uncertain. However, such complexity often stems from simple patterns. Uncertainty does not necessarily imply randomness or unknowability; instead, these behaviors are confined to limited regions and exhibit hidden order within disorder. The chaotic attitude, discovered through the observation of nature, has been utilized across various scientific disciplines to describe behavior in natural and living systems. However, chaotic behavior in human systems, the most advanced of living systems, exhibits distinct characteristics, primarily due to the quantum flow of information. The quantum flow of information refers to the interpretation and creation of new information that generates dynamism within social systems. As the interpretation of information forms the basis of how individuals, as interaction units, perceive and act, we can observe a diversity of responses or interpretations of a single subject within these systems. Ultimately, the exercise of will and thought renders human behaviors inadequately explainable by classical science's mechanistic approach or by biological perspectives that overlook cognition.

The consequences of multiple interpretations of a singular text are evident in actions across individual, social, political, and international levels. For instance, groups within the Islamic world that confront one another often claim to represent the same Islam of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and the Quran. Yet, each seeks to expel, destroy, or limit the other, citing the same text. Thus, one primary reason for conflicts and violence among individuals and groups in the Islamic world is the multiplicity of readings of Islam, generated through the quantum flow of information and variability in the internal patterns of each interaction unit.

Therefore, this article examines the various interpretations of Islam based on the quantum flow of information in human interaction patterns. The discussion unfolds in three sections: first, an introduction to information flows and human interactions in chaotic behavior, focusing on the quantum flow of information; second, a presentation of three violence-oriented interpretations of Islam contrasted against three peace-oriented interpretations; and third, an examination of the practical implications of these interpretations concerning violence.

Interaction and Information Flows

Interaction is a widely utilized concept across various scientific fields, often referring to the relationship between two or more phenomena or variables. In human and social systems, however, it holds a broader meaning. Systems continuously interact with their surrounding environment, and depending on the extent and intensity of these interactions, they can be classified into three general categories: open, semi-open, and closed. According to this classification, a system can receive or send at least one of three combinations of matter, energy, and information (Meadows, 2008). We differentiate among three types of systems: 1. Mechanical and artificial systems, 2. Biological and cybernetic systems, and 3. Social and human systems. The information flow in mechanical systems is understood from a "mathematical" and "Shannonian" perspective; in biological and complex systems, it is "cybernetic"; and in human and social systems, it is "quantum."

Shannonian and Cybernetic Flow of Information

Based on the previously described types of systems, three types of information flows influence their behavior. In closed and mechanical

systems, Shannonian information flow is established. Claude Shannon proposed a mathematical theory of information that deals with the transmission of signals without addressing meaning, focusing instead on the production of messages by the sender. This theory considers three factors: 1) How messages are encoded, 2) The presence of noise (any condition that alters signals), and 3) Channel capacity. The significance lies in the statistical description of messages produced by codes (Shannon and Weaver, 1963). As a result, this theory plays a major role in electronic and computer sciences, though its application in social studies often adopts a mechanistic view, treating information as devoid of meaning. The social sciences have metaphorically employed Shannon's theory; for instance, in human communications, message transmission is likened to signal transmission, utilizing concepts such as "noise," "uncertainty," "feedback," and "redundancy." However, even if we accept that signal transmission within communication is valid, it only represents part of the communication process; as Ritchie notes, Shannon's model evaluates only variable aspects of information, failing to encompass all dimensions. The concept of cybernetics, which pertains to control and communication in animals and machines, is based on Norbert Wiener's groundbreaking findings from the 1930s and 1940s. Cybernetics relates to bioelectric signals in living systems, including humans (Marko, 1967). In this framework, "probability" holds special importance; information is defined in terms of choosing between two probable options. According to Wiener, the quantity referred to as information is the negative form of a quantity typically defined as entropy, signifying disorder. Entropy arises when the probability of selecting a message among several is equal, leading to indecision. In these systems, the presence of information implies the absence of entropy, while disorder reflects insufficient information (Budd, 1992: 21). The greater the amount of information in a system, the more possibilities it will encounter. Just as the amount of information indicates a system's level of organization, entropy reflects its disorder, rooted in insufficient information (SanJuan & Dousa, 2014). Thus, the cybernetic flow of information relates to decision-making, communication, and control, where biological systems perceive information as something a mechanism or organism utilizes to guide the system toward a predetermined goal (Horri, 2008).

Thus cybernetic flow essentially considers social and human systems as complex intelligent machines adapting to their environment, selecting and acting on computed probabilities among available options. Nevertheless, human behaviors cannot be analyzed solely through this flow. While humans operate at a biological level similar to other living beings, the presence of thought and cognition implies that analyzing behaviors at this biological level will not capture all dimensions. In summary, Shannonian information flow treats humans as closed systems with no interactions with their environment. Cybernetic information flow conceives humans as calculating learning machines adjusting to environmental information, seeking to increase probabilities and choices toward objectives (Brier, 2014: 28). However, in humans, knowledge and awareness are not acquired merely through calculation; understanding results from interpreting information, which is unique and can yield varying and contradictory responses.

Quantum Flow of Information

Quantum theory explains the behavior of matter and energy in the universe through indivisible units called quanta. Within classical physics, an object occupies a specified location at a given moment. In contrast, the infinitesimals described by quantum theory do not exhibit specific positions or trajectories. Quantum theory characterizes energy and matter as both waves and particles, whereas classical physics views light solely as a wave (Horri, 2008). This wave-particle perspective in quantum physics parallels the understandings that arise in people's minds. These understandings are never stable; they continuously transform with experience and awareness. We can interpret these understandings as being in a fixed state, akin to particles with defined boundaries. However, when confronted with new information and experiences, they enter a state of transformation, resembling waves. Even understandings that seem certain can disintegrate under the pressure of new insights, leading to the formation of new obvious understandings (Neshat, 2007).

Thus, the quantum flow of information indicates that information, like quantum phenomena, is an indivisible entity that cannot be reduced. Information exhibits both wave-like (potential information) and particle-like (active information) characteristics. This information remains in a

wave-like state—neither measurable nor perceivable—until observed or engaged with. Once measured or analyzed, it transitions into a recognizable state. Therefore, individuals may be exposed to the same potential information, but each one actualizes a portion of it based on internal patterns. According to their goals and intentions, they transform it into active information. It can be posited that information as a whole equals potential information plus actual information; however, this relationship is not accurate, as actual information does not remain confined within potential information and diversifies according to the number of goals and intentions expressed over time. Consequently, individuals, groups, societies, and governments continuously interpret the same subjects differently based on their internal patterns and conditions, which serve as the basis for their actions. These varying interpretations depend on the openness or closedness of the interaction unit toward information; the more open the unit is to environmental information, the greater the potential for broader interpretations, leading to chaotic behavior characterized by complexity, uncertainty, and disorder.

Conversely, if the unit is more closed to incoming information, this restrictiveness leads to narrower interpretations, resulting in simplicity, certainty, and static order. Thus, along the spectrum from the broadest to the narrowest interpretations, the degree of openness or closedness of the system creates various interpretations and understandings, each with different practical implications and outcomes. The diversity of interpretations of the Quran and prophetic traditions ranges from the most peaceful to the most violent, depending on the amount of information received and the interaction unit itself.

Human Interactions and the Quantum Flow of Information

Human-made systems, including mechanical ones, are typically closed and deterministic. This means they follow predictable circuits of operation. The interactions between the components of such systems are known with certainty, enabling predictions about their future states based on current conditions. For example, when we analyze a machine, we find that its performance and future state can be anticipated from the moment it is created.

In contrast, natural and living systems—like plants or migratory bird flocks—exhibit high degrees of unpredictability and uncertainty. Unlike human-made systems, these biological systems are informed by complex information flows. Each living system is open to varying degrees of information, which leads to the diversity observed in nature (Meadows, 2008). For instance, a plant that requires sunlight (energy) along with water and minerals (matter) is open to matter and energy but closed to information. On the other hand, biological systems, especially animals, experience a high flow of information, resulting in greater complexity and unpredictability in their behaviors compared to plants.

Human and social systems represent a third category. These systems operate at a biological level but are the most complex and advanced in terms of interaction. Due to their cognitive abilities, humans engage in the highest levels of information exchange and analysis. For instance, when observing an embryo, we realize that its future behavioral, personality, ethical, and physical traits cannot be predicted from the outset of its development. In reality, chaotic behavior in human and social systems evolves based on the type, quantity, and manner of interactions among units such as individuals, societies, or governments.

An increase in interactions and openness can lead to complex behaviors, uncertainty, and disorder; conversely, a decrease can drive the system toward simplicity, certainty, and order. Therefore, chaotic behavior in international systems reflects the simultaneous existence of complex and simple behaviors arising from interactions—behaviors that are uncertain but not random, confined to specific contexts. The disorder observed over time in these systems is not inherently destructive. Instead, it fosters encounters and interactions from which order can emerge. This means that individuals can exhibit different behaviors when interpreting the same information, even under similar conditions. This mutable and unique aspect of humanity is what we refer to as "chaotic behavior," distinguishing humans from other creatures.

The primary characteristic of chaotic behavior in humanistic systems arises from the differences in human interactions. The pattern of interaction within groups, political movements, and various forms of governance is shaped by three components:

1. The interaction unit,
2. The environment
3. The quantum flow of information

Each interaction unit—whether an individual, group, society, or government—possesses a condensed informational pattern about itself and its surroundings, formed through the quantum flow of information. This flow is an endless process that influences the desires, objectives, beliefs, and overall evolution of human systems. Each individual is exposed to numerous fragmented and decentralized informational resources. However, the understanding derived from their surroundings is not the sole source of awareness; each unit also stores incoming information along with its interpretations and analyses.

Within the environment of each interaction unit exists a reservoir of potential information. Yet, each unit, based on its conscious engagement, only actualizes a portion of that potential, transforming it into active information based on its goals and intentions (Horri, 2008). This unique flow of information, which exists only in human interactions, is what we term the "quantum flow of information." The interpretation of this information plays a central role in shaping either peaceful or violent understandings of Islam.

Violent and Peaceful Approaches to Islam in the Quantum Flow of Information

Three main variables influence the interpretation of Islam as either peaceful or violent:

1. Individual biological characteristics, such as genetics and gender, which shape the internal pattern of each interaction unit.
2. Environmental factors affecting the interaction unit from birth through various developmental stages, including geographical, cultural, and economic influences.
3. The quantum flow of information, which allows for diverse interpretations.

This paper focuses on the quantum flow of information to demonstrate how it influences individuals', groups', and communities' interactions

regarding their openness or closeness to information, particularly in their interpretations of Islam as either violent or peaceful. Among the scientific and epistemological approaches to Islam, six major approaches are examined. Three of these approaches, due to their emphasis on intra-religious interactions, have limited engagement with external environments, effectively transforming them into closed systems. This creates a potential for violent interpretations of texts and epistemological foundations, leading to religious justifications for violence when this potential information is activated in practical interactions.

The three epistemological approaches prone to violence are the Transmissive (or narrational), theological, and jurisprudential approaches. In contrast, three other approaches—philosophical, ethical, and mystical—offer more conciliatory and peaceful interpretations. I explain that the peaceful stance in these three approaches arises from their greater openness to external interactions and a broader range of information, transforming them into more open systems.

In both categories, we observe a semi-open system along a spectrum. The more informational richness exists from outside sources, the more diverse interpretations can emerge within these domains. The accuracy of available information is another discussion that does not diminish the multiplicity of interpretations. Each sect within the Muslim community often considers only its own understanding as correct. Foundational Islamic texts, including the Quran and prophetic traditions, have been repeatedly re-read and reinterpreted over centuries, serving as sources of information for Muslims.

The abundance of sources allows for numerous interpretations, which may sometimes be contrasting or contradictory. Among these are verses regarding war and jihad in the Quran, the battles of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), and the continued violence in historical periods following his death. This environment has led to a significant incorporation of information about violence into Islamic texts. Over the past fourteen hundred years, discussions related to war and violence have been re-read and reinterpreted, reaching significant milestones at various historical moments and by certain Muslim scholars.

The existence of verses about war and jihad, alongside numerous Transmissive, theological, and jurisprudential texts, has enabled individuals and groups to analyze potential information in a violent manner, justifying violent actions. Each interaction unit interprets potential information based on its internal pattern. The central factor activating violent interpretations is not the original information itself, but the subsequent interpretations and narrations of that information. The openness or closeness of units to environmental information, coupled with their internal richness, generates interpretations that facilitate violence. Conversely, when internal patterns are open to external information, there will be greater possibilities for peaceful interpretations.

If the verses on war and jihad in the Quran and the battles of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) are analyzed separately from the aforementioned epistemological systems—considering their historical contexts and circumstances—different results and deductions would emerge (Alikhani, 2014).

Interpretations of Islam Prone to Violence

This section introduces three approaches that, due to their closed or semi-closed nature regarding environmental information, facilitate violent interpretations. These epistemic systems promote violence because their foundational principles have been defined as closed and internally oriented.

1. Narrational Approach

The narrational approach to Islam, often referred to as the Islam of Hadith followers, underscores the explicit meanings of the Quran and the narrations attributed to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). In the Shia tradition, the actions and narrations of the Twelve Imams are also included in this framework. This perspective prioritizes the overt indications of texts, narrations, and religious laws, emphasizing visible rituals and rites. The knowledge produced by this approach provides the raw material necessary for analyzing these texts from an internal standpoint, negating the need for engagement with external information.

Because of its insular nature and limited intellectual engagement with the external world, this approach accepts every apparent implication of

Islamic texts at face value. It often overlooks the dissonance between temporal and spatial contexts and the apparent meanings of texts, neglecting the objectives and philosophies of Islamic laws (Berenjkar, 2006; Shahrestani, 1995; Jaffari, 1985). In such contexts, the potential for environmental information within the internal pattern is minimal, leading to restricted behavioral flexibility and narrow interpretations. The narrational approach is accessible and comprehensible, with Quranic verses and Hadith volumes studied without engaging in complex interpretations. This superficial interpretation encourages behaviors that favor simplicity and certainty, preserving a static order and resisting change, ultimately heightening tensions and disputes.

2. Theological Approach

Theological study defends religious beliefs and counteracts objections from skeptics. It aims to reinforce believers' convictions while adopting an argumentative, intra-religious approach grounded in the Quran and prophetic tradition. (Ibn Babawayh, 2010: 96-97; Farabi, 1996: 86; Eji, 1936: 7-8; Lahiji, 2004: 42; Tosi, 1972: 237; Taftazani, 1987: 9). The internal interaction pattern of theological units remains closed to environmental information, as theology primarily seeks to counter external claims. The construction of "the other" within theological discourse emphasizes opposition and resistance.

When theology addresses environmental information, it precludes the influx of external counterclaims, intensifying conflicts. Each interaction unit perceives actions from others as threats, striving for preservation through measures aimed at managing or eliminating them. The theological narrative has consistently positioned itself as the protector of Islam, advocating robust boundaries between 'self' and 'other' (Kadivar & Shabestari, 2000: 10; Gary Gutting, 2016). While this delineation once primarily existed between Muslims and non-Muslims, theological discourses have rapidly expanded this exclusion to encompass divisions among Muslims themselves, adopting the notion that "anyone whose beliefs do not align with mine is deviant and erroneous."

This approach refrains from engaging with information derived from external intellectual spaces, acknowledging only that which conforms to its interpretative patterns. This narrow focus intensifies divisions and

diminishes flexibility in interactions. In such environments, interaction units perceive their preservation as contingent upon the rejection or eradication of their counterparts.

3. Jurisprudential Approach

Islamic laws and legal systems fundamentally rely on jurisprudential principles. Historically, these principles provide rules and regulations that guide Muslim interactions across various areas such as worship, transactions, personal status, marriage, divorce, and political engagement—each based on established legal norms. At the same time, jurisprudence addresses new inquiries, with Islamic jurists deriving answers from the Quran and prophetic tradition, asserting Islamic perspectives on various issues while often negating the necessity for external engagement or knowledge.

Jurisprudence is detail-oriented, focused on apparent meanings, and duty-centric, primarily clarifying responsibilities concerning religious matters grounded in internal sources. It operates within a framework shaped by the preceding two approaches, where the narrational perspective supplies interpretative materials, and the theological approach directs adherents' focus towards juristic doctrine, sidelining opposing perspectives. Thus, the characteristics of both prior approaches converge within jurisprudence, accompanied by unique attributes, the most significant being its capacity for punishment or the application of violence, expressed through fatwas. No other Islamic epistemological fields possess mechanisms for punishing or applying violence; only jurisprudence has the prerogative to issue death sentences, authorize warfare, or enact corporal punishments. Furthermore, much of the violence perpetrated within the Islamic world by extremist groups such as al-Qaeda, ISIS, and the Taliban can be traced back to juridical fatwas.

The foundations upon which fatwas are issued—and indeed the essence of jurisprudence—revolve around the interpretations of information by interaction units sustained within a minimally informative internal environment. This framework facilitates decisive and inflexible actions. Jurisprudence regulates behavior through established principles and emphasizes compliance among legal subjects, effectively controlling or restraining the conduct of others. Consequently, it naturally gravitates

towards simplicity, certainty, and an appearance of static order, contributing to a closed and insular system characterized by minimal interactivity.

Peace-Oriented Interpretations of Islam

The epistemological domains of Islamic philosophy, ethics, and mysticism have fostered increased interactions within their internal frameworks due to their openness to environmental information. This openness has led to motivational behaviors that are peaceful and tolerant. Philosophical, ethical, and mystical approaches within Islam regard the purpose of creation and the cosmic order as highly elevated, attributing a noble and prestigious position to humanity. In these interpretations, acts of violence and the shedding of human blood are considered grave sins, asserting that no goal justifies such actions (Nouri, 1987: 191; Mtahari, 2016: 679-680; Jani Pour & Lotfi, 2015: 27-55; Mousavi Gilani & Rouzbeh, 2015: 17; Al-Arabi, 2007: 155-167; Fanai Ashkuri, 2012: 15-30; Namdarpour, 2018; Bazargan, 2019: 198-219; Leaman, 2019: 267).

In these three approaches, the concept of "right of others" (Haq al-Nas) or a strong emphasis on the rights of others—including animals—is paramount. This concept is defined broadly, with even minor infringements, such as wasting someone's time or causing anxiety, regarded as unethical and deserving of divine punishment in the hereafter. A commonality among these three epistemological approaches is their flexibility in assimilating environmental information and engaging with external discourses, thus creating an open system. However, each approach possesses its unique perspective on tolerance and peace, which will be elaborated below:

1. Philosophical Approach

Islamic philosophy is primarily understood through the lens of medieval philosophical schools, notably four principal schools: the Fazeleh, centered around Al-Farabi; the Ishraqi, led by Suhrawardi; the Mash'i, represented by Avicenna; and the Mutali'i, inspired by Mulla Sadra. This branch of philosophy endeavors to comprehend the essence of creation, humanity, and society, offering a comprehensive and profound perspective that discourages violence as a means of resolving political and social challenges.

Islamic philosophy, through philosophical discourse, seeks to understand the nature of phenomena and political events, aiming to identify optimal societal structures that are conducive to human flourishing. This methodology acknowledges that the remediation of harmful influences or phenomena detrimental to the community occurs through legal means and punishment mechanisms (Pezeshki, 2011: 73; Rezvani, 2013: 39-40; Ebrahimi, 2014: 34-37). In this context, punishment is not the focal concern; rather, the primary aim revolves around societal well-being and the attainment of collective happiness. Thus, achieving these objectives necessitates deeper engagements characterized by openness to information, promoting the rationality of philosophical discourse, and enhancing the potential for information within the internal patterns of interaction units, leading to flexible interpretations.

While some critics contend that the discourse of Islamic philosophy remains anchored in revelatory frameworks, it is crucial to recognize that the epistemic foundation of Islamic philosophy cultivates an open narrative, integrating substantial information from external sources and fostering extensive relationships with other interaction units.

2. Ethical Approach

Logically, one would expect divine religions to advocate for ethical frameworks. The ethical teachings articulated in Islam are particularly robust (Saeedi, 2018: 175-176; Makarem Shirazi, 2008: 76-77; Gharamaleki, 2014: 29-38; Ameli, 2002). The Prophet Muhammad emphasized the completion of ethical virtues as one of his central missions (Bayhagi, 2003: 323; Majlesi, 1983: 382). While certain ethical discussions are inherently individual, a significant portion pertains to social and political ethics, relevant within socio-political contexts. Numerous influential Muslim thinkers articulate their political ideologies through ethical writings or approaches (Tousi, 2017: 340-343; Sabzevari, 2002).

When addressing ethics within social or political systems, it becomes essential to consider opinions, sentiments, and circumstances – effectively gathering more information from the environment. This approach fosters a sound understanding and recognition of others' behaviors, facilitating effective interactions that uphold ethical standards at both individual and collective levels. Key components of the ethical approach that render it

prudent, tolerant, and averse to violence include the urgent necessity to respect the rights of others, the call for self-discipline, piety, and a fear of divine punishment.

Since ethics transcends religious boundaries, it represents a crucial domain for interactions between Islam and other religions or non-Muslims. The principles and ethical rules within Islam largely align with those of other religions and with human consensus, rendering this aspect of Islamic knowledge an open system with extensive relationships with other interaction units.

3. **Mystical Approach**

Within Islamic mysticism, the principal aim is personal growth and elevation, necessitating an understanding of oneself and God. This includes uncovering hidden truths in nature and the system of creation, connecting with the unseen world, and realizing divine truths. From this mystical perspective, all creatures are viewed as manifestations of the divine essence, advocating for compassion and kindness toward them (Fallah & Iqbal, 2021). Consequently, this approach does not perceive the existence of the "Other" as negating or threatening; rather, all beings are regarded as reflections of the divine essence, and interactions with those outside oneself are considered valuable. The mystical outlook is upward-looking, and its information analysis and interpretation system is open to the vastness of the cosmic order. The mystical approach views the universe as a unified whole that reflects the divine essence, leading to expansive interpretations. The teachings presented in the epistemological framework of Islamic mysticism can establish connections with other individuals and spiritual systems, facilitating informational exchanges with other interaction units. This openness is one reason why this area of Islamic knowledge offers a peaceful interpretation of Islam.

Conclusion

The significance of the quantum flow of information in various interpretations of Islam is evident in the interactions and behaviors of various units within the Islamic world, including individuals, governments, institutions, peace-seeking groups, and terrorist organizations on the international stage. Divergent interpretations of the same information have created substantial differences in the actions and

behaviors of Muslims in the name of Islam across social, political, and international arenas. Processes of othering, alienation, and violence towards others emerge from interpretations and understandings of the same resources and information in Islam by various groups and movements. Each faction claims a version of Islam they deem authentic, which leads them to control their adherents and delineate boundaries between "us" and "them." This ongoing process results in polarization, conflict, and war, with actors resolute in their ideological convictions, leading to the deaths of thousands.

The tumultuous history of the Islamic world reveals that most wars and conflicts have been endorsed or supported by epistemological approaches predisposed to violence. Each party involved in conflict has sought, by any means, to obtain a fatwa permitting violence from scholars or to gain the approval of religious authorities to provide religious justification for their actions. Therefore, a fundamental way to reduce political and social violence and conflicts in the Middle East is to transform the systems and methods of teaching in religious schools and Islamic education. Increasing interactions and openness of Islamic epistemological systems to environmental information—even among themselves—enhances the potential for changing internal frameworks and fosters a more realistic understanding of the "Other," thereby reducing perceived threats.

It is important to note that this discussion has focused solely on the epistemological systems and scholarly approaches within Islam, without delving into the roles of scholars from each of these domains in practical politics. It is entirely possible that their performances in practical politics are similar. Practical politics and power operate under their own unique logic, which is consistent across most human societies. With few exceptions, due to the nature of power and politics, individuals from various epistemological backgrounds tend to exhibit somewhat similar behaviors in positions of power, unless constrained by legal mechanisms. Therefore, it would not be surprising if a philosopher, mystic, or ethical scholar has historically incited violence and bloodshed.

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Original Research Paper

Pazifismus der Iraner in den politischen Beziehungen zum Westen; Eine Studie von 1906 bis 1951

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Zusammenfassung:

Im Laufe ihrer modernen Geschichte waren Iraner gezwungen, verschiedene politische Ansätze in ihren Interaktionen mit westlichen Regierungen zu verfolgen, bedingt durch die militärische Präsenz und den politischen Einfluss der Kolonialmächte. Einer dieser wesentlichen und vorherrschenden Ansätze war die Annahme einer freundschaftlichen Politik und friedlicher Beziehungen. Diese Studie untersucht die Rolle des Pazifismus und des friedlichen politischen Verhaltens der Iraner gegenüber den wichtigsten westlichen Mächten. Dabei wird thematisiert, warum die Iraner trotz gewaltsamer Auseinandersetzungen mit dem Westen weiterhin freundschaftliche und friedliche Beziehungen pflegten. Die Betonung auf die Etablierung freundschaftlicher Beziehungen und die Annahme eines pazifistischen Ansatzes wurde sowohl theoretisch von Intellektuellen als auch praktisch von Staatsmännern und Politikern verfolgt. Die Forschungsergebnisse deuten darauf hin, dass die Iraner eine freundschaftliche Beziehung zum Westen anstrebten, um ihre territoriale Unabhängigkeit zu bewahren, politische Stabilität zu erreichen und zivile Fortschritte und Wohlstand zu fördern. Das Wissen und die Technologie des Westens wurden als unerlässlich für den industriellen und zivilen Fortschritt angesehen, und ein freundliches Verhalten des Westens war für die politische Stabilität innerhalb des Irans notwendig. Wirtschaftlich und militärisch war das Land nicht in der Lage, dem Westen entgegenzutreten, und jede Zwangsmaßnahme der iranischen Politiker führte zu einer noch aggressiveren Reaktion der westlichen Mächte.

Schlagwörter: Iran, Westen, politische Beziehungen, Pazifismus, friedliche Beziehungen, friedliche Gedanken

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صلح‌گرایی ایرانیان در روابط سیاسی با غرب؛ مطالعه سال‌های ۱۳۸۵ تا ۱۳۳۰ش

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چکیده:

ایرانیان در تاریخ معاصر خود به خاطر حضور نظامی و نفوذ سیاسی استعمارگران مجبور به اتخاذ رویکردهای مختلف سیاسی در تعامل با دولت‌های غربی بودند. یکی از این رویکردهای مهم و غالب، اتخاذ سیاست دوستانه و روابط مسالمت‌آمیز بود. پژوهش حاضر نقش صلح‌طلبی و رفتار سیاسی مسالمت‌آمیز ایرانیان را با دولت‌های بزرگ غربی واکاوی می‌کند و به این پرسش اصلی پاسخ می‌دهد که چرا ایرانیان با وجود برخوردهای قهری غرب با آن‌ها، همچنان به برخورد دوستانه و مسالمت‌آمیز با غرب ادامه می‌دادند. این مسئله یعنی تأکید بر برقراری روابط دوستانه و اتخاذ رویکرد صلح‌طلبی به صورت نظری توسط اندیشمندان و به صورت عملی توسط دولت‌مردان و سیاستمداران پی گرفته می‌شد. نتایج تحقیق نشان می‌دهد که ایرانیان به خاطر حفظ استقلال سرزمین خود، رسیدن به ثبات سیاسی، پیشرفت و رونق مدنی، خواهان رابطه دوستانه با غرب بودند. دانش و فناوری غرب برای پیشرفت صنعتی و مدنی، و رفتار دوستانه غرب برای ثبات سیاسی در داخل ایران ضروری می‌نمود. همچنین کشور از نظر اقتصادی و نظامی توان رویارویی با غربی‌ها را نداشت و با هر سیاست قهری دولت‌مردان ایرانی، غربی‌ها رفتارهای خشن‌تری را در پیش می‌گرفتند.

واژگان کلیدی: ایران، غرب، روابط سیاسی، صلح‌گرایی، رفتار مسالمت‌آمیز

Original Research Paper

Pacifism of Iranians in Political Relations with the West; A Study from 1906 to 1951

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Abstract

Iranians have had to adopt various political approaches in their interactions with Western governments in their modern history due to the colonial powers' military presence and political influence. One of these major and dominant approaches was adopting a friendly policy and peaceful relations. This study examines the role of pacifism and the peaceful political behavior of Iranians towards major Western powers, addressing why, despite violent encounters with the West, Iranians continued to engage in friendly and peaceful relations. This emphasis on establishing friendly relations and adopting a pacifist approach was pursued theoretically by intellectuals and practically by statesmen and politicians. The research findings indicate that Iranians sought a friendly relationship with the West to preserve their territorial independence, achieve political stability, and foster civil advancement and prosperity. The knowledge and technology of the West were deemed essential for industrial and civil progress, and friendly behavior from the West was necessary for political stability within Iran. Economically and militarily, the country could not confront the West, and any coercive policy from Iranian politicians led to an even more aggressive response from the Western powers.

Keywords: Iran, West political relations, pacifism, peaceful relationship, peaceful thoughts

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Introduction

One of the critical approaches of Iranians during the studied period (1906-1951) in political relations with the West was adopting a friendly political method. In this research, the West refers to major European powers of the time- Britain, France, Germany, and Russia- as well as the United States. Despite the antagonistic approaches of Western governments towards Iran, which included and were not limited to the acquisition of colonial economic concessions, exploitation of Iranians, repeated military occupations of the territory, and countless direct and indirect interventions in Iran's internal affairs, these governments were still viewed with respect by Iranian intellectuals and politicians, who desired to establish and maintaining friendly political relations. The present study explores the reasons and motivations behind Iranians' peaceful attitudes and behaviors towards Western governments. The central question of the research is why the Iranians maintained peace-seeking and amity in their political relations with the West from 1906 to 1951.

The research results demonstrate that domestic unrest and political instability were partly caused by the antagonistic behaviors of and direct incursions by Western powers. Iranians fathomed that one path to achieving political and social stability and progress was through friendly political engagement and a peaceful approach with the West. Given the status and political ethos of the time, Iran was then under the influence and interventions of Russia and Britain. On the other hand, Iran was seeking progress, which a stable political climate could facilitate, and such stability and security could be achieved through peaceful behavior and friendly relations with the West. The current research is divided into three sections: First, from the Constitutional Revolution to the fall of the Qajar dynasty; second, the Pahlavi I era; and third, the first decade of the Pahlavi II government, in which the research questions are particularly addressed.

Research Method

Historical research aims to understand past conditions and uncover the goals and motivations of actors in the subject and period under study. In historical methods, scientific rules and principles must be applied, and data, documents, and sources should be organized appropriately in line with the research objective before proceeding to the writing stage. Stephen Isaac and

William B. Michael define historical research as a systematic and objective reconstruction of the past achieved through the collection of information, evaluation, and determination of the accuracy of the information, and the synthesis of events, ultimately leading to the validation of occurrences and the attainment of a defensible conclusion (Isaac, 1995, p. 54). They outline five stages for the historical research method: 1. Selecting a title and research design, 2. Sampling according to the research topic, 3. Data collection, 4. Data analysis, 5. Conclusion (Ghasemi, 2021, p. 528). Other sources also mention similar stages for historical research methods. The method specifically employed in this research, aligning with historical methods, is a basic research method conducted in three stages, each with specific actions and rules that must be followed. The first stage involves research design based on certain principles and standards. The second stage encompasses the collection of information. In the third stage, the research follows specific scientific principles (Alikhani, 2022, pp. 29-30).

Pacifism in Political Relations with the West during the Qajar Era

1. Pacifism from the Perspective of Thinkers and Intellectuals

Talbof, a thinker of the Constitutional period, believed that Iran should maintain friendly relations with major Western powers and avoid hostility with them, which would be dangerous for the national interests and the continuation of the country's political independence. He viewed friendship with major Western governments as a means to civil flourishing, peace, and political stability in Iran, and he urged political leaders to have amicable political relations with major Western powers such as Britain, Russia, Germany, France, and the United States. In this case, the benefits of friendship could be utilized for economic and industrial prosperity. In his view, adopting a friendly approach towards these states would also attract investment from other countries, consequently boosting the economy and eventually leading to comprehensive national advancement (Talebof, 1978, pp. 116-117). From his perspective, antagonization was one of the grounds for disrupting peaceful relations with Western governments, inhibiting the country's path toward progress and stability (Talebof, 1978, pp. 116-117).

In his views, Hostility and avoidance of friendly relations with the West threatened the country's independence and resulted in lagging in modern civilization. At that time, Iran did not possess the knowledge and capacity

to utilize its financial resources to achieve civil and economic prosperity. The development of mines, the establishment of roads and railways, schools, and military instruction all required investment, knowledge, and technology from major Western countries, and there could be no talk of civil progress, political stability, or security unless some degree of peaceful relations with them were established (Talebof, 1978, pp, 116-118).

Talebof's aim for developing friendly relations with the West was economic prosperity and commercial success. He believed not all Western governments had a colonial mindset and that a country like France was keen to establish trade relations with Iran, from which the latter could benefit through cordial policies (Talebof, 1944, pp. 42-43). He contended that Britain desired Iran's advancement and urged political leaders to adopt an amicable approach towards Britain, as Britain sought peace and friendship with Iran for her own interests. Therefore, it was purely advantageous for Iran to utilize the benefits of this policy for civil progress and to establish political stability (Talebof, 1978, pp. 125-128). From his point of view, the West was seen to be the cradle of knowledge and modern civilization, and he wrote, "the sun of knowledge and industry has risen from the West"; thus, to achieve new civilizational advancements, one must seek friendship with them to remain safe from their superiority (Talebof, 194, pp. 91-94).

In international relations, he emphasized pacifism and advised leaders to adopt pacifist and cordial approaches in their political relations with other countries. He viewed this approach as the foundation for the progress and bliss of humanity, which would benefit all nations and states, advising Westerners to "base their relations with Asian and Muslim nations on genuine honesty, mutual satisfaction, and goodwill" (Talebof, 1978, p. 184). Most intellectuals and thinkers of the Constitution perceived the constitutional government as a compromise with Western states, thus advocating its establishment. They believed European governments would engage better with countries with the rule of law. Since their citizens and advisors involved in trade and economic affairs in other countries, lacking a legal government would risk their lives and property. Hence, political reform, such as establishing a constitutional order, could provide a friendly, redemptive solution for Iran against Western colonialism and lead the

country toward progress and stability (Zarghami-Nejad, 2008, pp. 496-500; Adamiyat, 1990, p. 246).

Some clerics of the Constitution also believed that the constitutional system could liberate Iran from the colonial approach of Western governments that treated nations lacking constitutional rule of law as uncivilized, and under this pacifism, progress and internal security might have been achieved (Zarghami-Nejad, 2008, p. 609). Dehkhoda also advocated distancing from tensions and engaging peacefully with the West. He posited that Iran could not confront the West, pursuing amity with the West to achieve political stability and civil advancements was better. Regarding Russia's military incursions, he believed Iran could not resist Russia and, therefore, had to fabricate a non-antagonizing strategy to address Russia's occupation. He asserted that Russia would not pursue a hostile policy against Iran without Britain's consent. Thus, he planned to sway British public opinion towards an amicable approach with Iran in response to Russia's offensive stance. Since their nation's public opinion influenced the British government, pressure from their people could change Russia's hostile approach (Dehkhoda, 1979, pp. 53-55). He argued that when other governments saw that Iran was secure, not in interstate conflict, and had friendly close relations with major countries, they would also be interested in engaging and establishing relations with Iran. From Dehkhoda's perspective, maintaining a friendly relationship with Britain was crucial for several significant reasons: First, it would reduce Britain's colonial avarice; second, it would accelerate the country's progress; and third, it would prevent territorial threats from Russia, as Britain had interests that needed to be protected on an ally's land. To him, Britain is a free society whose public opinion influences its policymakers' thoughts when dealing with other nations. He believed efforts should be made to garner British public opinion in Iran's favor, thus preventing Russia's hostile policies towards Iran. With the reduction of the colonial behaviors of Russia and Britain, freedom-seeking movements in Iran would flourish, political stability would be achieved, and the country would progress (Dehkhoda, 1979, pp. 53-55).

Dr. Mahmoud Afshar also advised the West and Iranians to adopt a non-antagonizing approach in their political relations, as it would be bilaterally advantageous. For Iran, it would provide civil advancement and political stability, while for the West -mainly Britain-it would allow for hassle-free

benefit acquisition. He considered the 1919 agreement a grave error in British-Iranian political relations, stating that it created a negative mindset among Iranians towards Britain, which would hinder their ability to acquire benefits easily. He told the British that Iran's growth and progress were in their interest and that they should not pursue oppressive and colonial policies in Iran, as these actions upset the Iranian people. Therefore, a dissatisfied Iran could be no assistance in ensuring security in India. Moreover, when Britain and Iran enjoyed friendly and peaceful relations, they would support each other, serving as a deterrent for Iran against Russian aggression, which was critical for the overarching plan of Iran's progress and political stability (Afshar, 1979, pp. 203-206). He emphasized the vital role of Iranian oil in political relations with the West, indicating that Iranian politicians should use it as a means for peace in international relations and maintain political stability and economic advancement through proper management; otherwise, it would become a contentious issue in their political relations (pp. 262-269).

Adopting friendly political behaviors toward Western governments was not only the desire of intellectuals and thinkers but also a widely held belief that establishing friendly political relationships with the West was the only way to achieve stability, independence, and progress.

2. Pacifism in the Behavior of Iranian Statesmen

Other political methods had to be adopted to achieve sustainable peace with the West. One of these measures was incorporating a powerful third state into the equations of foreign relations to garner support for Iran against the colonial ambitions of Russia and Britain. This third power would create a balance between the two Western powers for its interests and prevent them from encroaching on Iran. Thus, the Iranian inclination towards a foreign third power during this period can be interpreted as part of the Iranians' peaceful endeavors to avoid the warmongering of Western powers. Consequently, the Iranian government's tendency to establish relations with Germany and America was in line with achieving peaceful political relations with the West (Pira, 2000, pp. 258-259; Ettehadih, 1981, pp. 315-316). One of the goals of the Constitutional Revolution was freedom from colonial powers and establishing political relationships with non-belligerent Western states. Accordingly, as Iranian nationalists regarded

America as a humanitarian and liberating nation, they sought to establish friendly political relations with it to benefit from its assistance against the oppressive actions of Russia and Britain (Yaslean, 1989, pp. 182-183).

Even under the most challenging Western colonial pressures, the Iranians preferred peaceful methods to violent confrontations. When, in the second parliament, the Iranian government faced the colonial pressures of Russia to expel financial advisors, there were representatives who, not swayed by the emotional atmosphere, advocated for a peaceful stance and solution as, in their view, violent reactions to Russia's demands could provoke a severe political backlash. Matin-ol-Saltaneh, a parliament member advocating for amity with the West, argued that rejecting Russia's request aggressively could be extremely dangerous and lead to territorial occupation. He stated that by accepting some aspects that did not infringe on independence, one could escape violent confrontations and would negotiate to reduce the intrusive factors. This approach was friendly and logical and could resolve the emerging crisis (Azari, 1969, pp. 32-34).

The pacifist viewpoints of politicians believed that better outcomes could yet be derived from political relations with Western governments. One such opportunity was the 1919 Agreement. Almost all Iranians, except for the signatories of the agreement and Seyyed Zia al-Din Tabatabai, deemed this agreement colonial and enslaving (Tolouei, 2001, p. 100). However, some researchers, applying a hindsight approach to interpret the provisions, hold a different opinion. Mehdi Mojtahedi, in his book "Iran and Britain," written in 1947, sees the 1919 Agreement as beneficial to Iran, given the political conditions of that day. Mojtahedi describes the agreement's terms individually, positing them to preserve Iran's independence, achieve political stability, and alleviate unrest by establishing a strong modern army. Additionally, a strong and progressive Iran would resist the colonial ambitions of states like Russia. Britain, too, could secure the unruly political situation in Iran by ensuring peace and establishing a strong army and finance to easily protect its interests in India from the potential overreach of major European powers through an attenuated Iran. Some scholars and individuals at that time viewed this agreement as a peace treaty between Iran and the West, which would end disputes with Western powers. The envisioned calm and strong Iran aimed by this agreement was seen as a friendly political solution with the West (Tolouei, 2001, pp. 100-103).

Nationalists at the end of the Qajar period were very cautious over any disruption to the friendly and pacifist relations between Iran and Western governments. Consequently, they condemned the 1919 agreement, which had disrupted Iran's friendly policy with Western states, as it effectively placed the country under British control. They thus sought to build friendly relations with emerging powers like America to continue Iran's political relationship with great powers (Maki, 1980, pp: 90-95). The Iranian policy of leaning towards America, aimed at establishing peaceful political relations with the West, proved effective during this period, as America emerged as the main reason for the peaceful termination of the 1919 agreement with Britain (Tolouei, 2005, pp. 135-138; Zoughi, 1989, pp. 336-350). Qavam sought to create a third line in Iran's foreign policy against Russia and Britain. From his perspective, America could retract the interventionist hand of Britain and Russia from Iran's political landscape; thus, he inclined towards establishing political relations with America (Behnoud, 1998, p. 33). The primary goal of Qavam and other nationalist figures in their rapprochement with major Western powers was to achieve peace with the West and to curb their colonial ambitions. A superior third power could counterbalance Russia and Britain, and its interests in Iran could serve as a stabilizing force, reducing their hostile engagements (Behnoud, 1998, pp. 45-46). Qavam pursued a policy of friendly relations with the West and aimed to prevent the predatory and destabilizing ambitions of Russia and Britain through the concession of northern oil to America. His goal in leaning towards a third power was establishing a balance between Russia and Britain over their interests in Iran, thereby mitigating their colonial rivalries. By implementing this approach, the political turmoil in Iran stemming from the colonial rivalries of Britain and Russia would be alleviated, leading to economic improvements for the country (Kianfar, 1949, pp. 100-111).

Among the people and nationalists, one major reason for the opposition to the 1919 Agreement was the fear that Iran's friendly relationship with other Western countries would be compromised. This was also the reason for the opposition from Russia, America, and France. Thus, the positive relations worked to promote the cancellation of this agreement, ensuring that Iran's policy of peace and friendship with the West remained intact (Emanat, 2021, p. 438). The official declaration of neutrality during World War I indicated

the weak position of Iran and yet exemplified the pacifist attitude of Iranians who did not wish to get involved in international conflicts. With this policy, Iran was able to pursue its legitimate demands in international forums and garner global public opinion support along with the backing of the American government (Zoughi, 1989, pp. 221-225). The monarch, Ahmad Shah, also exercised a peaceful political approach towards Western governments. He was unwilling to submit to the excessive demands of Russia and Britain, believing that leaning towards one side would compromise the friendly and balanced political relationship Iran maintained with others. Ahmad Shah's approach stemmed from the policy of preserving friendship and balance between Western nations. He understood Iran's acute political situation and geographic position between two colonial powers, recognizing that leaning towards one side would generate hostility from the other, jeopardizing Iran's political stability and independence and thus involving the country in the fierce rivalry between the two colonial powers. Therefore, he refrained from endorsing any document that would disrupt Iran's non-antagonizing and balanced relationships with Western parties (Maki, 1982, Vol. 1, pp. 135-136). Ahmad Shah believed that as long as Iran was situated between Russia and Britain, "the Shah of Iran must be a very meticulous and wise guardian of the balance, vigilantly guarding the balance so that its weight should never lean slightly towards either side." Whenever the Shah of Iran performed this role well, he rendered the greatest service to his nation (Safavi, 1983, pp. 121-122).

The aim was to establish a peaceful relationship with all Western powers. Modarres also admonished the government regarding the 1919 Agreement, emphasizing that our policy in political relations with the West must be based on peace, friendship, and neutrality to preserve balance and equilibrium in Iran and to prevent harm from the country. He considered the 1919 Agreement detrimental to national interests due to its unilateral tendency to favor Britain, arguing that

"[T]he ominous contract was a harmful policy that was not just destructive of Islamic principles but detrimental to our neutrality policy. We are neutral; our policy should not reflect a tilt. That has been the case since His Majesty (Ahmad Shah) and the national assembly's declaration; Vothuq ol-Dowleh wished to shape Iran for the British government, yet the Iranian

nation revolted against it. This sentiment prevails even now, as any degree of inclination towards any policy will not find agreement with us as the Iranian nation, regardless of the side, be it East, West, North, or South." (Modarres, 1979, p. 79)

Mossadegh also believed in the need for a friendly political approach with the West. He argued that when Iran faced colonial and coercive pressures from the West, it was necessary to act peacefully to resolve issues. He asserted that Iran's political relations with the West should be conducted under the supervision of the parliamentary institution to prevent the establishment of colonial political relations and the development of resentment towards the West. Since they respected parliamentary institutions, differences would be resolved peacefully if this entity governed our political ties. "We are a nation equipped with a parliament, and the West cannot openly impose its demands upon us. Thus, the parliament can shape friendly political relationships free from Western powers' hegemonic aspirations." (Kianfar, 1949, pp. 86-90).

Pacifism in Political Relations with the West during the First Pahlavi Era

1. Pacifism from the Perspective of Intellectuals and Statesmen

During Reza Shah's reign, due to the extralegal powers of the monarch, intellectuals and politicians dared not express independent opinions regarding the type and method of establishing political relations. The king made all the decisions; his word was law. Consequently, ministers, representatives, and other prominent figures did not participate in political decision-making but merely executed the king's decisions (Maki, 1982, Vol. 7, pp. 355-358). Writers for the magazine *Kaaveh*, supportive of the modernization initiatives of Reza Shah's period and desiring for the country to quickly attain political stability and civil progress, believed that achieving these goals depended solely on establishing friendly and peaceful relations with major Western powers, as security and advancement for Iran were only possible in the absence of threats and animosities from them. However, various factors and internal issues threatened the achievement of these goals. One of them was certain negative moral attributes of Iranians, notably superiority complexes. This attitude negatively impacted peaceful and pacifist thoughts that hindered the path of political stability and growth in Iran. Such ethics blocked the entry of knowledge and new ideas and

exacerbated internal and external conflicts in Iran. Kaaveh identified the drawbacks of this mentality as an obstacle to establishing friendly political relations. The magazine critiqued these detrimental ethics, promoting a spirit of peace and peaceful behaviors, compelling Iranians to learn the principles of modern civilization (Malai Tavani, 2000, pp. 80-84).

The writers of Kaaveh warned Iranians during this period against cultivating enemies and fearing Westerners. They believed that anti-Western sentiment would lead to political instability and internal unrest, obstructing the path to peace and stability. Their primary solution for achieving stability and tranquility in Iran and fostering friendly relations with the West was solving internal conflicts by overcoming despotism that would bring order and drive political behavior toward peacemaking with the West (Malai Tavani, 2000, pp. 92-97).

Teymourtash, the powerful court minister of Reza Shah during the early years of his rule, was concerned about the monopoly of the British oil company as it kept Iran tethered to Britain and could jeopardize Iran's friendly relationships with other nations while entrenching the economy and trade in British hands. This situation undermined Iran's political ties with other states. Teymourtash desired to create a competitor for the UK to curb its recklessness. Therefore, he traveled to Europe and negotiated this subject, seeking to find other Western competitors in Iran's oil sector to foster competition and thereby open up Iran's constricted political space (Aqeli, 1993, 258-265, 392).

Teymourtash opposed Iran's isolation, believing no country could continue to thrive without friendly political relations with major powers in the age of machinery. However, he also acknowledged the natural political principle that, in establishing political relations, all governments, especially major powers, seek to expand their influence and dominance over others, particularly if that country is weak and has crucial resources, such as oil, deemed vital for modern industry. Thus, equity among nations and respect for their rights was fantastic; the jungle law prevailed, and the weak remained prey to the strong. Based on this premise, he sought to establish friendly political relations with European governments, aiming for Iran's advancement while escaping the colonial shadows of the lawless period. His formula for strengthening Iran was through establishing friendly and

peaceful political relations with European powers (Khajeh Noori, 1978, pp. 36-38).

While serving as a court minister, Teymourtash endeavored to forge close, friendly political ties with European states (Khajeh Noori, 1978, p. 43). His main goal in establishing these friendly political channels with Western political leaders—which the king interpreted as independence-driven—was to promote Iran (Khajeh Noori, 1978, pp. 48-47).

Some Iranian dignitaries regarded Teymourtash as a pro-Russian figure because he had spent considerable time and youth in Russia, especially since he did not favor collaboration with Britain. Because Teymourtash heavily influenced the first decade of Reza Shah's reign, this perception bolstered the belief that his inclination was towards Russia. However, Western political figures believed his political stances were dictated by necessity. The British ambassador stated that Timurtash had no belief in Bolshevik dogmas; he was neither pro-Russian nor pro-British but aimed to seize any opportunity beneficial to his nation. He was a patriotic nationalist who happened to be incompatible with the colonial policies of the West and desired to establish friendly political relations with the West to develop Iran politically and civically (Zarghozari, 1993, pp. 138-139).

Despite the emotionally charged atmosphere favoring decisive actions against colonizers—which stemmed from the increasing nationalism of the era—there were still individuals who recognized the severe consequences of trying to confront the West with harsh political actions, given the nation's circumstances. They sought to reclaim Iran's rights through logical arguments recognized by international bodies so as not to entangle the country in acute disputes with superpowers. For instance, Ali Akbar Davar, involved in the oil dispute with Britain, sought to implement logical and friendly policies, undeterred by the emotionally charged sentiments of the time favoring hostility toward British interests. He endeavored to deploy legal arguments to influence public opinion worldwide and persuade international organizations to de-escalate tensions. The importance of this issue became evident when Britain resorted to threats and violence during the annulment of the oil contract, resorting to military threats, legal threats, and complaints to the League of Nations. Davar, the envoy of Iran defending the nation's rights, presented a reasonable argument, declaring

that the oil dispute between Iran and the oil company was an internal matter, meaning international courts had no jurisdiction over it and that the British government did not have the right to interfere in Iran's domestic affairs. If the company had grievances, it should address them in Iranian courts. The adoption of such approaches saved Iran from political turmoil with the West (Aqeli, 1990, pp. 207-208). From the perspective of the circle of intellectuals during the First Pahlavi period, incorporating knowledge and new Western ideas into Iran would enhance friendly political relationships with the West. In fact, once Iran adopted the manifestations of Western civilization, Western countries would establish suitable and peaceful relations with Iran. Otherwise, a traditional Iran in the international arena was considered a deficiency, leading Western powers to refrain from acting in a pacifist manner, motivating Iran to embrace modernity; without modernity, peaceful political relations would not form, and Iran would fall into the misfortunes of war and chaos (Abadian, 2004, pp. 32-24).

2. Reza Shah's Pacifist Approach in Relations with the West

During his reign, Reza Shah sought to achieve friendly political relations with Western governments through plans and programs intended to mitigate their colonial demands. He aimed to build a friendly relationship with them to free Iran from hostile interventions. Creating national unity, establishing security, and modernization in the Western style were among the groundwork programs for Iran's national and international peace with the West. These modernization programs were grand and ambitious undertakings that required both internal and external political stability and friendship with powerful northern and southern neighbors. In his political dealings with those two powers, he aimed to strike a balance between their ambitions, enabling Iran to achieve civilizational progress and political stability. He subsequently viewed the recourse to a third power as a suitable instrument for reaching equilibrium in dealings with Western nations (Zarghani, 1993, pp. 139-141).

Reza Shah sought to demonstrate to those powers that he could skillfully manage the capabilities of a strong leader to maintain peace and create equilibrium between Western powers, ensuring their interests were safeguarded and that preferred relations were neither excessively tilted

towards one party nor the other. He also aimed to adopt the political tradition of the constitutionalists, namely establishing cordial relations with both colonialist powers of the Soviet Union and Britain while maintaining neutrality in global politics. In some cases, he even attempted to mitigate potential overreach from those two states by drawing closer to Germany, thereby maintaining the balance (Zarghani, 1993, pp. 139-141).

One of Reza Shah's efforts involved creating close political relations with Western governments, specifically with Britain and neighboring Russia, to secure their interests in Iran and uphold the established balance (Maki, 1982, Vol 6, pp. 46-47). He sought to reassure them of his friendly policy towards both sides and that he would maintain the stability of Iran while respecting both rivals' interests, preserving his neutrality between these forces. Like the nationalist politicians of the constitutional era, his foreign policy was built on three principles: 1. Friendship with Russia and Britain, 2. Neutrality in global politics, 3. Approaching a third power to establish a balance between Russia and Britain. His primary objective was to reduce dependency on foreigners and minimize their interference in Iran by establishing friendly and balanced political relations (Avayi, 2005, pp. 120-121).

Reza Shah's serious intention for Iran's neutrality in international conflicts was to avoid entrapment in the dangerous and violent games of Europeans. He intended to maintain friendships with all Western nations while capitalizing on their assistance and goodwill to foster peace and progress for Iran. Observing the situation in Europe during the years leading up to the war, he reckoned that Iran's involvement in these conflicts would be detrimental as it compromised his twenty years of peaceful and friendly relations with the Western powers, which had seen his country develop to an extent. Thus, preserving neutrality implied maintaining friendship and ongoing peace between him and the West (Stewart, 1991, pp. 17-20). Therefore, the fundamental principles of the Shah's foreign policy revolved around promoting neutrality and friendship with neighbors while respecting mutually beneficial relationships. He suppressed any activities that might disrupt this balance, making it clear to Britain and Russia that Iran's policy was transparent and followed through legal channels like the Foreign Ministry and its diplomatic apparatus, negating concerns from both

states regarding unauthorized negotiations by individuals that might undermine national security (Mokhtari, 1947, pp. 466-468).

During World War II, Iran officially declared a policy of neutrality, reflecting the pacifist spirit of Iranians and their reluctance to engage in international conflicts (Stewart, 1991, pp. 17-20). Iranian statesmen endeavored to demonstrate Iran's goodwill through neutrality and refrain from violent political actions, which somewhat helped to mitigate Allied anger over these matters (Khajeh Noori, ۱۹۷۹, Vol. 3, pp. 84-85). In the second decade of Reza Shah's rule, the policy of maintaining balance and neutrality with a tendency towards Germany in the early stages of World War II was compromised (Avayi, 2005, pp. 121-120). Although Iran's official policy was based on neutrality, this leaning tended towards Germany, which provided a pretext for the occupation of Iranian soil (Maki, 1985, Vol. 7, pp. 133-137).

The proponents among the Pahlavi supporters sought to absolve the royal family of culpability in disrupting the longstanding tradition of Iran's foreign policy – maintaining balance in political relations with the West – by attributing blame to Military Ministers and high-ranking army officers, thereby exonerating Reza Shah. Their perspective was that the military should have warned the regime against the dangers of leaning towards Germany, which could violate the principle of Iran's neutrality and embroil the country in war (Mokhtari, 1946, pp. 643-642). This notion posits that maintaining neutrality was the Shah's main desire, which he endeavored to uphold; the presence of military experts served as a nominal excuse, whereby they aimed for assistance to the Soviet Union through Iran, prompting its occupation (Mirza Saleh, 1993, p. 404).

Overall, Reza Shah's policy during his two decades of rule emphasized conflict resolution. From the outset, he recognized that most disputes with neighboring states involved border limits, surmising that progress and the survival of interests hinged on fostering good relations and balance among neighbors. Thus, efforts were made to militarily resolve these border disputes diplomatically so that no conflicts remained. Why did military commanders not realize that the government's policy did not favor hostility and that no official declarations had been made in this regard? How did they overlook the fact that the Shah had declared neutrality in parliament

and had issued no orders for intervention? Why, then, did sporadic resistances arise? By studying the structure of the Pahlavi army, it was evident that the Iranian military was neither trained nor equipped for conflict with its neighbors (Mokhtari, 1946, pp. 652-644). The realization of this perspective suggests errors made by military commanders and the country's diplomatic apparatus, which provoked neighbors into attack and dissolved Iran's friendly relations.

Pacifism in Political Relations with the West during the Second Pahlavi Era

1. Kasravi and Pacifism in Political Relations with the West

Ahmad Kasravi (1890-1946) was one of the most significant writers and influential politicians of the Pahlavi era. How should the West be treated? Which ideology and doctrine should we follow? These were the recurrent questions that Kasravi aimed to address with his scholarly mind during such sensitive times, as the country was under occupation by Russia, England, and America, with liberal and communist ideologies battling within society. Regarding how our political relationships with the West should proceed, he believed that at this juncture, the world order was largely under the control of three great powers—Russia, England, and America—each maintaining military presence and political influence in our country. Each Western power adheres to specific ideologies and worldviews that we must be cautious of when approaching them politically. He regards these matters as fundamental issues that had not yet received a suitable response, plunging the society into confusion. The cause of societal confusion stemmed from questions over which ideologies and governments to align with for maximum benefit, ensuring that the independence of Iran remains intact. Is maintaining Iran's independence achievable under these circumstances? These questions preoccupied the minds of Iranians during the early 40s. Kasravi's response emphasized maintaining a rational and friendly stance both from the government and the public. With this principle, he asserted that not only would Iran's independence be secured, but it would also contribute to the political elevation and advancement of society—a goal requiring the purging of society (both ordinary citizens and elites) of ignorance and division and promoting rational behaviors toward neighboring states to avoid

provoking them and instead compel adherence to a clear and transparent governmental policy (Kasravi, 1945, pp. 44-43).

Kasravi recommended establishing political relations with Western governments, particularly the two neighboring states, based on friendly political behavior. He argued that due to Iran's weak position, wisdom dictated that Iran should not engage in hostile political actions toward Russia and England (Kasravi, 1945, p. 6). Remembering the experiences from the Constitution along with its political crises with Western states, he continued the political agendas of conservative figures of that period while resting on the theme of maintaining balance, friendship, and amiable relations with those nations. Establishing friendly relations thus became the axis of Kasravi's thoughts on logical engagement with the West. By adopting this friendly approach, Iran's independence would be preserved, and political calm and stability would be fostered, guiding the nation toward prosperity. He believed the key to the country's development and prosperity lay in friendship with major powers (Kasravi, 1945, p. 9-6). Steering clear of hostile political behaviors and adopting a transparent, friendly policy with neighbors represented Kasravi's solution to lead Iran out of political tensions with them, resulting in political stability and development (Kasravi, 1945, pp. 9-6).

Of course, establishing amicable political relations with Western governments required tools, which Kasravi believed mainly lay in "purifying society" from its myriad contaminations, promoting goodwill among Iranian statesmen. He views politics essentially as a peaceful way of coexistence with neighbors. This peaceful living must be devoid of insults and antagonism towards other nations. He alluded to the existence of various political parties and their policies, which involved derogatory comments about the Russian and British governments and fueled tensions and hostilities that could provoke them. Kasravi regarded the backwardness and political underdevelopment of the masses and political parties as evidence of societal contamination, representing the overarching lack of progress that allowed Western governments to dominate Iran. Therefore, to cleanse this contamination meant advancing Iran through friendly policies and a sound absorption of Western civilizational experiences (Kasravi, 1945, pp. 16-15).

Kasravi addressed a misconception among Iranians who believed Western governments had imperialistic designs toward Iran, whereas he argued otherwise; their interests in Iran could only be secured through an independent Iran. An independent Iran would preclude violent political confrontations between neighbors. A stable Iran would result in a deeper retention and securing of their interests within the country. According to him, it was crucial to exploit this situation for the nation's advancement. He emphasized that negative emotional reactions would not only provoke local animosities but would also lead to Iran's backwardness. Kasravi attributed the hesitation of neighboring nations in establishing friendly relations with Iran to the presence of extremist parties and politicians, unable to cultivate a balanced policy between the interests of neighboring states. Their piecemeal and unplanned policies produced risk for the interests of both British and Soviet states. He acknowledged that a positive sentiment among Iranians towards establishing rational and friendly political relations with neighboring states was forming, albeit requiring mutual cooperation. Neighboring governments must also establish friendly relations with Iran. His advice emphasized an intelligent and friendly political relationship with both sides so this collaboration could foster Iran's flourishing and political stability 9-20).

Kasravi criticized the advocates of irrational policies leaning towards unilateralism as unfit for Iran's circumstances, potentially leading to Iran's subjugation to a single power, thus representing the main source of Iran's misfortunes—embracing the oppressiveness a single power brings. With such approaches, independent sovereignty could not be achieved; we must first liberate ourselves to serve as agents of recovery, as a stance favoring one would only further confine our freedom. By that time, large states had established friendly alliances; for them, securing relationships among those powers was seen as more beneficial than entangling themselves with Iran. Through a single-sided policy, Iran becomes a mere pawn for one power which would act in its own interests whenever the political tides dictated, and this scenario would jeopardize Iran's status as a crossroads of interests, inciting fury from others against whom it could not withstand (Kasravi, 1945, pp. 47-46).

However, this misunderstanding treats the notion that major Western powers want to eliminate Iran's independence as a fallacy. A strong Iran

would benefit all nations, helping maintain the balance of power while ensuring security over their interests. Why then do they interfere in our affairs, and what remedies can be sought? According to Kasravi, Western interference in Iranian domestic affairs is due to the internal discord plaguing Iran. Their actions stem from lacking a capable and suitable government that could manage affairs, enforce a clear and stable policy, and reassert the nation's balance. This perception characterizes Iran as a contested ground for the intersecting interests of these two states, as they act preemptively to prevent rivals from consolidating more influence at the expense of their gains. If a competent and principled government were to gain power, maintain equilibrium between the two states, sidestep allegiances, and regard both interests with respect, the likelihood of contentious interactions and entanglements in Iranian domestic matters would diminish, as their interests would not be jeopardized. This kind of government would catalyze Iran's advancement and contribute to maintaining global peace (Kasravi, 1945, pp. 49-47).

Kasravi was among the nationalists who deemed the acceptance of positive aspects of Western civilization, such as knowledge and expertise, imperative for Iran's advancement. He believed that the positive aspects of Western civilization, such as knowledge and expertise, would lead to political calm, stability, and progress in Iran, while the indiscriminate acceptance of all Western influences without internalizing them into Iranian culture could lead to a loss of peace, stability, and turmoil in the country. Perhaps it is for this reason that he did not consider the divisionary philosophical and moral schools of the West, such as a leaning towards communism, among the essential ailments of Iranian society and saw their appeal as a move away from peace that could provoke extremism in international relations, potentially disrupting the delicate equilibrium of Iran and obstructing the peaceful endeavors of the Iranian people (Hassanzadeh, 2000, pp. 134-133). Recognizing the tumultuous global state between the two wars and during the Second World War, he advocated for global peace so humanity could navigate the dangers of Western civilization (Hassanzadeh, 2000, pp. 137). He criticized the tendency to attribute blame to Britain in the contemporary events within Iran, which exacerbated anti-Western sentiment, positing that such provocative acts would counter the peaceful disposition prevalent

among Iranians while being detrimental to the preservation of Iran's independence amid powerful Western states (Hassan-zadeh, 2000, pp. 145-143).

2. Iranian Statesmen and Pacifism in Political Engagement with the West between 1941-1951

The political figures of this period were largely the old politicians from the Constitution, adopting the same time-tested approach amidst political crises, which emphasized establishing friendly ties and maintaining balance with both the northern and southern neighbors. From the perspective of these leaders, who typically hailed from influential and aristocratic classes, the optimal solution for establishing proper and peaceful political relations with the West was to be conciliatory towards the Soviets while fostering friendship with Britain. They believed that friendship with Britain was essential for Iran's political stability, asserting that as long as Britain remained a close friend of Iran, the latter's political stability would be assured, as the primary concern for these aristocracy and seasoned politicians was political stability that would not compromise their interests (Avayi, 1984, Vol.2, pp. 368-366). Therefore, they attempted to seek logical resolutions for establishing friendly political relations with the West through alignment with Western governments to create pathways for political stability that would safeguard independence and ensure Iran's advancement. Qavam exemplified this approach with a conciliatory political disposition towards all great powers; he aimed to lay the groundwork for political stability to catalyze reform and progress in Iran. The fundamental principle in these political leaders' minds, along with their political apparatus, was the pursuit of a de-escalation strategy in political relations with the three great powers to ease tensions while garnering their friendship, ultimately guiding the nation toward peace, stability, and development (Pirdigar et al., 1999, p. 132).

The means to establish friendly relations with the West and ensure internal political stability required compromises with great powers. Perhaps it could be termed positive balancing. Ahmad Qavam perceived the discourse of his foreign policy as determined by the advice of his allies in accommodating the three Western powers, essentially soliciting cooperation from these powers to prevent political unrest and achieve stability (Eskandari, 1993, p.

216). The policy of accommodating Western governments executed by Qavam proved quite sagacious, as evidenced in the resolution of the oil crisis with the Soviets and the peaceful resolution with Stalin regarding Azerbaijan. Despite being pro-Western, he adopted a friendly and conciliatory policy towards the Soviets to alleviate pressure and threats, resulting in the withdrawal of Soviet support for the Democratic faction in Azerbaijan and Kurdistan. Clearly, this outcome was unattainable without policies emphasizing conciliation, thus establishing a strategy to ensure stability for Iran (Mahdavi, 2006, pp. 431-430).

Mohammad Reza Shah also embraced a policy of conciliation with Western governments, which he pursued by establishing positive political ties with all major powers. Unlike Mossadegh, who resorted to a negative balance approach, he called for a positive balancing policy with all parties. Mohammad Reza Shah believed positive balancing would facilitate rapid advancements in Iran and its political stability. He detested the obstinacies of the National Front that led to societal polarization, hindering Iran's stability and progression relying on major powers, thus advocating for a form of positive balance that benefited Iran and necessitated complying with all countries, especially Western powers (Pahlavi, 1976, pp. 146-139).

From the very start of his rule, Mohammad Reza Shah recognized that establishing political stability in Iran and securing his monarchy were contingent on friendship and collaboration with Western countries like Britain, Russia, and America. Friendly relations and pacifist behaviors toward these nations were essential for achieving a political stability under the king's leadership and monarchy itself. Thus, without collaboration with Western allies, peace and stability would not be achieved in this tumultuous decade for Iran (Abrahamian, 1998, pp. 217-216).

Believing in the need for a balance and friendly approach towards Western nations was a prevailing sentiment among nationalist figures. After Reza Shah's downfall, they opposed the government's policy advocating for unity with the Allies against Germany, reasoning that it was premature, as the outcome of the war was yet uncertain; if Germany were victorious, it would pose a threat to Iran's existence (Mahdavi, 2006, pp. 412-410). Even as Iranians sought to cooperate with the Allies under pressure, they limited this collaboration to assisting within the borders, refusing any support

outside Iranian territories for their allied friends (Naghizadeh, 2004, pp. 156). This tendency can be viewed as an ideological inclination toward the traditional policy of Iranian nationalists regarding neutrality and friendship with major powers. The policy of neutrality and friendship with all nations, particularly major Western nations, which included Germany, represented a strong sentiment among nationalist figures during the early years of the Pahlavi II period. They deemed this path essential for Iran's independence and political stability (Mahdavi, 2006, 92-93).

In this decade, oil emerged as a critical issue in political relations between Iran and Western governments. Under these circumstances, Dr. Mohammad Mossadegh, a prominent and seasoned nationalist politician, initiated a creative advocacy that preserved Iran's peaceful policy while assuring its independence. His perspective was that Iran required a balance favoring itself rather than the West; thus, this balance could be negative. In other words, unlike positive balancing, which grants concessions to both sides, a negative balance implies granting no concessions to either party. Through this policy, which epitomizes the optimal approach for maintaining neutrality and peaceful strategies, both powers -Russia and Britain- would withdraw from colonial competition over concessions disrupting the political stability in Iran. This approach, centered on oil, fostered friendship and perpetuated Iran's peaceful policies towards the West, as granting concessions to one party undermined the ethos of friendship and maintaining balance in political relations with Western powers (Mahdavi, 1989, pp. 57-54; Kistavan, 1977, pp. 193-194).

Mossadegh's method of engaging politically with Western powers was characterized by a systematic interaction that arose from years of colonial pressure. By rejecting the demands of colonial powers, he contested unilateralism and positively balanced policies, which he regarded as divisive and counter to the discourse of peace-seeking espoused by Iranians since the Constitutional Movement. This approach became known as negative balance (Sami'i, 2019, pp. 473-472). In light of this policy, representatives in the fifteenth parliament rejected the oil agreement proposed by Qavam and Sadchikov, which entangled Iran in a perilous unilateral policy that would provoke American and British ire (Mahdavi, 1968, pp. 56-55). Furthermore, Mossadegh resisted accepting a mutual military pact with the United States—one that would bind Iran to the

West—arguing that such an agreement would compel Iran to defend Western interests and perceiving it as an infringement upon Iran's peaceful and friendly relationships with all Western powers, including the Soviets, leading it towards unilateralism and confrontation with the Eastern Bloc. Opposition to this military pact did not signify a drift into the Eastern Bloc. Still, it was rather an application of a fundamental principle in Iran's foreign policy, which had served as a crucial tool for the Iranian nationalists in navigating political crises with the West since the Constitutional Revolution (Zabih, 1991, pp. 133-135). Mossadegh argued that leaning towards a specific state was detrimental to national interests and contrasted with the peaceful approach that characterized Iranian nationalists, potentially exacerbating hostilities between Western powers and Iran; thus the best policy involved adhering to neutrality and sustaining friendly relationships that resonated with nationalist sentiments while fostering amicable relations across all governments (Mossadegh, 1986, p. 344).

Conclusion

In the contemporary political history of Iran, diverse approaches have been employed in political encounters with Western colonizers. One such approach included establishing friendly and peaceful relations aimed at avoiding coercive policies from Western governments. Due to its geographical position, Iran was subject to the ambitions and interventions of colonizers, yet it decidedly rejected military and violent confrontations, consistently opting for friendly and peaceful strategies despite the adversarial methods employed by the colonizers. Iran pursued independence and progress, perceiving solutions not in conflict and hostility but in peace and coexistence. The most significant strategy adopted and adhered to by Iranians during this period was the establishment of friendly and peaceful relations with the West. Within the context of these relations, Iranians aspired to political stability and civil advancement, which was fundamentally pursued theoretically and practically by nationalists, intellectuals, and statesmen. Distancing from tension and achieving political stability and civil progress necessitated the establishment of friendly political relationships with colonial powers that exercised military presence and political influence in Iran. Therefore, peaceful political relations with interfering powers emerged as one of the foremost pathways for establishing tranquility and political stability along

with advancement, perceived amongst intellectuals and statesmen. The key strategy of Iranian thinkers and politicians during this studied period was through goodwill in political relations with the West and promoting peace-centered ideas, steering the country towards tranquility, political stability, and progress, as national advancement was a pivotal tool in ensuring peace with meddlesome Western governments that treated weaker states contemptuously. This period witnessed theoretical and practical efforts by Iranians to establish friendly and peaceful relations with Western entities.

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Original Research Paper

Eine Neubewertung der islamischen feministischen Bewegung und des Prinzips der Toleranz: Eine Fallstudie zur ägyptischen Gesellschaft

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Zusammenfassung:

Der islamische Feminismus ist eine progressive Bewegung, die darauf abzielt, die Rechte von Frauen in islamischen Gesellschaften zu sichern, indem religiöse Lehren neu interpretiert werden, um traditionelle Werte mit zeitgenössischen Idealen von Gerechtigkeit und Gleichheit in Einklang zu bringen. Im Mittelpunkt dieser Bewegung steht das Prinzip der Toleranz, ein zentraler Aspekt des Pluralismus, der ein friedliches Zusammenleben unterschiedlicher intellektueller Strömungen ermöglicht, insbesondere im soziopolitischen Kontext Ägyptens. Diese Studie untersucht die Beziehung zwischen islamischem Feminismus und Toleranz, mit Schwerpunkt auf deren sozialen und politischen Dimensionen. Mit der Methode der „Kettenanalyse und Theorie“ identifiziert die Forschung konzeptionelle Verbindungen und diskursive Verschiebungen, die die Entwicklung der Gedankenwelt des islamischen Feminismus prägen. Diese Methode beleuchtet das Zusammenspiel und die Auseinandersetzung von Ideen zwischen islamischem Feminismus und anderen ideologischen Bewegungen. Die Ergebnisse zeigen, dass die Betonung der Toleranz im islamischen Feminismus den interkulturellen und intersubjektiven Dialog gefördert und ideologische Verbindungen zwischen säkularen und religiösen Strömungen geschaffen hat. Diese Interaktion hat die intellektuelle Landschaft bereichert und die Fähigkeit zu reformistischen Initiativen innerhalb islamischer Kontexte gestärkt. Durch die Förderung neuer Wege für Dialog und kritischen Diskurs hat der islamische Feminismus den Vorstoß für Geschlechtergerechtigkeit intensiviert und umfassendere strukturelle Reformen innerhalb pluralistischer Gesellschaften ermöglicht. Die Integration von Toleranz als Kernprinzip hat Chancen für ein breiteres Engagement zwischen unterschiedlichen diskursiven Traditionen geschaffen und das reformistische Potenzial des islamischen Feminismus gestärkt. Letztendlich positioniert dieser Ansatz den islamischen Feminismus als transformative Kraft, die zur umfassenderen Agenda des sozialen und intellektuellen Wandels in multikulturellen Umfeldern beiträgt.

Schlagwörter: Feminismus, Islamischer Feminismus, Geschlechtergerechtigkeit, Pluralismus, Toleranz

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چکیده:

فمینیسم اسلامی به‌عنوان یک جریان فکری پویا، می‌کوشد با بازخوانی آموزه‌های دینی، بستری برای احقاق حقوق زنان در جوامع اسلامی فراهم کند. این جریان، با پذیرش اصل رواداری که یکی از ارکان بنیادین پلورالیسم است، نقش مهمی در ایجاد همزیستی مسالمت‌آمیز میان گفتمان‌های مختلف در جامعه مصر ایفا می‌کند. مقاله حاضر با هدف بررسی رابطه میان فمینیسم اسلامی و اصل رواداری اجتماعی و سیاسی، به این پرسش پاسخ می‌دهد که چگونه فمینیسم اسلامی توانسته است از طریق پذیرش این اصل، گفتمان خود را در جامعه گسترش داده و نقشی مؤثر در میان سایر جریان‌های فکری ایفا کند. برای نگارش این مقاله، از روش زنجیره‌ای در جریان پژوهی استفاده شده است؛ روشی که امکان شناسایی پیوستگی‌ها و گسست‌های مفهومی میان دو جریان فکری مذکور را از منظر تاریخی و نظری فراهم می‌آورد. این روش، با تأکید بر روندهای تاریخی، گفتمانی و تحول‌محور، زمینه بررسی تعاملات و تقابلهای فکری میان جریان‌های مختلف را فراهم می‌سازد. نتایج این پژوهش نشان می‌دهد که فمینیسم اسلامی با پذیرش اصل رواداری، توانسته است در گفت‌وگوی میان‌فرهنگی و بین‌الذهانی در جامعه مصر مشارکت فعالی داشته باشد. تعامل این جریان با سایر گفتمان‌های سکولار و مذهبی، زمینه‌ساز تسهیل ارتباطات فکری و ایدئولوژیک در جامعه شده و ظرفیت‌های اصلاح‌طلبانه را در جوامع اسلامی افزایش داده است. این روند، علاوه بر تقویت عدالت جنسیتی، دستیابی به اهداف فمینیسم اسلامی را در بستر جوامع چندفرهنگی تسهیل کرده است. در نهایت، این مقاله نشان می‌دهد که پذیرش رواداری به‌عنوان یک اصل اساسی در فمینیسم اسلامی، نه تنها به ارتقای تعاملات میان گفتمان‌های متنوع کمک کرده، بلکه فرصت‌های تازه‌ای برای گفت‌وگو، اصلاح و دستیابی به عدالت جنسیتی در جوامع اسلامی فراهم آورده است.

واژگان کلیدی: فمینیسم، فمینیسم اسلامی، برابری جنسیتی، تکثرگرایی، مدارا.

A Reappraisal of the Islamic Feminist Movement and the Principle of Tolerance: A Case Study of Egyptian Society

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Abstract

Islamic feminism is a progressive movement aimed at securing women's rights in Islamic societies through the reinterpretation of religious teachings to align traditional values with contemporary ideals of justice and equality. Central to this movement is the principle of tolerance, a key aspect of pluralism, which enables peaceful coexistence among diverse intellectual currents, particularly within Egypt's socio-political context. This study investigates the relationship between Islamic feminism and tolerance, focusing on their social and political dimensions. Using the "chain method and Theory" the research identifies conceptual connections and discursive shifts that shape the evolution of Islamic feminism's thought. This method highlights the interplay and contestation of ideas between Islamic feminism and other ideological movements. The findings reveal that Islamic feminism's emphasis on tolerance has facilitated cross-cultural and intersubjective dialogues, creating ideological linkages between secular and religious currents. This interaction has enriched the intellectual landscape and enhanced the capacity for reformist initiatives within Islamic contexts. By fostering new pathways for dialogue and critical discourse, Islamic feminism has strengthened the push for gender justice, enabling broader structural reform within pluralistic societies. The integration of tolerance as a core principle has generated opportunities for greater engagement between diverse discursive traditions, boosting the reformist potential of Islamic feminism. Ultimately, this approach positions Islamic feminism as a transformative force, contributing to the larger agenda of social and intellectual change within multicultural environments.

Keywords: Feminism, Islamic Feminism, Gender Equality, Pluralism, Tolerance

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Introduction

The late 19th and early 20th centuries witnessed profound transformations across social, political, and cultural spheres. During this period, Egypt emerged as a pivotal center of change within the Arab world, serving as fertile ground for large-scale and influential movements. The 1919 Egyptian Revolution represents a critical juncture in the history of anti-colonial struggles. This revolution not only established the foundation for national resistance against British colonial rule but also contributed to the development of new paradigms of resistance, wherein the roles of both the general populace and social elites became distinctly prominent. Egyptian women, who had long been constrained by restrictive traditions and colonial power structures, gradually assumed a more active role in social and political struggles. The women's movement emerged as a pivotal social force during this period, manifesting in two distinct trajectories: The first trajectory was embedded within the nationalist movement, which sought to resist colonial domination. Colonial rule not only exerted control over the political and military spheres of society but also reinforced gender-based discrimination by influencing social structures. In response, women stood alongside men in the struggle for political and social independence, playing a pivotal role in advancing nationalist objectives through active participation in demonstrations, protests, and social activism. The second trajectory of this movement focused on combating patriarchy and gender discrimination, which were deeply ingrained in social, political, and even nationalist frameworks. This was especially evident within the Wafd Party, a prominent anti-colonial movement that, despite its central role in the struggle for independence, remained influenced by patriarchal structures in its decision-making and policy formulation. Although the party utilized women's participation in the anti-colonial struggle, it resisted incorporating women into its political structures after gaining power, effectively marginalizing them from key positions. These contradictory actions prompted Egyptian women activists to connect nationalism with broader concepts such as gender justice, tolerance and solidarity. In their pursuit of a deeper impact on social change, they gradually expanded their focus, progressing beyond initial demands for fundamental rights like the

right to vote and the right to education. As their intellectual and academic development advanced, they increasingly addressed more comprehensive issues, including the promotion of peace both regionally and globally, as well as the reinforcement of a culture of tolerance and social justice. This article explores the intellectual evolution of the Islamic feminism movement in Egypt over the course of a century. The primary objective of this research is to address the question of how the Islamic feminism movement in Egypt conceptualizes tolerance as a key principle of pluralism within society and the strategies it employs to advance this goal.

Method and Theoretical Framework

This article adopts the chain theory and method on current research to conduct a historical analysis and reassess key events and critical turning points that have shaped the formation and evolution of the feminist movement in Egypt. It further identifies the major initiatives and strategies employed by feminist activists to promote their objectives in the realms of peace and social equality. By examining these struggles and analyzing the role of the Islamic feminist movement in fostering a discourse centered on justice and peace, the study underscores the movement's significant influence on transforming cultural and political perspectives within Egyptian society. (Alikhani, 2024, pp. 93-101)

The chain theory on current research is utilized as the analytical framework for this study. This theory facilitates the study, analysis, and understanding of human and social movements, tracking their evolution from their inception to the point of investigation. This theory provides an analytical framework for examining fundamental concepts, including current spaces, origins, intrinsic and extrinsic elements, actors, sub-currents, identity, and current indicators, without imposing value judgments. Movements are conceptualized as dynamic and fluid systems characterized by their causes of emergence, impacts, consequences, and patterns of interaction or conflict. These movements can be categorized as local, national, regional, or global in scope. Movements are categorized into intellectual, field-based, and theoretical-practical types, according to their identity, approach, and objectives. Their analysis is conducted through various patterns, including continuity, transformation, and metamorphosis. Employing this theory

within the framework of current studies, and in adherence to established research standards, facilitates a comprehensive description and analysis of movements, as well as their interactions and relationships with other movements. (Alikhani, 2024, pp. 25-27) The Islamic feminism movement comprises a collective of scholars, writers, and activists who operate within academic, political, social, and cultural spheres to advocate for the rights of Muslim women. The movement seeks to promote gender equality, social justice, and the realization of women's rights, grounded in Islamic principles and frameworks. Islamic feminists draw on the Quran, Hadith, and the lives of prominent women in Islamic history to substantiate egalitarian ideals and to critique patriarchal interpretations of religious texts. This discourse developed as a response to two distinct paradigms: first, the orientalist discourse of certain Western feminists who critique Islam based on the status of women in Muslim-majority countries, and second, the discourse of political Islamic fundamentalism, which reinforces patriarchal structures under the guise of religious authority. (Sirri, 2021, p. 3)

The Islamic Feminism Movement: Foundations and History

1. The Foundations of the Islamic Feminism Movement

Margot Badran contends that Islamic feminism, by transcending the traditional dichotomy between religion and secularism, as well as between East and West, aims to bridge the divides between these two discourses while emphasizing principles of gender equality and social justice. Islamic feminist discourse draws on classical Islamic methodologies and social science tools to advance and expand egalitarian ideals. As a broad and diverse ideological framework, Islamic feminism shares discursive similarities with other forms of feminism, yet it maintains its own distinct worldview, intellectual foundations, religious principles, and perspectives, which shape its core beliefs and, in turn, define and give identity to the movement. (Alikhani, 2024, p. 125)

Ontological Basis: Islamic feminism emphasizes individual agency and upholds women's right to establish a direct relationship with God, free from the mediation of human or spiritual intermediaries. It draws on the

principles of monotheism (tawhid), equality, and justice to frame its ontological foundations. Rawani characterizes Islamic feminism as a neo-Mu'tazilite movement, positioning religion as a source of reason and knowledge. Through a monotheistic lens, Islamic feminism advances a reinterpretation of the Quran that is both innovative and liberatory. This perspective portrays the divine essence as a representation of gender justice and firmly rejects the attribution of gender to the divine being. (Sirri, 2021, p. 18) Barlas identifies monotheism (tawhid), justice, and the oneness of God as the foundational principles for liberatory interpretations of the Quran. She conceptualizes God as transcending gender constructs and wholly devoid of misogynistic attributes. (Barlas, 2002, pp. 13-15) Islamic feminism regards justice, equality, and human dignity as fundamental concepts derived from the Quran. It posits that gender hierarchies are inherently incompatible with the principle of divine oneness (tawhid) and the notion of equality within the order of creation. (Wadud, 1999, pp. 25-30)

Epistemological Basis: Islamic feminism constructs an epistemological framework for gender justice, integrating reason, faith, and justice in the process of knowledge production. Proponents of this movement advocate for independent reasoning (ijtihad) and critical analysis of Islamic texts, moving beyond the interpretations and rulings (fatwas) of male jurists. They emphasize a return to primary sources and the application of rational analysis to address gender-related issues. By challenging patriarchal interpretations of the Quran (Barlas, 2002, p. 19), Islamic feminists argue that the comprehension of sacred texts is not inherently tied to gender. (Sirri, 2021, p. 21) They identify intellectual competence as the foundational basis for gender equality and argue that the exclusion of women from religious scholarship has led to the misinterpretation of Islamic teachings on gender.

Methodological Basis: The methodology of Islamic feminism in reinterpreting religious texts and challenging patriarchy within an Islamic framework is grounded in hermeneutic and ijtihad approaches. Islamic feminists, through ijtihad, reexamine Islamic laws and ethics to address contemporary issues, with a particular focus on gender justice. They argue

that the interpretation of Islamic texts must be situated within the historical, linguistic, and cultural contexts of a given society. (Sirri, 2021, pp. 43-44) They are also influenced by intersectional feminist approaches, which view gender, race, class, ethnicity, and religion as interconnected categories in the analysis of multiple identities. (Dalaman, 2021, p. 83) Additionally, postcolonial frameworks and critiques of Western cultural colonialism are integrated into feminist analyses grounded in Islam. By employing these methodologies, they offer a comprehensive framework for reinterpreting religious texts and challenging patriarchy, ultimately aiming to construct a more inclusive and nuanced narrative of women's rights. (Ahmed, 1992, pp. 301-303)

Sociological Basis: Kumari Jayawardena conceptualizes the interaction between European and non-European cultures as a dialectical result of imperialist expansion. She asserts that this process was reciprocal, wherein Asian and African societies not only embraced Western values such as liberalism and parliamentary democracy but also engaged in reforms of their internal social and political structures. Within this context, nationalists sought to reinforce national identity by reinterpreting cultural and religious traditions. In colonized societies such as Egypt, feminism emerged in a distinctly nationalist form. (Jayawardena, 2016, p. 26) Feminist figures such as Huda Sha'arawi engaged with both Western feminists and domestic political elites. Since the late 1980s, Muslim feminists have redirected the discourse to prioritize justice, expanding their focus beyond gender-specific issues. They have actively participated in social movements and employed legal frameworks to advocate for the reform of laws to advance women's rights, securing significant concessions from the government. (Abu-Lughod, 1998, p. 3) The power dynamics between feminists, the state, and Islamist movements are characterized by an imbalance. The state employs legal instruments to assert its authority, whereas Islamist groups leverage social norm-setting to restrict women's roles. Despite these challenges, Egyptian feminists do not adopt passive roles; rather, they actively participate in negotiation processes. By employing strategies akin to those of secular feminists, they aim to redefine power relations and remain engaged in the social and political spheres. (Karam, 1998, p. 25)

Theological Foundations: Islamic feminism generally embraces an intersectional approach to various issues, including religion. In the Egyptian context, feminism is neither anti-religious nor a mere imitation of Western models; instead, it represents an indigenous and independent movement dedicated to the emancipation of women. Even early feminist movements, despite their liberal orientation, were not in direct opposition to Islam, often leveraging Islamic modernism to legitimize their objectives. Secular feminist movements, although not subscribing to religious discourse, maintain a respectful acknowledgment of the religious identity of society. (Arenfeldt & Al-Hassan Golley, 2012, p. 45) The Islamic feminist movement upholds religious diversity and ensures that religion does not become a source of division. (Badran, 1995, pp. 95-96) Islamic traditionalists, such as Zainab Al-Ghazali and Safinaz Kazem, have emphasized the traditional roles of women as wives and mothers, valuing these positions as essential to social stability. In contrast, the modernist feminist movement aspires to goals that extend beyond the confines of family roles, advocating for an Islamic state and gender equality grounded in a progressive interpretation of Islamic teachings. Within this framework, the Islamic feminist movement seeks to develop a discourse on women and gender that upholds gender equality and social justice, drawing on an egalitarian reading of Islam within an Islamic paradigm. This movement conceptualizes its feminist commitments as an organic process aimed at fostering a dynamic understanding and practical application of Islamic justice rooted in virtue ethics, thereby offering a reimagined interpretation of religion. (Sirri, 2021, pp. 36-37)

Axiological Basis: Islamic feminism aims to harmonize feminist principles with Islamic teachings, grounding its approach in core values such as justice, equality, human dignity, women's agency, and interpretive pluralism. This framework draws upon the Quran and the Prophetic tradition (Sunnah) as foundational sources. Central to Islamic feminism is the emphasis on Quranic justice as a universal right, rejecting any interpretation that perpetuates injustice as fundamentally misaligned with Islamic principles. (Wadud, 1999, p. 63) The discourse of Islamic feminist movement frames gender equality within the concept of equality before God. It critiques patriarchal interpretations of Islam as detrimental to

human dignity and, by rejecting such interpretations, affirms women's agency. The movement asserts that Islamic principles do not hinder this agency but instead support it. By advocating for interpretive pluralism, it promotes the legitimacy of diverse readings of the Quran. This recognition of plurality sustains the dynamism of Islamic teachings, broadens the discursive framework for women's rights, and reflects a commitment to tolerance and democratic principles. (Barlas, 2002, p. 56)

Political Basis: The Islamic feminist movement takes a critical and reformist stance toward political systems, particularly within Islamic countries. While one of the consequences of Islamist movements and repressive policies in the Middle East has been the politicization of gender, women's activism holds the potential to challenge and dismantle this established order. (Moghadam, 1993, pp. 169-170) Islamic feminism, with the goal of establishing a just Islamic society and state, underscores the importance of women's active participation in political processes. The movement views equal involvement of women in decision-making as crucial for the implementation of equitable policies. Additionally, Islamic feminism serves as a response to Western colonial dominance, actively resisting colonial cultural forces. It aims to redefine indigenous identities and challenge the influence of Western ideologies within Islamic societies. Saadia Sheikh examines the tension between Muslim feminist commitments and gendered interpretations of Islam, offering a critique of neocolonial discourses concerning Muslim women. (Sirri, 2021, p. 24) From the perspective of Islamic feminists, patriarchy is not rooted in religion but is also intricately tied to political power structures. They conceptualize patriarchy as a product of power-driven interventions and, akin to secular feminists, argue that the struggle for gender justice transcends cultural, religious, or individual concerns, positioning it as a resistance against the political dominance of men. (Sirri, 2021, p. 3)

Proponents of the Islamic feminist movement challenge Western misconceptions that depict Islam as an inherently repressive religion. They aim to contextualize gender identity within a broader framework that includes religion, culture, ethnicity, and class. In doing so, the movement expands its focus beyond women as the sole target group, promoting

engagement with both traditional and modernist factions within society. Amina Wadud, in her scholarly work, seeks to harmonize Islamic feminist legal discourse with the dynamics of globalizing movements. (Wadud, 1999, p. 13) Islamic feminism, rooted in faith and the belief in the Quran's universal ethic of egalitarianism, seeks to challenge the power dynamics that have historically enabled men to hold and sustain absolute power within Muslim societies. Asma Barlas conceptualizes the interpretation of religious texts as a process aimed at "totalizing" meaning. By rejecting traditional Islamic perspectives and offering a feminist reading of the Quran, she advocates for the recognition of moral agency and completeness, irrespective of gender, and works to promote the principle of equality. (Sirri, 2021, p. 5)

2. History of Islamic Feminism in Egypt

The emergence of the feminist movement in 20th-century Egypt can be traced to the growing gender awareness among upper-class women in the 19th century, alongside the gradual transformation of traditional cultural norms. This culture was characterized by the isolation of women, patriarchal control over families, and the unrestricted agency of men. It was increasingly challenged by the rise of reformist thought and exposure to Western civilization. Key figures in this reform movement included Muslim intellectuals such as Rifa'a at-Tahtawi, Muhammad Abduh, Rashid Rida, and Qasim Amin, who played pivotal roles in advocating for social and cultural change. At-Tahtawi emphasized the critical importance of women's education and their role in societal advancement, viewing the oppression of women as indicative of societal ignorance. Muhammad Abduh, with a bold and progressive stance, addressed issues of gender equality, particularly in marriage and divorce. Qasim Amin, through his seminal works "The Liberation of Women" and "The New Woman", advocated for the empowerment of women and the dismantling of their social isolation. He attributed the restrictions placed on women to the legacy of Ottoman rule and an authoritarian cultural framework. These reformist perspectives faced significant opposition from conservatives and even some nationalist liberals. The liberal movement in Egypt argued that emphasizing women's rights would detract from political and national

priorities. Leila Ahmed concurs with this critique, accusing Qasim Amin of aligning with colonial discourse and deeming his rhetoric as lacking authenticity. In contrast, Ahmed defends the feminist approach of Malak Hifni Nassef, who viewed the reform of family law and women's active participation in society as essential for social progress. (Ahmed, 1992, p. 179) Leila Ahmed and many Islamic feminists argue that Islamic identity is essential, and they work to present Islam as non-gendered and modern, countering the depiction of Islam in Qasim Amin's writings. Huda Sha'arawi was a prominent figure and advocate of the feminist movement in Egypt. She is recognized as the founder of intellectual, organizational, and political feminism in Egypt, serving as the movement's official representative. Often in opposition to nationalism, which had lost its priority, Sha'arawi navigated the complex intersection of politics and gender that marginalized the women's issue. Consequently, after the formation of the Egyptian Parliament in 1923 and the exclusion of women, Sha'arawi focused on advancing women's rights and social reforms by emphasizing indigenous culture, critiquing patriarchal interpretations, and engaging with the global feminist movement. Margot Badran describes feminism in colonized or semi-colonized countries like Egypt as "nationalist feminism," which, though often unconsciously, positions itself in opposition to the imperialist feminism of colonizing powers. (Badran, 1995, p. 21) Mohammad Yunus categorizes feminism in Egypt into three distinct phases: colonial, post-colonial, and modern. In the colonial phase, first-generation feminists primarily concentrated on issues such as girls' education, women's right to work, and the reduction of political and social restrictions on women. They subtly challenged patriarchal structures in ways that did not provoke significant societal backlash. Concurrently, the Muslim Brotherhood emerged as a transnational movement, which, while encouraging women's social participation, continued to emphasize traditional gender roles. In the post-colonial phase, following the 1952 revolution, Egyptian secular feminism adopted a more confrontational approach, addressing critical issues such as sexual violence, women's subjugation in marriage, and societal taboos like prostitution and female genital mutilation. Nawal El Saadawi, a prominent leader within this movement, boldly critiqued both tradition and patriarchy. In the modern

phase, Egyptian feminism distanced itself from its previous confrontational approach and endeavored to reconcile women's rights concepts with Islamic values and Egyptian culture. This shift, coinciding with the global expansion of intersectional feminist discourse, sought to integrate human rights frameworks with Islamic principles. The movement aimed to uphold religious legitimacy, minimize conflicts with secular feminists, and, by focusing on national issues, foster broader societal acceptance of gender equality. (Younis, 2007)

Hala Kamal analyzes the development of feminism in Egypt within the broader context of global feminist movements, identifying its evolution through three distinct waves. The first wave coincided with the rise of nationalism and the struggle for independence, during which the Egyptian feminist movement advocated for the elimination of discrimination, equal educational opportunities, reforms to personal status laws, and the right to political representation in parliament. Although women's political rights were not fully realized during this period, significant progress was made with the securing of girls' access to public education. The second wave emerged with state-sponsored feminism under Nasser's regime, which, despite its support for women's rights, involved the suppression of independent feminist groups. During this era, Nawal El-Saadawi introduced a new feminist trajectory that sought social, economic, and cultural revolution beyond the confines of Islamic frameworks. The third wave followed the assassination of Anwar Sadat, with Mubarak's administration attempting to implement protective laws for women's legal institutions, further shaping the feminist landscape in Egypt. During this period, three distinct feminist frameworks emerged, and women's committees were formed within political parties. Human rights initiatives, in collaboration with international organizations, expanded, and independent feminist research organizations were established. Despite facing political and legal constraints, these organizations persisted in their activities. The fourth wave of feminism emerged following the 2011 revolution, with a particular emphasis on addressing sexual harassment and assault. (Kamal, 2016, pp. 13-19) Feminist activists dismantled the culture of shame surrounding these issues, utilizing social media as a platform for women to share their experiences and promote awareness.

(Cooke, 2016, p. 39) The aforementioned studies have not sufficiently examined the Islamization of Egyptian society following the era of Gamal Abdel Nasser. In the 1970s, with the implementation of Anwar Sadat's Infitah policy, efforts were made to undermine Nasserist discourse. As part of this strategy, the government bolstered Islamist groups, which subsequently exerted significant influence on Egypt's social and cultural landscape in the following decades. Azza M. Karam identifies three primary feminist movements in Egypt: secular feminism, Muslim feminism, and Islamist feminism. In alignment with Margot Badran's perspective, these movements, despite their ideological differences, share the common goal of emphasizing the status of Egyptian women. Notably, they often refrain from using the term "feminism" due to its Western associations. According to Karam, secular feminism advocates for equality grounded in universal human rights principles and typically operates through human rights organizations. Muslim feminists, drawing on Islamic sources such as the Quran and Hadith, emphasize the equality of men and women while striving to reconcile religious teachings with human rights principles. They advocate for *ijtihad* (independent legal reasoning) and the reinterpretation of religious texts. In contrast, Islamist feminists prioritize Islam as the central framework of their ideology, asserting that women should not compete with men but instead seek to align gender roles. They support structural *jihad* aimed at Islamizing society. According to Karam, the principal differences among these three feminist strands lie in their approaches to politics, veiling, and strategies for combating oppression. Despite these ideological variations, all three groups agree on the importance of women's participation in social and political responsibility. (Karam, 1998, pp. 12-13) Despite this categorization, Mulki Al-Sharmani rejects the classification of Islamic feminism, considering it a unified movement characterized by diverse research approaches and political, social, and cultural activities, all directed toward a common, specific objective. According to Al-Sharmani, Islamic feminism in Egypt is a scholarly-driven initiative pursued by a small group of intellectuals across different generations. The production of feminist knowledge, whether secular or Islamic, is an independent process that transcends intellectual and organizational categories. The differences among these

feminist strands, she argues, stem from their varying interpretations of Islam and distinct methods of activism. (Al-Sharmani, 2016)

In Egypt, secular feminism has, with a few exceptions, remained closely connected to Islamic concepts. Secular feminists have strategically employed Islamic ideas to engage their audiences. The rise of Islamic influence in the 1970s, alongside the emergence of the Women's Mosque Movement, which sought to transform women's religious practices into public and social activities, provided a foundation for the development of Islamic feminism. The origins of Islamic feminism in Egypt can be traced to the efforts of Zaynab al-Ghazali, whose activism began in the 1940s and persisted until her death in 2005. As Saba Mahmood notes, the feminist movement initiated by Zaynab al-Ghazali had a profound impact, though it remained relatively obscure, even among activists within the Women's Mosque Movement. (Mahmood, 2005, p. 67) Zaynab al-Ghazali is considered a representative figure of traditional Islamic feminism. In this approach, the concept of serving God is central. While upholding traditional interpretations of Islamic texts, traditional Islamic feminism encourages women's social participation, yet confines it within the boundaries of their familial roles as wives, mothers, and daughters. For adherents of this perspective, da'wah (inviting others to Islam) is regarded as a personal responsibility, subordinated to the primary role of women within the family structure. (Mahmood, 2005, p. 179) This movement aims to establish a balance between women's private responsibilities and public roles without challenging religious norms or surpassing legal frameworks. In addition to the traditionalist faction, a more contemporary strand of Islamic feminism gained traction among the younger generation of feminists. This approach utilizes interpretations of the Quran and Islamic history to promote women's rights, expand their social roles, and enhance their opportunities. Modern Islamic feminism, referred to by Zaynab Mir-Hosseini as "neo-traditionalist," seeks to reconcile modern values with Islamic principles. This movement, grounded in reason and *ijtihad*, advocates for the interpretation of Islamic texts with an emphasis on moderation and rationality. Mir-Hosseini contends that the social changes driven by secular education, which gained prominence in the 19th century, weakened the traditional framework of Islamic jurisprudence and created

space for the emergence of new gender discourses. (Sirri, 2021, p. 21) This strand focuses on overcoming the constraints imposed on women and is influenced by Mu'tazilite thought in its approach to the interpretation of religious texts.

Feminism and Pluralism

Pluralism refers to the coexistence of diverse groups, beliefs, and practices within a society, underscoring the importance of accepting and respecting different identities, cultures, religions, and perspectives. It emphasizes the value of diversity and the necessity of fostering an environment where varied social groups can coexist in a peaceful and constructive manner. Rooted in a range of cultural and philosophical traditions, pluralism is recognized as a foundational principle for the development and sustenance of multicultural societies. Philosophical pluralism posits that there is no single, universal method for attaining truth. Instead, each form of knowledge operates within a specific conceptual, contextual, or cultural framework. This perspective encourages scientific paradigms to coexist with alternative paradigms, fostering a more inclusive and diverse understanding of knowledge. (Beall & Restall, 2000) Political pluralism, as a political philosophy, refers to the recognition and acceptance of diversity within society, allowing for the peaceful coexistence of various interests, beliefs, lifestyles, and identities. While pluralism is rooted in liberal thought and philosophically distinct from Islamic feminism, the two concepts converge at certain junctures. Both frameworks are grounded in the principle of respecting diversity and acknowledging difference as a fundamental aspect of social coexistence. Islamic feminism aims to advance women's rights within the framework of Islamic principles, while pluralism advocates for the peaceful coexistence of diverse social groups. Kimberlé Crenshaw, in her development of intersectionality theory, emphasizes the significance of social identities, particularly those of marginalized communities. Although religion is not explicitly identified as a factor of intersectionality in Crenshaw's framework, Islamic feminists conceptualize feminism through the lens of the indigenous cultural context of Muslim women. They regard this approach as a critical dimension of feminist intersectionality, highlighting the interconnectedness of religion,

gender, and cultural identity. (Dalaman, 2021, p. 83) Islamic feminism conceptualizes pluralism as the inclusive participation of Muslim women and men from all social strata. In his *Tafsir al-Mizan*, Tabatabai references the verse of Mubahala as a pertinent example of pluralism, highlighting that the Prophet Muhammad, in this context, selected a woman (Fatima, peace be upon her), two sons, and one man, each representing distinct social groups. This selection serves as a symbol of pluralism within the Islamic community, underscoring the significance of diverse participation in both religious and social spheres. (Dhala, 2024, pp. 42-43)

Tolerance is a core principle of pluralism and holds significant importance within Islamic feminism as well. Islamic feminism is grounded in the values of tolerance and respect for others, in alignment with Islamic principles. However, this approach has been subject to criticism, particularly from traditional and conservative Islamic scholars. They argue that Islamic feminism's incorporation of modern philosophies compromises the integrity of sacred texts, as it introduces secular and modern ideologies, which they believe undermines traditional Islamic practices. Consequently, they view this blending of modernity with religious teachings as a form of religious innovation (*bid'ah*). (Hijab, 1998, p. 49) Gender equality can be a common objective for both ideologies. In societies that acknowledge diversity, achieving gender equality is a fundamental principle; however, pluralism envisions equality on a broader scale than Islamic feminism. Within this context, Amina Wadud emphasizes Islam's intellectual heritage, which spans over fourteen centuries, aiming to reformulate Islamic discourse by shifting it away from its male-centric framework and interpreting it through a pluralistic lens. The Islamic feminist movement in Egypt began to articulate its discourse in the late 1980s, redirecting its focus from solely gender issues to broader social justice concerns, while also engaging in discussions around concepts of cultural authenticity and integrity. (Abu-Lughod, 1998, p. 3) The alignment between pluralism and Islamic feminism necessitates an understanding of the shared principles of inclusion, justice, and respect for diversity within both ideologies. Pluralism denotes the recognition and acceptance of diversity across races, languages, ideas, and religions, while Islamic feminism is a movement dedicated to achieving justice for women

in various domains, ensuring their public participation, and adhering to Islamic principles. The concept of tolerance within feminism intersects with pluralist discourse, particularly through its commitment to equity and the acceptance of diverse perspectives.

The existence of multiple jurisprudential schools within Islam, the adaptability of feminist thought, and its application of modern *ijtihad* principles, which integrate Sharia with contemporary social changes, underscore the pluralistic character of Islamic feminism. Additionally, the movement's advocacy for women's active participation in political decision-making further exemplifies its alignment with pluralism. To understand the concept of tolerance within Islamic feminism, it is crucial to examine both the internal and external networks that shape it. The internal networks of the Islamic feminist movement encompass thinkers, intellectual traditions, and movements in Egypt that are closely associated with Islamic feminism. These networks are connected through shared meanings, structural affiliations, or mutual support, or they influence and are influenced by the movement in various ways. (Alikhani, 2024, p. 143) In this context, Islamic feminism is interlinked with secular feminism, nationalist movements, and Islamist groups. Secular feminism emphasizes gender equality and women's rights, with the goal of dismantling patriarchy, religious extremism, and neoliberal exploitation—objectives shared by both feminist movements in Egypt. However, these two movements diverge in their approach to Islam. Secular feminism treats religion as a private matter, while Islamic feminism regards it as a public concern. (Karam, 1998, p. 9) Islamic feminism is also interconnected with the nationalist movement, where nationalist feminism has historically played a role in anti-colonial and independence struggles. Within this context, nationalist women often adopted more radical positions than their male counterparts. While the masculine nationalist discourse predominantly emphasized political competition, nationalist feminism sought to promote and reinforce its own distinct feminine ideals. (Badran, 1995, p. 13) The shared approach of various feminist movements to social issues became particularly evident in 1952, following the violence at the Suez Canal. During this period, Islamist Zaynab al-Ghazali and leftist Angie Aflaṭoun jointly organized the Women's Committee for Popular

Resistance. Despite their divergent political ideologies, both women participated together in public demonstrations, setting aside their political differences in pursuit of a common cause. (Badran, 1995, p. 248) The external network of connections encompasses ideas and thinkers that have originated outside of Egypt's cultural sphere. Islamic feminism has drawn upon these ideas, utilizing their theoretical frameworks to advance its discourse. Similar to the internal networks, these external theories have played a significant role in reinforcing the foundational principles of Islamic feminism and broadening its intellectual scope. (Alikhani, 2024, p. 143) The external networks of Islamic feminism encompass international feminist movements, as well as regional and global organizations. Islamic feminism has notably drawn inspiration from global feminist concepts. However, this inspiration does not imply full acceptance. Zaynab al-Ghazali, a prominent member of the Egyptian Feminist Union, acknowledged the influences of secular and global feminism but considered them incompatible with her Islamic identity. Along with other modernist leaders within Islamic feminism, she analyzes women's rights within the parameters of Islamic principles. (Karam, 1998, pp. 217-230) In this respect, Islamic feminism diverges from secular feminism, while still drawing upon its core concepts. Islamic feminism also engages with global organizations, such as the United Nations and non-governmental organizations, capitalizing on international platforms to advocate for its perspectives and challenge Western feminist narratives that depict Islam as repressive. This approach is notably reflected in international frameworks, such as the "Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women," where Islamic feminists seek to offer alternative viewpoints that are congruent with Islamic principles.

Feminism and Tolerance

Departing from traditional feminism, two prominent figures in modern Islamic feminism, Omailma Abou-Bakr and Heba Raouf Ezzat, emphasize the importance of discursive plurality. Abou-Bakr's scholarship is founded on the notion that secular feminism can function as a potent counter-narrative to patriarchal interpretations of Islam. She identifies the root of societal challenges concerning women's rights in the patriarchal exegesis of

the Quran and Hadith, shaped by Egypt's historical and cultural context. Abou-Bakr contends that Islamic texts and sources are inherently grounded in egalitarian principles, offering a framework for gender justice within an Islamic paradigm. (Abou-Bakr, 2013, p. 4) She argues that patriarchal structures have historically exerted dominance over Islamic knowledge and practice, resulting in the marginalization of women and the distortion of Islamic teachings to legitimize inequality. Her scholarly endeavors aim to critically challenge these patriarchal interpretations and to reclaim the authentic, egalitarian essence of Islamic teachings. (Al-Sharmani, 2016) In this regard, Heba Raouf aligns with a similar perspective, advocating for a liberal approach to women's broad participation in political affairs, rather than limiting them to traditional roles. While she considers radical feminism to be divisive and rooted in Western ideology, she supports an Islamic liberation movement that seeks social change for both genders and addresses gender-based oppression. Heba Raouf Ezzat defends the active participation of women in political and public spheres, contending that Islamic principles affirm women's status as full citizens with the right to engage in political discourse. (Ezzat, 2007) In this context, her perspective aligns with secular feminism. Consistent with this stance, she resigned from the advisory council of President Morsi in Egypt to protest against the authoritarian policies of certain members of the Muslim Brotherhood. Thus, despite the absence of a unified language or coherence among various discourses in Egypt, Islamic feminism—particularly this conciliatory approach—can be situated within a semiotic framework alongside human rights and secular feminist discourses. Based on a rhizomatic philosophy, it can generate diverse meanings centered around a key sign (tolerance), overlapping at certain junctures, while concurrently evolving along distinct trajectories. (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005, p. 7) Simultaneously, secular feminism strives to engage with Islamists through a framework of tolerance, acknowledging Islamic interpretations as a closely related group. The divergence between these two perspectives can be traced, in part, to their differing approaches to religion. Despite the complex and often contentious relationship between feminist discourse—including its Islamic variant—and religion within the broader Islamic discourse of Egyptian society, Islamic feminism embraces the religious

framework as a means of alleviating social tensions. It seeks to employ Islamic methodologies and traditional indigenous reasoning to foster mutual understanding with Islamists and non-Islamist traditionalists alike. (Mahmood, 2005, p. 25) They strive to avoid conflict with opposing discourses by locating the roots of their liberatory and egalitarian ideals within their own cultural context, while simultaneously rejecting foreign ideologies.

However, the concept of tolerance within Islamic feminism may diverge significantly from the approaches observed in both Islamic and non-Islamic states. In non-Muslim countries, tolerance often retains gendered dimensions, particularly favoring masculine perspectives. In many instances, Western governments engage in a form of tolerance toward fundamentalist Muslim men, primarily to maintain diplomatic relations with Muslim communities. This form of tolerance is frequently framed as a strategy to prevent the escalation of social tensions and preserve stability. In such contexts, governmental policies tend to prioritize the demands of fundamentalist Muslim men, often at the expense of addressing the rights and needs of women. (Rahnama, 2023, pp. 141-142) As we transition from the level of power to lower societal strata, the concept of tolerance undergoes a transformation. It has been argued that selfishness, indifference, and the acceptance of the degradation of Islamic customs contribute to the regression of Muslim communities. In this context, Muslim feminist women endeavor to highlight the importance of education, in contrast to traditionalist male perspectives, and seek to expand the scope of tolerance from the familial sphere to broader societal levels. (Rahnama, 2023, p. 97) They endeavor to apply the concept of tolerance with groups that, while sharing cultural and social similarities, exhibit notable intellectual and philosophical differences. This approach seeks to foster tolerance and mutual understanding across various social strata, particularly in the face of perspectives that may challenge traditional or patriarchal ideologies. Consequently, Islamic feminism underscores that Sharia serves as a guiding framework for navigating the path of peace, while Islam is conceived as a comprehensive way of life. (Haqqani, 2024, p. 64)

Conclusion

The analysis of Islamic feminism through the lens of chain theory offers a robust and comprehensive framework for examining the complexities, historical development, and pivotal turning points of this movement. Islamic feminism, as a dynamic and multidimensional phenomenon, draws on its religious and cultural foundations to harmonize the principles of Islamic justice and equality with global human rights norms. Grounded in the teachings of the Quran and Hadith, as well as in the critical analysis of the social and historical contexts of Islamic societies, this movement seeks to provide reinterpretations of religious texts that are attuned to the demands of contemporary life. Chain theory, with its emphasis on internal and external dynamics, origins, subcurrents, and the identity of movements, serves as a precise analytical tool for understanding the evolution and influence of Islamic feminism. Within this theoretical framework, the movement can be categorized into three interconnected dimensions: intellectual, field-based, and theoretical-practical, which collectively trace its progression through patterns of continuity, transformation, and metamorphosis.

A defining feature of Islamic feminism is its capacity to preserve a strong connection to religious traditions while simultaneously engaging in the critical reinterpretation of traditional exegeses. This movement underscores the enduring relevance of concepts such as justice and equality, utilizing innovative interpretive methodologies to enhance the status of women within Islamic contexts. By advancing gender equality in a manner that respects and incorporates the cultural and religious values of Islamic communities, Islamic feminism demonstrates a unique adaptability. Its ability to bridge the gap between tradition and modernity positions it as a transformative movement with the potential to effectively address the challenges of contemporary society. The interactions of Islamic feminism with other discourses and social movements exemplify its pluralistic and rhizomatic approach. Islamic feminism, by embracing religious and cultural diversity, fosters a conducive environment for interdisciplinary and intercultural engagement. Unlike certain feminist movements that adopt an oppositional stance toward religion, Islamic

feminism emphasizes principles of dialogue, tolerance, and convergence. This orientation enables meaningful collaboration with diverse groups, including traditionalist Islamists and secular feminists, while establishing a platform for intellectual exchange and the formation of strategic alliances.

The evolution of Islamic feminism, as reflected in its interaction patterns, is a testament to its dynamic adaptability. Initially focused on the reinterpretation of religious texts, the movement gradually expanded to serve as a catalyst for social and legal reforms within Islamic societies. This transformation underscores the movement's inherent flexibility and its ability to respond effectively to evolving social and political challenges. In the context of Egypt, the historical trajectory of Islamic feminism vividly demonstrates its significant role in reshaping public perceptions and influencing policy frameworks related to women's rights, highlighting its transformative impact on societal structures. Islamic feminism, as represents a movement that adeptly negotiates the dynamics of modernity while maintaining its cultural and religious foundations. By incorporating diverse interpretations and employing multifaceted approaches, it emerges as a robust model for advancing gender equity and social justice. A critical analysis of this movement underscores its inherent complexities, dynamism, and adaptability to shifting social and political landscapes. Islamic feminism further provides a distinctive framework for fostering interaction between secular and religious discourses. Serving as a bridge between diverse intellectual and cultural traditions, it assumes a vital role in the promotion of human rights, the advancement of social justice, and the reinforcement of universal human values within a global context. Through its emphasis on dialogue, tolerance, and interdisciplinary collaboration, Islamic feminism has pioneered innovative pathways for social and political reform, solidifying its position as a transformative and inspiring paradigm for other social and intellectual movements.

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Original Research Paper

Der Zoroastrismus als prononcierter Monotheismus

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Abstract

The first part of this two-part essay focused on Zarathustra's special position as the first founder of a religion. In this essay it is shown that through the work of Zarathustra polytheism was replaced by a radical monotheism. Zarathustra's work transformed a ritual religion into a book religion based on the Avesta. At the center of this is Ahuramazda, with whom the prophet and founder of the religion cultivated an almost friendly relationship through revelations. In addition, Zarathustra develops a new eschatology with a clear separation of a positive afterlife on the one hand and a concept of hell on the other. Man's actions in this world are the basis for how his post-mortem fate is judged in the afterlife. In addition, the essay looks at the conditions that make such a pronounced monotheism possible in the first place, as well as the dark sides that monotheism entails. Finally, Zarathustra is defined as the one who - alongside Akhenaten in Ancient Egypt - created this monotheistic variant for the first time and completely without foreign influence, which then even found its way into Islam via Judaism and Christianity.

Keywords: Monotheism, Zoroaster, Iran, Avesta, Ahura Mazda, Comparative Religion

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زرتشتی‌گری به عنوان یکتاپرستی بارز

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چکیده:

در بخش اول این مقاله‌ی دوجزئی، جایگاه ویژه‌ی زرتشت به‌عنوان نخستین بنیادگذار دین مورد بررسی قرار گرفت. در این مقاله نشان داده می‌شود که چگونه به‌واسطه‌ی آموزه‌های زرتشت، چندخدایی جای خود را به یکتاپرستی رادیکال داد. به‌جای یک دین آیینی، زرتشت دینی کتاب‌محور را بر اساس اوستا بنیان نهاد. در مرکز این دین، اهورامزدا قرار دارد که پیامبر و بنیان‌گذار دین، از طریق وحی، رابطه‌ای تقریباً دوستانه با او برقرار می‌کند. افزون بر این، زرتشت یک آموزه‌ی نوین درباره‌ی آخرت ارائه می‌دهد که در آن، مرز روشنی میان جهان مثبت پس از مرگ و مفهوم دوزخ ترسیم شده است. اعمال انسان در این دنیا، مبنای داوری درباره‌ی سرنوشت او در دادگاه پس از مرگ خواهد بود. افزون بر این، در این مقاله شرایطی که امکان چنین یکتاپرستی آشکاری را فراهم کرده‌اند، همچنین پیامدهای منفی‌ای که یکتاپرستی به همراه دارد، مورد بررسی قرار می‌گیرد. در نهایت، زرتشت – در کنار اخناتون در مصر باستان – به‌عنوان نخستین فردی تعریف می‌شود که کاملاً مستقل و بدون تأثیرپذیری از دیگران، این شکل از یکتاپرستی را ابداع کرد؛ شکلی که از طریق یهودیت و مسیحیت حتی به اسلام نیز راه یافت.

واژگان کلیدی: یکتاپرستی، زرتشت، ایران، اوستا، اهورامزدا، تطبیق ادیان

Der Zoroastrismus als prononcierter Monotheismus

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Zusammenfassung:

Im ersten Teil dieses zweiteiligen Aufsatzes wurde Zarathustras Sonderstellung als erster Religionsstifter in den Fokus genommen. In diesem Aufsatz wird gezeigt, dass durch das Wirken von Zarathustra der Polytheismus abgelöst wurde zugunsten eines radikalen Monotheismus. Aus einer Ritualreligion wurde durch das Wirken von Zarathustra eine Buchreligion auf der Basis des Avesta. Im Zentrum dieser steht Ahuramazda, mit dem der Prophet und Religionsstifter durch Offenbarungen ein fast freundschaftliches Verhältnis pflegt. Darüber hinaus entwickelt Zarathustra eine neue Eschatologie mit der klaren Trennung von positiv besetztem Jenseits auf der einen und einer Höllenvorstellung auf der anderen Seite. Das menschliche Handeln im Diesseits ist die Grundlage dafür, wie über sein postmortales Schicksal im Jenseitsgericht befunden wird. Darüber hinaus werden im Aufsatz die Bedingungen in den Blick genommen, die einen solchen prononcierten Monotheismus erst ermöglichen sowie die Schattenseiten, die ein Monotheismus mit sich bringt. Zarathustra wird schließlich als der definiert, der – neben Echnaton im Alten Ägypten – erstmalig und völlig ohne fremden Einfluss diese monotheistische Spielart kreierte, die dann über das Judentum und Christentum sogar Eingang in den Islam fand.

Schlagwörter: Monotheismus, Zarathustra, Iran, Avesta, Ahuramazda, Religionsvergleich

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1. Einleitung

Jede Religion und jeder metaphysische Weltentwurf – von Platon bis Plotin (Halfwassen 2004, S. 32-58, und Thiel 2006, S. 182 ff.) – muss eine Antwort auf die Frage geben (können), ob in letzter Instanz ein einziger Gott existiert, der die Welt in einem Schöpfungsakt hervorgebracht hat, oder ob mehrere Prinzipien oder Götter dafür verantwortlich sind. Betrachtet man die klassischen Weltreligionen, so sind beide Antworten möglich: die Ägypter vertraten (die meiste Zeit) einen an Vielfalt kaum zu überbietenden Polytheismus (Hornung 1963, S. 1 ff. und Assmann/Strohm 2012, S. 119 ff.), der Manichäismus (Antes 1992, S. 84 f.) und die Gnosis (Holz, 2011, S. 596 ff.) sind für eine eher dualistische Variante bekannt und das Christentum (Fischer, 2008), der Islam (Antes, 1992, S. 104 f.) sowie das Judentum (Lang 2002, S. 230 f.) präferieren – bei allen Differenzen im Detail – für einen Monotheismus mit einem seinstranszendenten, persönlichen Gott. Wie verhält es sich in dieser Frage mit dem Zoroastrismus? Als „sekundäre Religion“ setzte sich der Zoroastrismus deutlich von dem polytheistischen Umfeld ab, was ihn mit den Bestrebungen Mohammeds in enge Verbindung bringt. Hier gilt: religiöse Gewalt auf der Folie einer sekundären Religion ist immer „schriftgestützte Gewalt“ (Assmann 2016, S. 130). So verhält es sich auch bei Zarathustra und seinem Schaffen als Prophet der Schrift und deren späterer Auslegung.

Auch wenn heutzutage der Polytheismus eher als Durchgangsphase zum Monotheismus betrachtet wird, so hatte er in der Antike zunächst einmal Vorteile. Auch wenn die Völker nämlich verschieden waren, hatten sie Handelsbeziehungen oder sie führten Krieg untereinander. Friedensverträge wurden geschlossen, indem man sich auf die eigenen Götter berief. In diesem Zusammenhang wurden die eigenen Götter mit den anderen Göttern verglichen, teilweise parallelisiert. Man denke an das griechische Pantheon, in welchem jeder der Götter ein römisches Pendant mit entsprechenden Namen hatte (Zeus – Jupiter usw.). Der Polytheismus hat also eher ein verbindendes Element als ein trennendes, weil er mit Verständnis für den anderen und Vergleichbarkeit untereinander einhergeht. Der Abstraktionsschritt von vielen Götter zunächst auf einen dominanten (Monolatrie), der dann der einzige Gott wird, der neben sich keinen anderen duldet, diesen Schritt nennt Assmann die „mosaische

Unterscheidung“, die zu Segregation und religiöser Intoleranz führe. Der absolute Monotheismus führt demnach also vom Polytheismus (über die Monolatrie) hin zum Monotheismus - wenn die entsprechende Krisensituation besteht und eine Führungsfigur das kreative Potential dafür aufbringt, diesen Denkschritt zu vollziehen. Echnaton, Zarathustra und späterhin Moses waren dazu in der Lage. Von einer polytheistischen Religion konnte man nicht abfallen. Der neue Monotheismus entsteht dadurch, „dass sich die Gottesbeziehung politisiert“ (Assmann 2016, S. 168). Dies - sowie die zentrale Rolle von Ahura Mazda im Weltgefüge des Zarathustra - sollen in der Folge eingehend analysiert werden.

2. Das religiöse Umfeld zur Zeit des Zarathustra

Will man die monotheistische Wende durch Zarathustra verstehen, muss man zunächst den religiösen, polytheistischen Kontext im Vorfeld näher ins Auge fassen. Ausgangspunkt sind Stämme in der kaukasischen Steppe ab ca. 4500 v. Chr., die sich selbst im Laufe der Zeit „Edle“ oder „Vornehme“ (Arier) nannten. Dieses Volk sprach avestisch, was eine frühe mündliche Form des Sanskrit ist. Bis ca. 1500 v. Chr. lebten die Gruppen relativ friedlich neben- und miteinander (Armstrong 2006, 17 ff.). Diese ruhige, bereits sesshafte Lebensweise - noch ohne Pferd - war geprägt von Schafs-, Ziegen-, Schweine- und Rinderzucht. Diese frühen „Arier“ verehrten im Sinne eines Animismus die Natur, Tiere und Pflanzen. Im Laufe der Zeit kam es allerdings zu einer Ausdifferenzierung des Götter-Pantheons. An der Spitze standen hier Varuna, der ordnungsstiftende Gott, Mithra, der Gott der Stürme, des Donners und des Regens, und Mazda, der Gott des Rechts und der Weisheit, welcher zugleich mit Sonne und Sternen verbunden wurde. Daneben fungierte Indra als himmlischer Kriegsgott, der mit dem Chaos in Verbindung gebracht wurde. Insofern findet sich schon in dieser Frühzeit eine gewisse dualistische Weltordnung zwischen einerseits Varuna (Mithra, Mazda) und andererseits Indra, die noch durch den Feuergott Agni ergänzt wurde. (Strohm 2014, S. 315 ff.) Diese Götter wurden in dieser Zeit *daevas* (die Strahlenden) oder *amescha* (die Unsterblichen) genannt, woraus in Sanskrit *devas* und *amerita* wurde. Sie galten allerdings nicht als allmächtig, sondern waren Bereichs- und Funktionsgötter und darüber hinaus der göttlichen Ordnung genauso unterworfen wie Menschen, Pflanzen und Tiere. Diese göttliche Ordnung *dahinter* nannte man *asha* (im Sanskrit *rita*). Die menschliche Ordnung

ihrerseits war in dieser göttlichen, universalen Ordnung wie selbstverständlich eingebunden. Die Menschen waren eingebunden in vielschichtige vertragsrechtliche und vielfältige soziale Bezüge. Dabei waren das mündliche Wort und das Zuhören, also der orale Logos, in besonders hohem Ansehen, zumal die Arier Visualisierungen von Göttern - wenn auch nicht so hartnäckig wie spätere Ikonoklasten - weitgehend ablehnten. Einmal ausgesprochene Lügen wurden daher mit dem absoluten Bösen verknüpft gedacht, genau wie eine einzige Silbe das Göttliche verkörpern konnte. „Die Arier sollten diesen heftigen Drang nach absoluter Wahrhaftigkeit immer verspüren.“ (Armstrong 2006, S. 19). Darüber hinaus waren die Arier im Sinne einer „primären Religion“ (Assmann 2003, S. 11 ff.) Anhänger einer Ritual- und Opferreligion. Deshalb war das Töten von Opfertieren eine logische Konsequenz (Lehmann/Schlink 1983, S. 17 ff.), zumal nur rituell getötete Tiere verspeist werden durften. Dabei dachte man, dass die Seele des Tieres zurückkehre zu *Geush Urwan* („Seele des Stiers“), dem als Archetyp fungierenden Ur-Rind. Im Laufe der Zeit wurde diese Diesseitsreligion, in der man sich die Götter im Sinne einer *do-ut-des*-Beziehung durch Opfer gefügig zu machen glaubte, durch jenseitige und postmortale Gedanken erst ergänzt und späterhin zugunsten einer elaborierten Jenseitsvorstellung überwunden. Menschen, die viel opferten, galten nun als moralisch gut und würdig, sich nach dem Tod zu den Göttern ins Paradies zu gesellen.

Durch wirtschaftliche Prosperität, Einführung neuer Techniken und die Herstellung und Nutzung von Waffen (wie z. B. Streitwagen) endete diese friedliche Phase. Die Arier entwickelten immer mehr kriegerische Tendenzen - Söldnergruppen entstanden, Stämme bestahlen sich untereinander und es kam zu einem Kriegszustand der Stämme untereinander. Eine neue üble Sitte trat ins Leben und verbreitete sich: Männerbünde erhoben das Stehlen von Stieren anderer Stämme zum Gruppensport. Im Zuge dessen wurde gebrandschatzt, geraubt, geplündert und gemordet: Es entstand ein Kriegszustand mit einer ständig weiter vorantreibenden Negativspirale zu immer drastischeren Handlungen. „Die alte arische Religion hatte Gegenseitigkeit, Selbstaufopferung und einen freundlichen Umgang mit allen Lebewesen gepredigt. Dies übte auf die Viehdiebe keinen Reiz mehr aus.“ (Armstrong 2006, S. 22). Die räuberischen Handlungen wurden nämlich zunehmend mit Indra assoziiert, während

Varuna, Mazda und Mithra seine Gegenspieler als Hüter der göttlichen Ordnung waren. Mazda wurde aufgrund dessen der Ehrentitel *Ahura* („Herr“) verliehen. Es stellte sich auf natürliche Weise die Frage, ob nicht auch die Götter mit dem gewalttätigen Treiben von Indra konfrontiert sein könnten, wenn die friedlichen Menschen und Bauern hier in dieser Welt den marodierenden Viehdieben ausgesetzt waren. Dahinter stünde somit eine Art Projektion der hiesigen auf die jenseitigen Verhältnisse - und zwar in Zeiten einer sozial-religiösen Krise, die die ganze Gesellschaft erfasste. Diese Frage bedurfte einer Antwort, welche wegweisend der visionäre Zarathustra gab. Er empfand die Viehdiebe und das Schlachten und Töten von Rindern als höchst alarmierend. Man kann diese Phase wie folgt einschätzen: Besonders in Krisenzeiten wird das Vorhandene und Tradierte radikal in Frage gestellt. Strohm/Assmann machten auf diesen Zusammenhang wie folgt aufmerksam: „Apokalypsen sind Deutungen solcher Krisen“ (Strohm/Assmann 2012, S. 217). Diesen Weg schlug Zarathustra ein.

Zarathustra ist der erste urkundlich belegte Prophet überhaupt und er ist zugleich „der Stifter der ältesten prophetischen Offenbarungsreligion“ (Antes 1992, S. 9). Es war kein religionsfreier oder „religionsleerer Raum“ (Antes 1992, S. 9), in dem sich Zarathustra sowie die von ihm überzeugte Gemeinde bewegte. Vielmehr mussten sich Zarathustras Vorstellungen erst gegen die geschilderten konkurrierenden polytheistischen Vorstellungen durchsetzen und diese nach und nach ersetzen. Der Durchsetzungsprozess endete tödlich für ihn. Als Quellen darüber fungieren das *Avesta*, das in Bücher (*Yasna*) eingeteilt ist. Von diesen sind es die ersten fünf, die *Gathas* (*Yasna* 28-34, 43 - 51 und 53), die in der Forschung auf Zarathustra zurückgeführt werden (Hinz 1961, S. 9 ff.) Für uns besonders interessant ist das *Yasna Hadoxt Nask*, weil dieser bedeutsame Text das postmortale Schicksal der Seele zum Thema hat. Entstanden sind die Texte im Ausgang des 2. Jahrtausends, anschließend wurden sie einige Jahrhunderte mündlich weitergegeben, um schließlich unter der Herrschaft der Achämeniden schriftlich fixiert zu werden. An das *Avesta* in seinem alten Dialekt schließt sich ein Korpus zoroastrischer Literatur in Mittelpersisch an, das zwar erst im 9. Jh. n. Chr. zusammengestellt wurde, aber altes Material verarbeitet hat. Hier stechen besonders das *Bundashiin* und das *Anda Wiraz Namag* hervor, weil hier die Eschatologie und die Kosmologie

entfaltet werden. Es geht also um hochinteressante und für das Abendland wegweisende Elemente zu den Themen Jenseits(reise), Himmel und Hölle, Schöpfung, Jüngstes Gericht, Weltende sowie um eine umfassende Kosmologie und damit letztlich um die Stellung des Menschen in ihr. Bei den detailreichen Beschreibungen ist das Weltbild des *Avesta* vorausgesetzt (Stausberg 2002, Bd. 1, S. 69 ff.); beide bauen aufeinander auf und ergänzen sich wechselseitig. Darüber hinaus finden sich Informationen zur Mythologie in der Schrift *Firdausis*, einem Werk mit Weltliteraturstatus. Daneben gilt es die Mithras-Mysterien zu beachten, die unter den Arsakiden (Wiesehöfer 1998) im ganzen Römischen Reich Verbreitung fanden. Zu vernachlässigen sind auch nicht die antiken Quellen außerhalb des Zoroastrismus, insbesondere griechischer Provenienz, wie z.B. Herodot.

Bevor wir uns mit der Eschatologie im Zoroastrismus beschäftigen, werfen wir noch einen Blick auf das Weltbild (Antes 1992, 10 f.). Wir schreiten also so voran, wie es einst Aristoteles vorgeschlagen hat – von der Physik zur Metaphysik. Die vermutlich im südlichen Ural ansässigen Zoroastrier entwickelten ein eigenes Weltbild, das eine ganz neue Qualität darstellt. Die Erde wird noch als runde Scheibe gedacht, die in sieben Regionen eingeteilt ist, wobei die mittlere flächenmäßig so groß ist wie die anderen sechs zusammen. Nur in der Mitte sind die Menschen angesiedelt, hier haben sie ihren Lebensraum. In die anderen sechs Regionen kann der Mensch nur in der Funktion als Götterbote gelangen. Umschlossen wird die ganze Scheibe von einem ringartigen Gebirge. Auf der höchsten Stelle führt eine Brücke hinüber ins Jenseits. Es ist die berühmte *Cinvat*-Brücke, der eine zentrale Rolle beim Transit vom Diesseits ins Jenseits zukommt. Die Ungläubigen stürzen von hier aus in die Hölle, die Gläubigen hingegen werden von einer jungen schönen Dame in den Himmel geleitet. Darüber entfaltet sich das Himmelsgewölbe mit Mond, Sonne und Sternen. Das Himmelsgewölbe hat Löcher, damit die Himmelskörper aus- und eintreten können. Darüber befindet sich ein unendlicher Raum, der mit Licht gefüllt ist, was zugleich das Paradies ist (Strohm 2014, S. 105 ff.) Die Hölle hingegen ist vermutlich unterhalb der Scheibe gedacht. Der Sitz der Götter (!) ist an verschiedenen Stellen des Ringgebirges verortet, während allein Ahura Mazda in dem anfangslosen Lichtraum verweilt, also *jenseits* des Kosmos verortet ist. Zugleich ist er aber in pantheistischer Manier in allen Dingen enthalten, „denn Aspekte seines Wesens (Amasa Spontas) sind in die Elemente dieser

Welt eingekörpert.“ (Antes 1992, S. 11). Sowohl die Menschen- als auch die Götterwelt ist dreigeteilt. Wir konzentrieren uns im Folgenden primär auf die Letztere.

3. Das komische Geschehen

Ahura Mazda als der oberste Gott ist *allein* verantwortlich für die Schöpfung und deren Erhalt. Damit nimmt er die klassische Rolle des Demiurgen bzw. Schöpfergottes ein, wie er z.B. in Platons *Timaios* (28 C) aufgefasst wird. Diese Schöpfung ist aber durch den Zwillingsgott und Gegenspieler von Ahura Mazda, Angra Mainiu, gefährdet. Letzterer ist aber in jeder Hinsicht Ahura Mazda nachgeordnet, z.B. erschafft er nicht selbst und er weiß noch nicht einmal um die lichtvolle Schöpfung von Ahura Mazda, umgekehrt weiß aber Ahura Mazda alles von Angra Mainiu. Ahura Mazda kennt ihn durch und durch, seine Motive und Vorhaben. Er hat also eine epistemologische und ontologische Überlegenheit gegenüber seinem in bestimmten Phasen des Weltgeschehens dualistisch gedachten Gegenspieler, der nur auf menschlicher Ebene und aus menschlicher Sicht sein ebenbürtiger Gegner ist. In Wahrheit ist Ahura Mazda das erste und einzige, unübertreffbare und letzte Prinzip, Ursprung von allem, ganz im Sinne platonischer und plotinischer Gedanken (Halfwassen 1992) vom Einen gegenüber dem defizitären Sein, das erst aus dem absoluten Einen der ungeschriebenen Lehre Platons (Thiel 2006, S. 173 ff.) oder Plotins absoluten Einen hervorgeht (Halfwassen 2004, S. 60 ff.), sozusagen eine „henologisch-zoroastrische Seinsgenese“. Angra Mainiu reagiert erst, nachdem er „entdeckt“ wurde und seinem Reich die Vernichtung drohte. Daraufhin beschloss er, das Böse „in die Welt“ zu bringen, in die gute Schöpfung von Ahura Mazda. Durch diesen „Gegenschöpfungsakt“ vollzieht sich im statischen Ausgangszustand eine innere Bewegung. In dieser (Zwischen-) Zeit stehen sich beide Götter unversöhnlich und scheinbar dualistisch gleichrangig gegenüber - und zwar in einer Art Dauerauseinandersetzung, bis das Weltende erreicht ist. Beide Seiten haben ein großes göttliches Gefolge, und so ist die ganze Schöpfung durchsetzt mit „gut“ und „böse“. Auch alle Bestandteile der Schöpfung dienen entweder dem „Guten“ (wie das Feuer und die nutzbringenden Pflanzen und Tiere, besonders die Rinder) oder aber dem Bösen“ wie die

unheilvollen Pflanzen, das Ödland oder die schädigenden Tiere, wie z.B. Schlangen, Fliegen oder Heuschrecken (Vd. 1:2,4,14). Die schädlichen Tiere par excellence sind Reptilien, Insekten und Ungeziefer. Deren Vernichtung dient sogar der Entsühnung. Man ist fast an Heraklit erinnert (Kirk/Raven/Schofield 2001, S. 204 ff.), der meinte, die ganze Welt sei vom Kampf und Krieg durchsetzt, denn genau so verhält es sich aufs Ganze gesehen beim zoroastrischen Weltbild: Alles, was existiert, ist entweder gut oder böse, hilft dem Menschen, ein gutes Leben zu führen, oder führt zum Bösen. Man versteht nun, warum im Zoroastrismus die rituelle und moralische Reinheit so hochgehängt wurden, setzt es doch eine permanente Entscheidung des Menschen für Ahura Mazda und gegen Angra Mainiu voraus. Es handelt sich um einen ständigen kosmischen Kampf aller Elemente der Schöpfung, der den menschlichen Bereich mit umfasst und mit einschließt. Die Schöpfung ist in dieser zweiten Phase vom Kampf dominiert, aber sie entwickelt sich auch positiv. Das Auftreten und das Wirken von Zarathustra kann als der Beginn der 3. Phase gedeutet werden, an deren Ende die Vernichtung von Angra Mainiu steht. Es geht also um eine „Vervollkommnung der Welt“. (Hutter 2019, S. 47). In den *Gathas* ist die Rede von einer „endzeitlichen Heilsgestalt“ (Saolisant, Y 45:11, 46c3. 48:9), die kommen wird, die Welt vom Leid zu erlösen. In den *Gathas* ist angedeutet (Stausberg, 2002, Bd. 1, S. 86), dass dieses Weltende nicht allzu fern sei. Erst in späterer Zeit wird das Schema mit den vier mal 3000 Jahren entwickelt und auf diese Weise systematisiert. Ahura Mazda und sein Gegenspieler Angra Mainiu sind also die alles dominierenden kosmischen Gegenspieler in diesen Phasen. Systematisiert lassen sich die Phasen wie folgt auseinanderhalten:

- 1.) In dieser Phase befindet sich Ahura Mazda im unendlichen Licht, während sein Gegenspieler Angra Mainiu in der Finsternis verweilt, ohne etwas von der Schöpfung zu wissen. Die erste rein geistige Schöpfung durch Ahura Mazda ist durch Statik gekennzeichnet.
- 2.) Nun geht Ahura Mazda dazu über, die Schöpfung zu materialisieren, indem er seine Geschöpfe aus dem geistigen Reich verstofflicht. Diese verharren zunächst in einem embryonalen Zustand, bis das Wasser sie aus ihren Nischen spült. Im Anschluss daran werden das Ur-Rind, der Ur-Mensch und die Pflanzen

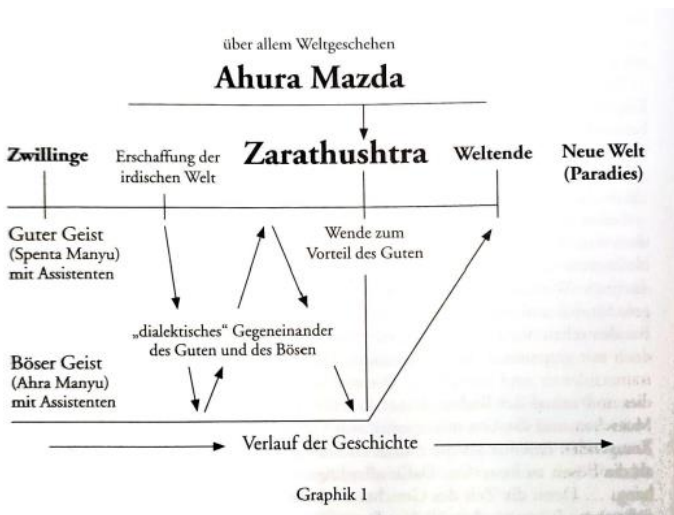
geschaffen - in dieser Phase schon auf der Erde. Die Sonne steht aber noch dauerhaft am Himmel, alles ist noch statisch.

- 3.) Nun beginnt Angra Mainiu diese gute Schöpfung anzugreifen, indem er zunächst in den Himmel eindringt, das Ur-Rind und den Ur-Menschen tötet. Ahura Mazda geht zum Gegenangriff über, wodurch die ganze Schöpfung in Bewegung gerät. Nun herrscht für 3000 Jahre eine komplette Durchmischung von Gut und Böse, die im ständigen Kampf liegen. Auch der Mensch ist hierin eingebettet, wodurch sich für ihn religiös-moralische Wertvorstellungen ergeben. Man könnte hier von einer ersten *anthropologischen Wende* sprechen, weil erstmals an den Menschen moralische Ansprüche gestellt werden.
- 4.) Diese Periode thematisiert die nahe Zukunft aus Sicht von Zarathustra. In einer Form, die an die christliche Apokalypse erinnert und zugleich den Gedanken eines stellvertretenden Opfers für alle aufnimmt, wird das Kommen eines Heilsbringers prophezeit - ein Gedanke, der in allen monotheistischen Religionen in jeweils modifizierter Form fortlebt (s.u.), ein Heilsbringer, der die Schöpfung endgültig vom Bösen reinigen wird. Zuerst werden die Dämonen vertrieben, dann wird der ursprüngliche Zustand der Trennung von Gut und Böse wieder hergestellt. Der ursprüngliche Zustand der Ruhe wird wieder reaktiviert. Ganz im Sinne Hegels kommt der absolute Geist nach einer Phase des Werdens wieder zu sich selbst zurück.

Die dargestellte Kosmologie stellt sich also wie folgt dar: Ein Ruhezustand vor der Schöpfung mit 3000 Jahren, 3000 Jahre lang Entfaltung des Reichs des Guten, dann 3000 Jahre lang Vermischung von Gut und Böse und schließlich das Erreichen eines neuen 3000 Jahre währenden Ruhezustands. Es ergeben sich also insgesamt nach zoroastrischer Vorstellung 12000 Jahre, die das „Große Jahr“ ausmachen. Dieses dreischrittige Schöpfungsschema zeigen alle späteren, mittelpersischen Texte wie das *Menog i xrad* (Kap. 8) oder in Kap. 3 des *Bahman Yast*. Hutter spricht zu Recht von einer „Drei-Zeiten-Lehre“, „die bereits in den frühen avestischen Quellen fassbar ist.“ (Hutter 2019, S. 49) Kurzum: Am Anfang ist alles noch getrennt und gut, dann kommt es zur Vermischung von Gut und Böse, um schließlich die

Trennung wieder zu restituieren. Der Einzelmensch ist permanent aufgefordert, das Gute zu unterstützen.

Die ganze Kosmologie erinnert in ihrer Dreiteilung an Plotins Weltentwurf, bei dem das absolute Eine überquellend emaniert, den göttlichen Geist entstehen lässt, der sich in einem Prozess der Selbstkonstituierung wieder dem Einen zuwendet; das Ruhe-Bewegung-Schema erinnert ebenfalls an die Megista-Genese-Lehre Platons (Thiel 2006, S. 346 ff, S. 368 ff.) aus dem *Sophistes*, denn Bewegung und Ruhe sind hier konstitutive oberste Ideen für den ganzen Ideenkosmos. Auch ist man erinnert an Weltentstehungsmythen und Kosmogonien von den Orphikern bis zu den Vorsokratikern, (Kirk/Raven/Schofield 2001, S. 29 ff.), denn auch hier entstehen aus einer Art kosmogonischen Ei Himmel und Erde, die latent im Ei vorhanden sind, aber anschließend getrennt werden. Wie verhält es sich aber mit der Stellung von Ahura Mazda und Angra Mainiu und deren Verhältnis zueinander? Oben haben wir bereits einiges über den Prinzipienstatus von Ahura Mazda gesagt, das nun noch von anderer Seite untermauert werden soll. Hier sei ein Blick auf den Weltentwurf geworfen (Strohm 2014):



4. Zarathustra - ein Philos Ahura Mazdas

In den ersten fünf *Gathas*, auf deren Grundlage wir argumentieren, nennt Zarathustra den ersten und einzig relevanten Gott *Ahura Mazda*. Dieser Name stellt eine sich ergänzende Kombination von *Ahura* (Herr) und *Mazda*

(allweise) dar. Man kann es auch so zum Ausdruck bringen: der Herr, der Allweise. Dabei steht in den *Gathas* oft einer der beiden Begriffe für das Ganze. Ähnlich wie bei Mohammeds Namen für Gott, *Allah*, der schon verwendet worden ist, bevor Mohammed ihn aufgriff und ihm eine stringendere Bedeutung gab (Mackintosh-Smith 2019, 50 - 182), hat dabei der oberste Gott eine neue Kombination als „der Gott“ erhalten. Deshalb stellt auf der sprachlichen Ebene der Name „Ahura Mazda“ vermutlich eine Neukombination von Begriffen dar, denen Zarathustra eine völlig neue Bedeutung verlieh. Damit wollte er auch die Innovation seiner Gottesvorstellung zum Ausdruck bringen und sich zugleich von anderen Vorstellungen absetzen. Umbrüche schlagen sich oft sprachlich nieder.

Welche Rolle spielt aber Ahura Mazda bei Zarathustra ganz konkret? Er ist die letzte Instanz, „der eine wahre allmächtige und allwissende Schöpfergott“ (Hinz 1961, S. 92). Aber schon damit steht er nicht nur der Vielheit der Götter gegenüber, die im vorzarathustrischen Iran in Fülle vorhanden waren. Der Gottesbegriff ist innovativ und hat eine neue Stoßrichtung, weil er jenseits aller Vielheit eine neue (noch personifizierte) Einheit postuliert. In Yasna 44 lobpreist Zarathustra Ahura Mazda in einem dialogisch anmutenden, mit rhetorischen Fragen gespickten Gespräch wie diesen: „Wer setzt die Bahn fest der Sonne und den Sternen? Wer ist’s, durch den der Mond bald zunimmt und bald schwindet? Wer hält die Erde drunten, wer die Himmelsgewölbe, dass sie nicht stürzen, wer die Gewässer und die Pflanzen? Wer schirrte Wind und Wolken ihr Gespann vor? Welcher Meister schuf Schlaf und Wachen? Wer ist’s, durch den Morgen, Mittag und Abend sind, den Verantwortungsbewusstsein an seine Pflicht zu gemahnen?“ Diese Funktion als Schöpfergott erinnert an Formulierungen aus *Genesis* 1 und weiteren Stellen im Alten Testament, die Jahwe als Schöpfergott zeigen und näher auf den Schöpfungsprozess eingehen (Gen. 1; Jesaja 44, 6). Ahura Mazda ist darüber hinaus, wie es in Gatha 1 (Y 28) heißt, der „Urewige“ (28,3) und „Schöpfer aller Dinge“ (44,7), der „wahre Stifter der Rechten Ordnung, der Herr in den Taten des Daseins“ (31,8) und er bestimmt letztlich auch das postmortale Schicksal der Menschen, denn es heißt, er sei der „Allmächtige“, der „uns nach Gutdünken Heil und Unheil“ bereitet (45,9) und der Wahrsein und Sosein miteinander koinzidieren lässt. Er ist auch ein Allwissender, der nicht hintergangen werden kann, weil er alles wahrnimmt (45,4). Er begründet

die „Rechte Ordnung“ (31,7), damit seine Schöpfung geordnet ist. Er weiß alles und sieht alles voraus, er durchschaut alles und kennt auch die tiefsten und stillsten Geheimnisse im Herzen der Menschen. Zugleich sieht er jeden Regelverstoß, jede Sünde, aber auch jede Buße, womit die moralische Dimension im Zoroastrismus bereits angedeutet wird. Überhaupt scheinen in den *Gathas* auf sehr hymnische Weise verschiedene Dimensionen miteinander in einem Argumentationsgeflecht zu koinzidieren: die ontologische, dann die axiologische und die epistemische Dimension. Hutter (Hutter 2019, S. 14) meint zu Recht, dass es sich bei der Theologie des Zarathustra „unzweifelhaft um ein ähnlich bedeutsames Erbe früher geschichtlicher Geistesgröße“ handle.

Bereits im *Yasna 1* tauchen (ausschließlich) Zarathustra und Ahura Mazda in einer Zeile auf, was eine persönliche Nähe beider zum Ausdruck bringt: „Mein Herr, heiligster Geist, Schöpfer der körperlichen Welt, du Wahrhaftiger“, spricht Zarathustra Ahura Mazda an. Damit referiert Zarathustra über den Schöpfungsvorgang, aber zugleich spricht er Ahura Mazda eine rein geistige, noetische Existenzweise zu. Die Schöpfung selbst ist demnach ein zweistufiger Vorgang mit der Stoßrichtung, erst das Noetische und dann das sinnenfällige Sein zu verwirklichen. Dies erinnert stark an platonisches Gedankengut, wo erst die noetische Ideenwelt aus der Idee des Guten entspringt, bevor die Werdewelt über einen komplizierten Prozess abbildhaft aus dieser hervorgeht. (Thiel 2006, S. 221 ff.) Zarathustra tritt in allen ontologischen, epistemologischen und axiologischen Fragen deutlich auf - entweder man folgt seinen Lehren oder man muss mit schlimmen postmortalen Strafen rechnen. Das ist der Punkt, zu dem Assmann meint, dass dieser Übergang von einer primären Religion zu einer sekundären immer wieder mit einer religiösen Gewalt einhergehe. Wie kam es dazu? Dazu hilft nochmals ein Blick auf den sozialen Hintergrund.

5. Die göttliche Ratsversammlung

Der sozial-gesellschaftliche Hintergrund wurde oben geschildert, wird aber jetzt mit neuem Fokus skizziert. Als religiöser Wanderprediger hatte Zarathustra zunächst wenig Erfolg, bis seine Lehre vom König Vistaspa übernommen wurde und sich auszubreiten begann (Lommel 1971, S. 32) Da bekanntlich der Prophet im eigenen Land nichts gilt (Mt. 13,57), konnte er zunächst aus seinem angestammten Kreis nur eine einzige Person für seine

Gedanken gewinnen. Der Bewegung schlossen sich nun zunächst die adligen Brüder Jamaspa und Frasaostra an. Spätere Quellen schmücken das Ganze aus, aber das ist zunächst eine sehr kleine, allerdings ausgewählte Anhängerschaft. Es handelt sich nämlich weniger um das breite Volk, als vielmehr um einen „kleinen Kreis ausgesuchter adliger Personen“ (Lommel 1971, S. 33), die beim König als Ratsleute fungieren und zum Teil Beratungs- und Mitspracherechte für sich verbuchen konnten. Das Volk übernimmt wie üblich die neuen Religionsvorstellungen der geistigen, religiösen und politischen Elite, aber wie so oft nicht ganz reibungslos.

An dieser Stelle sei ein Rückblick gewagt: Es herrschte zu dieser Zeit ein Mithras-Kult, dessen wichtigster Teil darin bestand, den göttlichen Stier zu töten, was in repetitiven Ritualen verstetigt wurde. Zarathustra schaffte diesen Kult nicht sogleich ab, weil das zu viele Feinde auf den Plan gerufen hätte, aber er wehrt sich grundsätzlich gegen das Töten des göttlichen Stiers, weil dieses Ritual dem von Menschen ausgeführten Rinderschlachten in dieser Welt den Boden bereiten würde. Also steht auch hier der Gedanke einer unmittelbaren Verwandtschaft zwischen göttlicher und weltlicher Sphäre dahinter. Die *Gathas* berichten hier einmütig, wie Zarathustra diese Sitten Ahura Mazda im Klage-tonfall vortrug und damit einen Wendepunkt (in der Geschichte des Monotheismus) erreichte. Mithras' Eigenschaften sind mit der Sonne verbunden, der Stier wurde mit dem Mond verbunden gedacht. Als „Heilstat“ galt das Töten des Stiers deshalb, weil aus dem „Tod des Stiers neues Leben hervorging“ (Lommel 1971, S. 33). Der Kult war abgestellt auf das Repetieren dieser Tat, was mit ausgedehnten Rinderspeisen beendet wurde – zum Unmut von Zarathustra, der sich für den Schutz der Stiere einsetzte, und zwar des göttlichen wie des leibhaftigen, bilden sie doch eine wichtige Lebensgrundlage der neuen sesshaft gewordenen Gesellschaft. Das Schlachten der Rinder war ihm ein Gräuel, er bringt deshalb harsche Kritik am Mithras-Kult vor. Für Zarathustra ist dieser Stierkult die falsche Religion, ja sogar eine Missreligion (Lommel 1971, S. 33), aber es gab ausgedehnte Feste, eine etablierte und gut situierte Priesterschaft des Mithras-Kultes sowie weitere Einnahmequellen diesbezüglich, die nicht abrupt verstimmt werden durften. Wollte Zarathustra diese überzeugen, musste er einerseits eng verbunden bleiben mit dieser primären Religion, wollte er sie aber verändern, dann musste er neue Wege gehen. Deshalb

entwickelte er eine neuartige Theologie, die man in der 1. *Gatha*, die im dichterisch-prophetischen Tonfall im Ratskreis des Königs vorgetragen wurde, nachspüren kann. Auch für Lanczkowski (Lanczkowski 1956, S. 76) ist nicht die Quantität, sondern „die Qualität der Botschaft“ entscheidend. Emma Brunner-Traut (Brunner-Traut 1993, S. 55) fügt dem hinzu, Zarathustra sei 30 Jahre alt gewesen, als ihn „der Anruf des Himmels wie ein Donnerschlag traf“. Sie nennt es „Berufungswiderfahrnis“ und meint, das „Heilige umfüllte ihn, erleuchtete ihn“. Dem kann sich Antes (Antes 1996, S. 163) anschließen: Zarathustra habe das ganze Avesta „direkt vom höchsten Gott Ahura Mazda empfangen“. Wenn Zarathustra nun zum König spricht, dass er als Gottes Beauftragter und eigens Bevollmächtigter redet, dann entsteht quasi eine wechselseitige Legitimation zum gegenseitigen Vorteil, eine Art geistiger Symbiose: der König unterstützt Zarathustra in seinen Bemühungen, Zarathustra seinerseits stellt sich auf die Seite des Königs. Zarathustras persönliche Autorität wird jedenfalls ins Unübersteigbare erhöht, wenn er sich im Rahmen einer einzigartigen göttlichen Ratsversammlung eigens auf einen Auftrag von Ahura Mazda persönlich berufen kann.

Seine Anwesenheit in der göttlichen Ratsversammlung muss man sich noetisch, rein geistig vorstellen, nicht eingeschränkt durch die körperlichen Defizite. Er ist reine Erkenntnis, reine innere Offenbarung, was eine ontologische Abstammung des Menschen aus dem göttlichen Bereich voraussetzt und damit die theologische Kosmogense mit der Anthropogenese verknüpft. Der Mensch ist zwar defizitär gegenüber dem Göttlichen, aber er hat auch göttliche Spuren an sich. Die wichtigsten sind Geist und Verstand, auf die sich Zarathustra hier berufen kann. Zarathustra gibt uns Einblick in den Verlauf und die Entscheidungsfindung der göttlichen Ratsversammlung, auch wenn er selbst im Kreis der Götter *nicht* gesprochen hat. Die hohe Ehre durch den göttlichen Kreis hindert ihn daran, selbst das Wort zu ergreifen. Er lässt stattdessen die gedemütigte Seele des Stiers sprechen und erreicht so sein Ziel der Umkehr aller Werte.

Was folgt, ist ein hymnisches Klagelied, welches von der Seele des Stiers vorgetragen wird – eine gelungene Personifizierung, weil damit das Gesagte eine persönliche Note erhält. Dieser dichterische Kniff bleibt nicht wirkungslos auf die Zuhörer. Dabei ist die „Seele des Stiers“ eine „mythische Neuschöpfung Zarathustras“ (Lommel 1971, S. 34). Die Idee

von der Schonung des mythischen Ur-Stiers hat eine ganz neue Qualität, ist eine völlig innovative Idee. Damit verdrängt Zarathustra den mythischen Ur-Stier und schafft zugleich etwas Neuartiges. Nun gab es in Form der *Gathas* eine sprechende Stier-Seele, die anklagen und sich verteidigen und die man zugleich verehren kann. Auch andere Seelen konnten in der Folge die neue Weltbühne in dichterischer Form betreten, miteinander kämpfen und Ahura Mazda anbeten. Die Klage der Stiers steht aber zunächst im Mittelpunkt der göttlichen Ratsversammlung. Und er hebt wie folgt an: „Ich habe keinen anderen Beschützer (Helfer, Retter) als dich“ (Lommel 1971, S. 35) – eine im alten Iran und Indien sehr verbreitete Form, Hilfe in der Not zu erbitten. Das Klagelied setzt sich fort, indem von verschiedener Seite mit „da fragte“ und „da antwortete“ abgewechselt wird. Zunächst spricht der „Bildner des Rinds“, der sich mit *Sponta Manya* als der „verständige Geist“ zu erkennen gibt. Der höchste der anwesenden Geister, Ahura Mazda, eröffnet die Verhandlungsrunde, spricht aber dann kein weiteres Wort mehr, was als erstes Indiz für seine Transzendenz gelesen werden kann: er schafft zwar etwas, stößt es an, entzieht sich dann jedoch in die Abwesenheit. Es fällt darüber hinaus auf, dass Zarathustra keinen einzigen alten Gott überhaupt nur nennt. Diese radikale Ablehnung durch Nicht-Nennung kann so gedeutet werden, dass Zarathustra diese Götter einfach nicht für existent hielt, eine Parallele zu Xenophanes' Heno-Theismus, der ja auch hinter der Vielheit der „Götter“ und dem Zweifel an diesen den einen Gott vermutete, der zugleich Schöpfer der Welt ist. (Oelmüller 1996, S. 55 ff.) Was nicht existiert, braucht auch keinen Namen! Eine radikalere Form der Ablehnung ist kaum denkbar, eine Verneinung durch Nicht-Nennung gleicht einer Revolution in den so tolerant daherkommenden religiösen Auffassungen in der Antike, die oft darauf abzielten, fremde Götter ins eigene Pantheon zu integrieren und das Götterpantheon immer mehr zu erweitern und auszudifferenzieren. In der Person des Zarathustra erlebt und überwindet die Gesellschaft eine Krisensituation, die mittels einer neuen radikalen Gottesauffassung in eine neue Daseinsphase überführt wird. Die Gesellschaft wandelt sich von einer primären Ritualreligion zu einer sekundären Schriftreligion und Zarathustra ist als erster Religionsstifter und einziger Prophet das neuschöpfende Bindeglied zwischen beiden.

Man wundert sich in der göttlichen Ratsversammlung über die neuen Bilder des Stiers und über dessen Wahnsinn über das angetane Leid, während Ahura Mazda erst ganz am Ende das Wort noch einmal ergreift, und zwar als er das Flehen des Stiers und seiner Mutterkuh erhört. Die Intellektualisierung der Ratsversammlung im intelligiblen Bereich wird durch die Göttlichkeit bzw. die Beseeltheit der Teilnehmer deutlich und dadurch wird eindeutig der Materialität der vergänglichen WerdeWelt eine Absage erteilt. Die Ratsversammlung ist dem empirischen Zugang völlig enthoben. Die Seelen des Stiers und der Kuh sprechen, indem sie eine Gebetshaltung einnehmen, während Zarathustra mit seinem Gesang zum emotional aufgeladenen Miterleben aufruft. Dabei zielt Zarathustra darauf ab, dass nicht nur die Rinderseele, sondern auch die diesseitigen Rinder geschützt werden müssten, was für gesellschaftliche Sprengkraft gesorgt haben dürfte, denn damit werden Rinder stehlende Männerbünde moralisch geächtet, sicherlich nicht ohne Gegenwehr derselben. Rinder zu schützen, zu pflegen und für ihre Vermehrung zu sorgen, galt nun als gute Tat. Man ist an Nietzsches „Umwertung der Werte“ erinnert, die Zarathustra hier einleitet. In der Person des Zarathustra und dessen Lehre koinzidieren die Benennung der Gründe für die Krise und zugleich die Krisenbewältigung. Wenn die Krise überwunden ist, geht es wieder in eine neue evolutionäre Phase über, wie es Kuhn (Kuhn 1996) für wissenschaftliche Revolutionen postulierte. Auch Lommel spricht von einer „einschneidenden, umstürzenden Maßnahme“ und meint damit dezidiert die „Abschaffung der mithräischen Rinderopfer“ (Lommel 1971, S. 37). Davon mussten allerdings das Volk und die Priesterschaft überzeugt werden, aber mit der königlichen Gefolgschaft im Rücken war dies nach anfänglichen Stocken möglich. Das Rind, so lässt sich Ahura Mazda am Ende vernehmen, diene dem Nutzen des Menschen und sei daher unbedingt schützenswert. Durch Milch, Fleisch und Butter komme dem Rind ein nicht zu unterschätzender Nutzen zu.

Nun kommt es aber zum Eklat in der Götterrunde, weil die Seele des Stiers aufgrund der Machtlosigkeit seines irdischen Fürsprechers weint. Was könnte ein Mensch, auch ein Mensch wie Zarathustra, schon ausrichten gegen die Gewaltanwendung gegen den göttlichen Stier und die menschlichen Stiere? Die Stierseele hatte sich eine deutlich machtvollere Hilfe gewünscht. Weil die Stierseele aber um die Endgültigkeit göttlicher

Entscheidungen weiß, bittet sie Ahura Mazda nicht etwa um eine andere Hilfe, sondern um die machtvolle Unterstützung des Zarathustras, freilich mit Blick auf die irdischen Verhältnisse. Diese Intervention muss erfolgreich gewesen sein, denn im Zoroastrismus war ab diesem Zeitpunkt keine Rinderschlachtung mehr überliefert. Zum Abschluss werden die Wahrheit, gutes Denken und gerechte Herrschaft ausdrücklich Gott allein attestiert.

6. Handelt es sich um einen Monotheismus?

Bei dieser Frage gibt es mit Blick auf den Forschungsstand Folgendes zu beachten: Lange Zeit galten die Kategorien „Eines“ und „Vieles“ wie festgeschrieben, ist das Verhältnis von Einem und Vielen doch ein Grundthema der platonischen und aristotelischen Metaphysik. Diese hatte auch Einfluss auf die Diskussion um Monotheismus vs. Polytheismus. Methodisch ist somit Folgendes zu beachten: „Nachgerade paradigmatisch hierfür ist die Neudefinition des alten antiken Begriffs ‘Polytheismus’ durch die Formulierung eines normativen Begriff ‘Monotheismus’. Dies hatte zur Folge, dass ‘vor-monotheistische’ Traditionen in einem ahistorischen Vergleichsbezug zu einem ‘Monotheismus’ gesetzt wurden und dass der normative Aspekt des Monotheismus quasi in Umkehrung in die Bestimmung des Polytheismus hineingewirkt hat.“ (Strohm/Assmann 2012, S. 218)

Zarathustra bekommt somit den wichtigen Auftrag von Ahura Mazda persönlich und wird damit zum einzigen Mittler zwischen Gott und den Menschen. Seine weiteren Ausführungen zum Schöpfergott und sein Verhältnis zur Schöpfung sind demnach genuines Produkt einer göttlichen Schau, wie sie oft in der Religions- und Philosophiegeschichte überliefert ist, so bei Platon, Plotin (Halfwassen 1992) bis hin zur deutschen Mystik um Meister Eckhardt (Flasch 2011). Deshalb tritt Ahura Mazda, der „weise Herr“, als der höchste Gott im Pantheon, als „der Erste und der Letzte“ (Y 31,8) auf. Er wird lokalisiert im unendlichen Lichtbereich, jenseits des für Menschen Wahrnehmbaren, jenseits der diesseitigen, defizitären Welt. Auf der Folie der platonischen Gedankenwelt ist Ahura Mazda als die Erstursache des Seins zwar jenseits der Werdewelt, jedoch noch Teil des Seins - und zwar des lichthaften Teils des noetischen Seins. Diese abstrakte Seinsauffassung, bei der das Eine mit dem Sein identisch ist, ist vergleichbar mit der des

Aristoteles oder der von Hegel (Dangel 2013), setzt sich aber ab von der Einheitsmetaphysik Platons und Plotins, weil diese das Einheitsprinzip im Sinne einer absoluten Transzendenz noch jenseits des Seins setzen. Ahura Mazda ist als Erstursache und Schöpfer des Seins aber noch Teil des lichthaften noetischen Bereichs. Dort ist er lokalisiert, wenn man den *Gathas* folgt. Damit ist er in metaphysischer Hinsicht Erst- und Letztursache des Seins und zugleich Teil des lichten Jenseits-Seins und damit höchste Instanz, aber eben nicht im Sinne einer absoluten Transzendenz wie sie Plotin dachte (Halfwassen 1992) oder Platon in seiner ungeschriebenen Lehre postulierte (Thiel 2006). Erstursache und lichtvolles göttliches Sein koinzidieren miteinander, Sein und Einheit fallen also ineinander, sind identisch.

Ahura Mazda ist allwissend und allsehend, wobei nicht deutlich unterscheiden wird, ob sich dies ausschließlich auf die Gegenwart bezieht oder auch Vergangenheit und Zukunft mit einschließt. Streng genommen heißt Allwissenheit in der Regel aber alles wissend, was seine eigene Schöpfung betrifft. Damit bekommt Ahura Mazda von Zarathustra die typischen Merkmale einer positiven Theologie zugeschrieben: Allwissenheit, man könnte noch ergänzen Allmacht, Allgegenwart und Allpräsenz (im lichthaften Sein). Und dennoch spricht er in der Person des Zarathustra dem Menschen die Freiheit zu, denn sonst würde er Zarathustra nicht als sein Instrument benutzen, um seinen Willen indirekt durchzusetzen. Er könnte auf dieses Instrument auch verzichten und direkt in seine Schöpfung eingreifen. Die Zuschreibung der Freiheit an den Menschen ist eine der wichtigsten Errungenschaften des Zoroastrismus, die wirkungsmächtig für das Judentum und insbesondere für das Christentum wurde (s.u.)

Sein Sohn ist das Feuer, ein Abkömmling des jenseitigen, noetischen Lichts und modifizierter Nachfolger von Agni, dem frühen Feuergott der Arier. Das Feuer steht stellvertretend für die Wirkmächtigkeit von Ahura Mazda im Diesseits (Strohm 2014, S. 173 ff.). Deshalb bemühten sich die Zoroastrier Jahrhunderte lang - bis heute - um die akribische Pflege der Feuerstellen, die rein und dauerhaft bleiben sollten. Reinheit ist garantiert, wenn es gerade nicht genutzt, also zweckfrei unterhalten wird. Damit ist das kultische Feuer der Mittler zwischen Himmel und Erde und zugleich dient es der „Belehrung des Menschen“. Auf diese Weise erklären sich bis heute

die Feuertempel, die überall dort zu finden sind, wo Zoroastrier sich niedergelassen haben. (Budde 2002, S. 870)

Mithras ist in diesem Bezugsrahmen nicht völlig bedeutungslos, sondern avanciert immerhin zum Mitgott, und zwar als Gott der Metzger und des Tageslichts erscheint er noch *kurz vor* der Sonne und erwärmt die Welt – und das jeden Tag aufs Neue. Die Sonne ist seine sichtbare Repräsentation, was starke Ähnlichkeiten zur Aton-Lehre des Echnaton vermuten lässt (Hornung 1963) Dieser Revolutionär schuf im Alten Ägypten in kurzer Zeit alle Götter ab, zerstörte deren Inschriften, verprellte damit die Priesterschaft der vielen Götter und verlegte seine Hauptstadt nach Armana, wo er dem Aton-Kult sein Leben einhauchte. Echnaton erhob einen einzigen Gott zum alleinigen Herrscher des Universums. Auch hier ist die Sonnenscheibe eine Art sichtbares Symbol und Abbild dieses einen Gottes. Mithras ist aber als Lichtgott verantwortlich für das Licht in allen sozialen Beziehungen und Verhältnissen, was seine Beziehung zum Vertrag verständlich macht. Damit wird seine alte Bedeutung zumindest ein Stück weit bewahrt. Seine Begleiter sind Graosa (Gehorsam), Rashav (Gerechtigkeit) und Asys (Vergeltung), was auf seine Funktion beim Jüngsten Gericht verweist. Zugleich bleibt Mithras aber der Kultgott der Männerbünde, die nun neue Aufgaben übernehmen, aber die Stiere als wichtige Nahrungsgrundlage aller unangetastet lassen müssen.

Halten wir also fest: Zuerst hat Zarathustra durch seine Vision den Schöpfergott Ahura Mazda kennengelernt und wird nun im Rahmen einer Ratsversammlung für eine Mission ausgewählt. Da war er ca. 30 Jahre alt und stand am Beginn einer religiösen Umkehr der gesamten Gesellschaft vom Nomadentum zur Sesshaftigkeit mit all ihren Vor- und Nachteilen. Durch diese Begegnung ist er in der Lage, weitere Auskünfte über den Schöpfungsprozess, die Stellung der Menschen etc. in den *Gathas* schriftlich zu fixieren, um sich schließlich bei Ahura Mazda für das innige Verhältnis und seine Sonderaufgabe zu bedanken. Mit Ahura Mazda verbindet ihn eine persönliche Vertrautheit. Er hat ein freundliches, völlig angstfreies Verhältnis zum Schöpfergott – eine einmalige Beziehung, auch im Vergleich zu anderen Religionsstiftern oder gar den Propheten im Alten Testament. Es sind bei Zarathustra auch keinerlei Arroganz und Übermut zu spüren. Durchgehend wird Zarathustra die Freiheit des Wortes gegeben und das freie und damit eigenverantwortliche Handeln der Menschen

postuliert. Seine Worte spiegeln die innere Haltung und menschliche Größe von Zarathustra wider. An einer Stelle, die stark an den Propheten Elia erinnert, heißt es in Y. 44 daher: „O Allweiser, möchte doch Deinesgleichen dies einem Freunde wie mir verkündigen! Und uns so nach göttlichem Recht freundschaftlichen Beistand gewähren!“ Zarathustra sieht sich als einen Freund Gottes – ein *Philo-Theos*, erhabener noch als ein Freund der Weisheit, ein *Philo-Sophos*. Er kann von sich sagen: „Der ich nach göttlichen Recht Ihn kenne, den Allweisen Herrn.“ (45,8) Und über sich selbst spricht er in der dritten Person Folgendes: „Der Prophet, der seine Stimme, Allweiser, erhebt, als ein nach göttlichem Recht Getreuer, anbetend, der heißt Zarathustra.“ (50.6)

Auf der Basis dieser Worte sieht er sich in der Lage, ihm sein persönliches und allgemeines Leid zu klagen: „So klag´ ich Dir, sieh es Dir an, O Herr, Unterstützung leihend, wie sie der Freund dem Freunde gewähren soll.“ (46,2). Zarathustra weiß um die Anfechtungen durch diejenigen, die gegen die göttliche wie die menschliche Ordnung verstoßen. Das Rind litt durch die Drangsal und den Rechtsbruch. Deshalb scheint Zarathustra sogar die göttliche Machtfülle kritisch zu hinterfragen, wenn er moniert: „Welches ist Eure Macht, was Euer Vermögen einzugreifen, Allweiser um – sollte ich selbst schlafen – nach göttlichem Recht durch Guten Sinn zu schirmen Euren Knecht?“ (34,5) Fast schon in dialogischer Form fragt er weiter: „Solltest du freie Hand haben, gemeinsam mit dem göttlichen Recht schirmend einzugreifen... welchem von diesen beiden wirst du den Sieg schenken.“ (44,15) Der Widerspruch zwischen der Allmacht Ahura Mazdas einerseits und seine eingeschränkte Handlungsfähigkeit andererseits ist nur scheinbar und lässt sich leicht aufklären. Worum handelt es sich beim göttlichen Recht? Die Macht von Astra darf jedenfalls nicht angetastet werden. Wenn also Gott selbst direkt eingreift, dann würde er sich nicht mehr an die von ihm geschaffene Ordnung halten. Diese Frage, ob sich der Gesetzgeber an seine eigenen Gesetze halten muss, hat eine lange Geschichte und kennt ganz verschiedene Varianten. Ahura Mazda „hebt das von ihm geschaffene Recht nicht auf. Seine Gesetze haben immer Gültigkeit, ausnahmslos.“ (Hitz 1961, S. 97).

Ab und zu findet sich in Zarathustras Ausführungen ein Einschub („solltest du freie Hand haben“....) oder dezidiert: „gemäß jenen Geboten, die auch du selbst, Allweiser, einhältst.“ Es gehört zu dem Ideenschatz des

Zarathustra, dass hiermit die absolute Machtfülle der obersten Instanz deutlich eingeschränkt wird. Deshalb erwartet Zarathustra von Ahura Mazda auch nur so viel Hilfe, wie er wirklich benötigt. Bereits hier deutet sich an, dass der Mensch innerhalb der Schöpfung das Zünglein an der Waage im Weltgeschehen ist und Zarathustra wiederum hat hier die entscheidende Sonderstellung als einziger Prophet und erster Priester der neuen, sekundären Religion. Zarathustra ist die Scharnierstelle zwischen Mensch und Gott; nur er hat Kontakt, weiß um den Ratschluss von Ahura Mazda und kommuniziert diesen den Menschen in Form des *Avesta* mit ihren *Gathas*. Damit ist seine Sonderstellung kaum noch zu überschätzen. Er ist der wichtigste Mensch im Menschengeschlecht, das Bindeglied zu Ahura Mazda, der Umschlagpunkt der als Heilsgeschichte verstandenen Weltgeschichte. Zarathustra wusste, dass Ahura Mazda jederzeit eingreifen und das Böse damit vernichten könnte, aber damit wäre die Freiheit und die moralische Verantwortung des Menschen ad absurdum geführt. Der Mensch ist frei; er soll und kann sich immer für das Gute entscheiden und genau das fordert er von den Menschen - und dies im Lichte seines postmortalen Schicksals. Zarathustra sah sich also als Prophet und Heilsbringer (*Saoshyant*), dem ein Engel eröffnet, „welche Vergeltung sein Wirken dereinst finde“ (48,9). Die Menschen sind aufgerufen, den Worten des Zarathustra zu folgen. Zarathustra selbst ist sich noch ungewiss, ob er, nachdem er seinen Auftrag gut erfüllt hat, ins Reich von Ahura Mazda zurückkehren wird.

7. Schlussbetrachtungen und Resümee

Jan Assmann unterscheidet in seinen Werken über die antiken Religionen zwei Spielarten des Monotheismus. In seiner Betrachtung übergeht er allerdings in aller Regel den Zoroastrismus, verharret vielmehr beim Alten Ägypten und bei Israel. Deshalb soll an dieser Stelle eine Einordnung auf der Basis seiner Kategorisierung vorgenommen werden - mit dem Ziel, die Besonderheiten und Alleinstellungsmerkmale des zoroastrischen monotheistischen Gottesbildes herauszustellen. Der Monotheismus tritt demnach in der Religionsgeschichte in zwei Gestalten auf. Die erste davon lässt sich auf die Formel bringen: „Alle Götter sind Eins“. Diese Spielart findet sich Assmann zufolge in ägyptischen, babylonischen, indischen,

griechischen und lateinischen Texten der Antike wieder. Es handelt sich hierbei demnach um einen „inkluisiven Monotheismus“ (Assmann 2016, S. 29), der sich auf den Reifezustand des Monotheismus bezieht: „Alle polytheistischen Religionen führen letztendlich zu der Einsicht, dass alle Götter Eins sind“ (Assmann 2016, S. 30). In jeder Religion gibt es demnach die Tendenz, zunächst einen der Götter aus dem Pantheon als Mächtigsten zu titulieren, um diesen dann nach einer bestimmten Reifezeit zum ersten und konsequent zu Ende gedacht zum einzigen Gott zu erklären. Hinter dem altägyptischen Polytheismus für das Volk – so vermutete auch lange Zeit die Ägyptologie – stehe ein Monotheismus für die Eingeweihten (Hornung 1963, S. 20 ff.)

Die zweite Spielart des Monotheismus hat ihren Ursprung ebenfalls im Alten Ägypten, nämlich bei dem Revolutionär Echnaton ab ca. 1350 v. Chr. Echnaton sieht hinter der Vielzahl der Götter einen einzigen, nämlich Aton, versinnbildlicht durch die sichtbare Sonnenscheibe. Nach dem Tod von Echnaton und der Restauration des Polytheismus hat sich dieser Monotheismus nach dieser Auffassung im kollektiven Gedächtnis in traumatischer Form festgesetzt. Moses, der Ägypter, habe diesen dann in modifizierter Form an das Judentum weitergegeben und auf den „eifersüchtigen Gott“ JHWH transferiert. Die Formel für diesen absoluten Monotheismus lautet: „Keine Götter außer Gott“. Hier werden die Bilder und das Gedächtnis an andere Götter ausgelöscht, weil es nur einen einzigen Gott gibt, die anderen Götter also Götzen sind. Dies ist die Spielart, aus der dann der jüdische, christliche und islamische Monotheismus hervorging. Dieser Monotheismus der Wahrheit hat eine klare Sprache. Das Bilderverbot steht an zentraler Stelle. In der Bibel existieren beide Spielarten des Monotheismus nebeneinander, wobei der „Monotheismus der Treue“ das Übergewicht hat. Assmann definiert allerdings diesen Monotheismus des Echnaton anhand von fünf Merkmalen im Sinne eines biblischen „Anti-Ägypterianismus“ (Assmann 2000, S. 224): Ein strikter Monotheismus, der intolerant gegenüber polytheistischen Ideen vorgeht; (2) es wurden magische Riten und Zeremonien durchgeführt, um den Kontakt zu Gott zu gewährleisten; (3) bis zu einem gewissen Grad ist man gegen Visualisierung Gottes (antikönisch); (4) es gibt neue ethische Forderungen an die Gläubigen; (5) und Vorstellungen an ein Jenseits werden genauso verworfen wie der Glaube an das Leben nach dem Tod.

Nach den bisherigen Ausführungen lässt sich konstatieren, dass der Monotheismus von Zarathustra eine Art Zwischenglied darstellt - er hat nämlich Elemente von beiden Spielarten. Er hat auf jeden Fall Elemente eines exklusiven Monotheismus, auch wenn er noch nicht die „Sprache der Gewalt“ (Assmann 2016, S. 30) spricht. Dennoch deutet sich bereits hier eine gewisse Exklusivität an, die fast immer mit religiöser Eindeutigkeit und der dualistischen Teilung zwischen Gläubigen und Ungläubigen einhergeht. Es deutet sich die Idee eines eifersüchtigen Gottes an, der neben sich keinen anderen duldet und in steten Kontakt mit dem Propheten und Vermittler Zarathustra steht, der seine Botschaften an die Menschen weitergibt. Die *Gathas* sind tatsächlich so gestaltet, dass es hier „gleichermaßen `monotheistische`, `polytheistische` und `dualistische` Komponenten oder Tendenzen gibt“. Dies entbindet aber die Forscher nicht davon, den Gesamtentwurf als *primär* monotheistisch, polytheistisch oder dualistisch einzustufen. Wir konnten zeigen, dass Zarathustra mit Blick auf das Gesamtsystem einen prononcierten Monotheismus vertreten hat, der sicherlich mit polytheistischen und dualistischen Elementen aufgeladen ist, aber - aufs Ganze gesehen - nur einen einzigen Gott, ein letztes Prinzip, einen „ersten Beweger“, ein letztes Einheitsprinzip kennt, hinter das nicht zurückgegangen werden kann. Ahura Mazda ist aber zugleich das oberste Sein ganz im Sinne der Seinsmetaphysik von Hegel oder Aristoteles - er übersteigt nicht das Sein, sondern am Anfang und am Ende aller Zeit fallen das geschöpfte Sein mit seinem göttlichen Sein zusammen. Dieser einzige Gott, dieser *monos theos*, hat keine Partner in einer Götterwelt, sein Partner ist ausschließlich der Mensch, und zwar primär in Gestalt von Zarathustra, der als Mittler zur Menschenwelt fungiert. Das macht seine Sonderstellung in der Welt- und Heilsgeschichte aus.

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Original Research Paper

The Science of Metaphysics in Abū Naṣr Al-Fārābī

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Abstract

This paper examines Al-Fārābī's concept of metaphysics. After providing an overview of Al-Fārābī's life and major works, the origin of the term and the various designations (Divine Science, First Philosophy, Wisdom, Theology) as well as the essence of metaphysics are presented. The study then focuses on Al-Fārābī's work *On the Aims of the Philosopher (i.e., Aristotle) in Each Treatise of the Book Designated with Letters (i.e., the Metaphysics) (Fī Aḡrāḍ al-Ḥakīm fī kull maqāla min al-kitāb al-mausūm bi-l-ḥurūf)*. A key aspect is the distinction between particular sciences and the one universal science. Finally, a brief reference is made to Al-Fārābī's attempt to establish the concept of the state on a metaphysical foundation. In the appendix, Friedrich Dieterici's German translation of Al-Fārābī's *Treatise on the Intentions of Aristotelian Metaphysics by the Second Master* is included.

Keywords: Aristotle; metaphysics, divine science, theology, being as being, first cause, particular sciences and universal sciences, Friedrich Dieterici

علم متافیزیک در اندیشه ابونصر فارابی

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چکیده:

این مقاله به بررسی مفهوم مابعدالطبیعه نزد ابونصر فارابی می‌پردازد. پس از ارائه‌ی مروری بر زندگی و آثار مهم فارابی، به منشأ نام و اصطلاحات مختلف آن (علم الهی، فلسفه‌ی اولی، حکمت، الهیات) و همچنین ماهیت مابعدالطبیعه پرداخته می‌شود. سبب، اثر فارابی تحت عنوان درباره‌ی مقاصد فیلسوف (یعنی ارسطو) در هر مقاله از کتاب که با حروف نامگذاری شده است (یعنی مابعدالطبیعه) (فی أغراض الحکیم فی کل مقله من الکتاب الموسوم بالحروف) مورد بررسی قرار می‌گیرد. در این بخش، تمایز میان علوم جزئی و یک علم کلی و جهانی، موضوعی اساسی به شمار می‌رود. در پایان، به‌طور مختصر به تلاش فارابی در جهت تبیین دولت بر مبنای مفاهیم مابعدالطبیعی اشاره می‌شود. در پیوست، ترجمه‌ی آلمانی اثر فارابی با عنوان رساله‌ای درباره‌ی مقاصد مابعدالطبیعه‌ی ارسطویی از سوی معلم دوم، که توسط فریدریش دیترسی انجام شده، ارائه می‌گردد.

واژگان کلیدی: ارسطو، مابعدالطبیعه، علم الهی، الهیات، موجود بما هو موجود، علت اولی، علوم جزئی و علم کلی،

فریدریش دیترسی

Original Research Paper

Die Wissenschaft der Metaphysik bei Abū Naṣr Al-Fārābī

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Empfangen: 04.11.2024; Akzeptiert: 23.12.2024

Zusammenfassung:

Der Aufsatz beschäftigt sich mit dem Metaphysikbegriff Al-Fārābīs. Nach einem Überblick über das Leben und die wichtigsten Werke Al-Fārābīs wird die Herkunft des Namens und die verschiedenen Bezeichnungen (Göttliche Wissenschaft, Erste Philosophie, Weisheit, Theologie) sowie das Wesen von Metaphysik dargestellt. Anschließend wird Al-Fārābīs Werk „Über die Ziele des Philosophen (d. h. des Aristoteles) in jeder Abhandlung des Buches, das mit den Buchstaben bezeichnet wird (d. h. der Metaphysik) (Fi Aḡrād al-Ḥakīm fī kull maqāla min al-kitāb al-mausūm bi-l-ḥurūf)“ untersucht. Dabei ist die Unterscheidung zwischen Einzelwissenschaften und der einen universalen Wissenschaft grundlegend. Abschließend wird kurz auf Al-Fārābīs Versuch hingewiesen, das Staatswesen metaphysisch zu begründen. Im Anhang wird Al-Fārābīs „Abhandlung von den Tendenzen der Aristotelischen Metaphysik von dem zweiten Meister“ in der deutschen Übersetzung von Friedrich Dieterici vorgelegt.

Schlagwörter: Aristoteles; Metaphysik, göttliche Wissenschaft, Theologie, das Seiende als Seiendes, Erste Ursache, Einzelwissenschaften und universale Wissenschaft, Friedrich Dieterici

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Die Metaphysik (Heidegger, 1978) hat im Laufe der europäischen Geistesgeschichte unterschiedlichste Deutungen erfahren – bis hin zu ihrer völligen Leugnung. (Ritter, Gründer, & Gabriel, 1980) Während des Mittelalters hat sie prägende Einflüsse aus der islamischen Welt empfangen, im Besonderen von den persischen Philosophen Al-Fārābī und Ibn Sina, die mit Recht als die bedeutendsten Vertreter der islamischen Metaphysik-Überlieferung gelten können. Metaphysik wurde in der islamischen Welt als göttliche Wissenschaft bezeichnet. Al-Fārābī hat sich gründlich und eigenständig mit der Aufgabe und dem Ziel dieser göttlichen Wissenschaft auseinandergesetzt. Bevor im Folgenden diese Auseinandersetzung betrachtet wird, werden noch einige Angaben über das Leben und die Werke Al-Fārābīs vorangestellt.

1. Leben

Al-Fārābī, einer der bedeutendsten persischen Philosophen, dessen voller Name Abū Naṣr Moḥammad ibn Moḥammad al-Fārābī lautet, stammt wahrscheinlich aus der Stadt Faryab im nordöstlichen Iran, worauf sein Name Al-Fārābī hindeutet. Viele Angaben über sein Leben sind unklar. Er wurde im Jahr 870 als Sohn eines persischen Generals geboren und studierte im Irak bei seinen Lehrern Abū Yaḥyā Ibrāhīm al-Marwazī und Yūḥannā ibn Ḥailān die wichtigsten Werke des Aristoteles. Beide Lehrer waren nestorianische Christen. Als Yūḥannā ibn Ḥailān nach Bagdad ging, folgte ihm Al-Fārābī, um dort seine Studien fortzusetzen. Er verbrachte in Bagdad viele Jahre. Hier begegnete er dem Übersetzer und Kommentator Abū Biṣr Mattā ibn Yūnus, der ein Vertreter der Bagdader Schule christlicher Aristoteliker war. Al-Fārābī hat aber nicht nur die Lehren des Aristoteles gründlich studiert und eigenständig gedeutet; er ist auch der Begründer des islamischen Neuplatonismus. (Fattal, 2008) In Bagdad verfasste er einige seiner wichtigsten Werke und versammelte einen Kreis von Schülern um sich. Im Jahr 942 verließ Al-Fārābī Bagdad und begab sich nach Damaskus. In Aleppo war er am Hof des schiitischen Ḥamdanidenfürsten Saifaddaula als Gelehrter tätig. Dann reiste er für kurze Zeit nach Ägypten und kehrte anschließend nach Damaskus zurück, wo er im Jahr 950 starb¹.

2. Die wichtigsten Werke

Die Aufzählung der Wissenschaften (Iḥṣā` al-‘ulūm)

Die Weisung auf den Weg zum Glück (at-Tanbīh 'alā sabīl as-sa'āda)

Über das, was dem Studium der Philosophie (des Aristoteles) vorausgehen muss (Fīmā yanbaġī an yuqaddama qabla ta'allum al-falsafa)

Die Einleitung in die Logik (at-Tauṭī'a fī l-mantiq)

Isagoge, d. h. die Einführung (Isāġūġī at-al-Madḥal)

Der Beweis (al-Burhān)

Das große Buch der Musik (Kitāb al-Mūsīqīal-kabir)

Die Religion (al-Milla)

Die Prinzipien der Ansichten der Bürger eines vorzüglichen Gemeinwesens (Mabādī' ārā' ahl al-madina al-fāḍila)

Das Buch: (Die Lenkung des Gemeinwesens: Die Prinzipien der seienden Dinge (Kitāb as-Siyāsa al-madanniya : Mabādī' al-mauġūdāt)

Die Erlangung des Glücks (Taḥṣīl as-sa'āda)

Die Philosophie Platons, ihre Teile und die Rangstufen ihre Teile, vom Anfang bis zum Ende (Falsafat Aflātun wa-aġzā' uhā wa-marātib aġzā'ihā min auwalihā ilā aḥirihā)

Die Philosophie des Aristoteles, die Teile seiner Philosophie, die Rangstufen ihrer Teile und die Position, von der aus er begann und bei der er endet (Falsafat Ariṣṭūṭālis wa-aġzā' falsafatihī wa-marātib aġzā'ihā wa-l- mauḍī' allaḍī minhu ibtada'a wa-ilahi intahā)

Die Harmonie zwischen den Ansichten der beiden Weisen, des göttlichen Platon und des Aristoteles (al-Ġam' baina ra'yat al-ḥakīmain Aflātun al-ilāhī wa- Ariṣṭūṭālis)

Über den Intellekt (Fi l-'Aql)

Das Eine und die Einheit (Al-Wāḥid wa-l-waḥda)

Über die Ziele des Philosophen in jeder Abhandlung des Buches, das mit den Buchstaben bezeichnet wird (d. h. der Metaphysik) (Fī Aġrāḍ al-Ḥakīm fi kull maqāla min al-kitāb al-mausūm bi-l-ḥurūf). (Rudolph, 2012, S. 377-407)

3. Der Name und das Wesen der Metaphysik

Metaphysik als philosophische Grunddisziplin geht auf Aristoteles zurück, der aber den Begriff Metaphysik noch nicht verwendete, sondern von „erster Philosophie, Weisheit und Theologie sprach. Was die Einführung des Begriffs Metaphysik betrifft, so glaubte man lange Zeit: „Er verdanke sich lediglich einem bibliothekarischen Zufall: Andronikos von Rhodos (1. Jh. V. Chr.) soll nämlich die aristotelischen Schriften geordnet und dabei das, was wir heute als die aristotelische ‚Metaphysik‘ verstehen hinter der ‚Physik‘ eingereiht haben. So sei es zu der Bibliotheksbezeichnung τὰ μετὰ τὰ φυσικά gekommen. ... Tatsächlich ist davon auszugehen, daß diese Namensgebung tiefere, sachliche Gründe hatte. Demnach ist durch den Titel (M.), der so schon in unmittelbarer Nähe des Aristoteles geprägt worden sein mag und erstmals bei Nikolaus von Damaskus, einem Peripatetiker aus der zweiten Hälfte des 1. Jh. V. Chr., zu belegen ist, die Folge der Schriften angezeigt, die ihrerseits in dem aristotelischen Erkenntnisweg von den ‚physischen‘, also sinnfälligen festgestellt Gegenständen zu den übersinnlichen begründet liegt“.

(Kobusch, 1980) Diese Metaphysik ist für Aristoteles die Wissenschaft, welche das Seiende als Seiendes untersucht. Zugleich ist sie die Wissenschaft, welche nach den Ursachen und Gründe des Seienden fragt. Al-Fārābī hat diese Metaphysik des Aristoteles gründlich studiert und ihre Ziele deutlich aufgezeigt. Er hat dazu keine systematische Darstellung vorgelegt, sondern seine Ansichten in verschiedenen Schriften auf unterschiedliche Weise entfaltet. Von diesen vielen großen und kleinen Werken wird im Folgenden nur die kleine aber gehaltvolle Schrift „Über die Ziele des Philosophen (d. h. des Aristoteles) in jeder Abhandlung des Buches, das mit den Buchstaben bezeichnet wird (d. h. der Metaphysik) (Fī Aġrāđ al-Ĥakīm fī kull maqāla min al-kitāb al-mausūm bi-l-ĥurūf)“ untersucht. (Türker, 1963) Sie wurde von Avicenna hochgeschätzt. Dieses Werk hat der deutsche Orientalist Friedrich Dieterici (Spies, 1957) 1892 aus dem Arabischen ins Deutsche übersetztⁱⁱ. In seiner Übersetzung lautet die Überschrift: „Die Abhandlung von den Tendenzen der aristotelischen Metaphysik von dem zweiten Meister“ⁱⁱⁱ.

4. Al-Fārābī - Über den Gegenstand und die Ziele der Metaphysik des Aristoteles

Am Anfang seiner „Abhandlung von den Tendenzen der aristotelischen Metaphysik von dem zweiten Meister“ erklärt Al-Fārābī, worin die Absicht und der Zweck dieser Schrift besteht: „Unsere Absicht in dieser Abhandlung geht dahin die Tendenzen, welche das ‚Buch Metaphysik des Aristoteles‘ zu Grunde liegt, zu zeigen und die ursprünglichen Teile anzugehen“. (Al-Fārābī, Tendenzen, S. 54.) Er erklärt weiter, dass die Abfassung dieser Schrift notwendig war, weil viele Menschen der Meinung sind, in ihr die Lehr vom Schöpfer, Intellekt und der Seele behandelt würden sowie die Lehre von der Einheit Gottes, das heißt von der Theologie. Weil sie aber, abgesehen vom 11. Buch, das mit dem Buchstaben Lambda „bezeichnet wird, nichts dergleichen fanden, geriet ihr Denken durcheinander. Es gab auch keine entsprechenden Kommentare griechischer Philosophen, auf die Al-Fārābī hätte zurückgreifen können. Der unvollständige Kommentar des griechischen Philosophen Alexander von Aphrodisias (2. – 3. Jahrh.n. Chr.) und ein vollständiger Kommentar von Themistios (um 317-388 n. Chr.), die Al-Fārābī erwähnt, waren offensichtlich auch keine Hilfe. Al-Fārābī hat deshalb eigenständig alle dreizehn Bücher der aristotelischen Metaphysik untersucht und interpretiert, was in der Geschichte der islamischen Philosophie ein bedeutsamer Schritt war. Dann stellt er fest, „dass ein Teil der Wissenschaften particulär, ein anderer Teil derselben aber universell sei. Particulär nennen wir solche Wissenschaften, die einiges Vorhandene und einiges Gedachte zum Object haben, und beschränkt sich die Untersuchung derselben auf ihre ihnen eigentümlichen Accidenzen“. (Al-Fārābī, Tendenzen, S. 55) So behandelt die Physik einen Teilbereich des Seienden, nämlich den Körper, insofern sich dieser bewegt, sich verändert oder ruht. Die Geometrie behandelt Messungen und die Arithmetik die Zahl. Die Medizin bezieht sich auf den menschlichen Körper insofern dieser gesund oder krank ist. Alle partikulären oder einzelnen Wissenschaften behandeln nur Teilgebiete des Seienden und keine von ihnen das, was allen gemeinsam ist. „Dagegen betrachtet die allgemeine (universelle) Wissenschaft das, was allem Vorhandenen gemeinsam ist“, (Al-Fārābī, Tendenzen, S. 56.) so dass sich das Sein und die Einheit auch allen Dingen, die nicht Gegenstand der Einzelwissenschaften sind, zukommen. Die universelle Wissenschaft, das heißt die Metaphysik betrachtet ferner „den allem Vorhandenen gemeinsamen Anfang d. h. dasjenige, was mit dem Namen der Herrlichkeit Gottes benannt werden muss“. (Al-Fārābī,

Tendenzen, S.56.) Zum Verhältnis der Metaphysik zur Theologie erklärt Al-Fārābī: „Die theologische Wissenschaft aber muss zu dieser Wissenschaft (Metaphysik) gehören, denn Gott ist zwar Anfang für das absolut Vorhandene (Sein), aber nicht für jedes beliebige. Es muss somit der Teil der Wissenschaften, welcher das Prinzip angeht, die theologische Wissenschaft sein, weil diese Gegenstände den Naturwissenschaften nicht speciell zukommen. Dieselben stehen vielmehr höher, und sind allgemeiner als die Physik ist somit auch die theologische Wissenschaft erhabener als die Naturwissenschaft und folgt sie nach derselben (μετὰ τὰ Φυσικά). Es ist deshalb notwendig, sie die Wissenschaft der Metaphysik zu nennen“. (Al-Fārābī, Tendenzen, S. 56-57.)

Was in diesem Zusammenhang die Mathematik betrifft, so kann man sie, obwohl sie höher steht als die Naturwissenschaften doch nicht Metaphysik nennen, weil die Immaterialität ihrer Objekte nur ideell und nicht essentiell ist. Das Sein dieser Objekte entspricht mutatis mutandis dem was Aristoteles das akzidentelle Sein nennt, das Das Sein der einer Veränderung nicht ausgeliefert ist. (Kremer, 1961) Dagegen ist das erste Objekt der Metaphysik „das absolute Sein [al-wuğūd al-muṭlaq, was bei Aristoteles das Seiende als Seiendes genannt wird], so wie das, was demselben in der Allgemeinheit gleichkommt, nämlich das Eine. Da nun aber das Wissen von dem Einandergegenüberstehenden nur eins ist, so fällt auch die Untersuchung über das Nichts und das Viele unter diese Wissenschaft (Metaphysik)“. (Al-Fārābī, Tendenzen, S. 57.) Nachdem diese Objekt begründet wurden, betrachtet die Metaphysik „die Dinge, welche die Stelle der Arten inne haben, wie die zehn Aussagen über das Vorhandene (Kategorien) auch die Arten der Eins , wie Eins im Individuum, Eins in der Art, Eins in der Gattung, Eins in der Wechselbeziehung und die Teile eines jeden hiervon. Dasselbe gilt von den Arten des Nichts und des Vielen , dann von den Anhängen des Vorhandenen, wie Potentialität und Actualität, das Vollkommene und das Mangelhafte, die Ursache und das Verursachte , auch die Anhänge zur Einheit, wie die Wesenheit, die Aehnlichkeit, die Gleichheit, die Übereinstimmung, das Parallelsein, die Gleichartigkeit und andere. Dann folgen die Anhänge des Nichts und des Vielen. Darauf behandelt diese Wissenschaft die Principe von jedem Einzelnen derselben, macht Zweig- und Unterabteilungen davon, bis sie zu den Objecten der Teilwissenschaften gelangt. Damit ist

dann die Universalwissenschaft zu Ende und treten in ihr die Principe aller Teilwissenschaften so wie auch die Abgrenzungen ihrer Objecte klar hervor“. (Al-Fārābī, Tendenzen, S. 58.)

Zum Abschluss seiner Abhandlung gibt Al-Fārābī einen Überblick über die in der Metaphysik behandelten Fragen:

„Abh. I dieses Buchs enthält gleichsam die Einleitung und Vorrede zu dem Werk, indem sie klarmacht, dass alle einzelnen Ursachen bei einer ersten Ursache enden.

Abh. II enthält eine Aufzählung der (Aporien) schwierigen Fragen, welche bei diesen Gegenständen entstehen, und giebt eine Darlegung von den Arten ihrer Schwierigkeiten, sowie eine Aufstellung der sich einander gegenüberstehenden Argumente. Dies hat den Zweck den Verstand auf das Ziel der Untersuchung aufmerksam zu machen.

Abh. III zählt die Objecte dieser Wissenschaft auf d. h. die darin behandelten Begriffe, so wie auch die ihnen eigentümlichen Accidenzen, d. h. die oben von uns Aufgezählten.

Abh. IV enthält die einzelnen Bedeutungen eines jeden der Ausdrücke, welche die Gegenstände dieser Wissenschaft bezeichnen, denn die Arten ihrer Objecte, so wie deren Anhänge, sei es, dass diese aus Mitnamigkeit (Synonymität), Zweideutigkeit, oder wirklichen Homonymität hervorgehen.

Abh. V legt die wesentlichen Unterschiede klar, die bei den drei theoretischen Wissenschaften, der Physik, der Mathematik und der Theologie vorherrschen, und zeigt, dass es eben nur drei gebe. Ferner findet sich hier die nähere Bestimmung über die theologische Wissenschaft und wird hier dargelegt, dass sie zu dieser Wissenschaft (der Metaphysik) gehöre, besser gesagt, dass sie in gewisser Hinsicht diese Wissenschaft selbst sei. Denn sie betrachtet die Wesenheit, die an sich ist, aber nicht die nur accidentell seiende; dann aber wird hier gezeigt, welche Gemeinschaft diese mit der Topik und mit der Sophistik haben.

Abh. VI giebt eine gründliche Erklärung des sogenannten „wesentlich für sich Seins“ und zwar besonders des substantiellen Seins. Sie giebt die Teile der Substanz an d. h. Stoff und Form, und das aus beiden Zusammengesetzte. In Betreff der richtigen Definition zeigt sie, bei

welchem Vorhandenen sie statt hat, wenn sie einem Vorhandenen zukommt und bei welcher Substanz, wenn sie einer Substanz zukommt. Ferner lehrt sie, wie man das Zusammengesetzte definiert, auch welche Teile bei den Definitionen sich vorfinden, welche Formen abstracte sind und welche nicht, auch dass die Urbilder keine Existenz haben.

Abh. VII zieht die Summe der vorhergehenden Abhandlung und giebt dieselbe dann den Schluss der Untersuchung über die platonischen Ideen und zeigt, dass das Entstehende zu seinem Entstehen derselben nicht bedürfe. Desgleichen findet sich hier eine gründliche Belehrung über die Definition der immateriellen Dinge. Wenn diese ins Sein treten, ist ihr Sein ihr Wesen selbst.

Abh. VIII behandelt die Potentialität und Actualität, sowie ihre Priorität und Posteriorität.

Abh. IX Behandelt das Eine und das Viele, das Andre, den Widerspruch und den Gegensatz.

Abh. X behandelt die Unterscheidung zwischen den Principen und Accidenzen dieser Wissenschaft.

Abh. XI behandelt das Princip der Substanz und alles Seins, sie stellt das Ansichsein derselben fest. Sie sei eine Welt im wahren Sinne. Dann handelt diese Abh. Über das hierauf folgende immaterielle Sein, und zeigt, wie die Existenz des Vorhandenen sich von ihm aus ordne.

Abh. XII Über die Principe der Physik und Mathematik. So weit die klare Darlegung von der Tendenz dieses Buchs und seiner Teile“. (Al-Fārābī, Tendenzen, S. 58-60.)

5. Zum Abschluss

Wie bereits gesagt, ist die Metaphysik für Aristoteles und in seiner Nachfolge auch für Al-Fārābī die Wissenschaft, welche das Seiende als Seiendes untersucht. Zugleich ist sie die Wissenschaft, welche nach den Prinzipien, Ursachen und Gründen des Seienden fragt.

Al-Fārābī hat in seiner „Abhandlung von den Tendenzen der aristotelischen Metaphysik von dem zweiten Meister“ vor allem das Seiende als Seiendes untersucht. In seinen beiden größeren Werken „Die Prinzipien der Ansichten der Bewohner der vortrefflichen Stadt (Mabādi‘

ārā' ahl al-madina al-fāḍila)" (Al-Fārābī, 1985, 2009) und „Die Lenkung des Gemeinwesens. Die Prinzipien der seienden Dinge (Kitāb as-Siyāsa al-madanniya: Mabādi`al-mauğūdāt)" (Dieterici, 1904) spricht er von Prinzipien. Prinzip bedeutet in diesem Zusammenhang das höchste Prinzip, das auch als die Erste Ursache (as-sabab al-auwal) bezeichnet wird. Diese Erste Ursache, die als solche vollkommen, ewig und aktueller ist, wird auch Gott genannt. Die Erste Ursache ist der Ursprung einer gerechten und guten Seinsordnung. Die Erste Ursache erkennt sich von Ewigkeit her selbst; sie bringt aber aufgrund einer Emanation (‘alā ġihati faiḍin) (Druart, 1987) ein zweites Seiendes hervor. Weitere Emanationen folgen, die insgesamt zehn Intellekte und neun Himmelsphären hervorbringen. Auf eine ausführliche Darstellung dieser Lehre kann hier nicht eingegangen werden.

Die Frage nach dem Prinzip des Gemeinwesens oder der Gesellschaft ist die Frage nach der metaphysischen Begründung dieses Gemeinwesens von Gott her. Diese Frage mag in einer Zeit der Weltverdüsterung (Kaliyuga), von der Martin Heidegger in seiner „Einführung in die Metaphysik“ spricht, als überholt erscheinen. Die wesentlichen Geschehnisse dieser Weltverdüsterung sind für ihn: „die Flucht der Götter [die Entheiligung der Welt], die Zerstörung der Erde, die Vermassung des Menschen, der Vorrang der Mittelmäßigen“. (Heidegger, 1976) Die Frage nach der metaphysischen Begründung, die eine Frage auf der Grundlage der göttlichen Wissenschaft ist, behält aber unabhängig vom geistigen und kulturellen Verfall im Zeitalter der Weltverdüsterung ihre bleibende Gültigkeit.

6. Anhang

Al-Fārābī, Die Abhandlung von den Tendenzen der Aristotelischen Metaphysik von dem zweiten Meister

Aus dem Arabischen ins Deutsche übersetzt von Friedrich Dieterici. (Rudolph, 2012, S. 377-407)

„Eine ausgezeichnete Schrift von dem Weisen, dem Philosophen, dem zweiten Meister, Abu Naṣr Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Tarḥān ibn Uzlağ Alfarābī, handelt über die Tendenzen, die der Weise (Aristoteles) in einem jeden Abschnitt seiner mit Buchstaben bezeichneten Schrift

verfolgt. Es ist also eine Darlegung von dem Ziel des Aristoteles in dieser Abhandlung in dem Buch ‚Metaphysik‘.

Er sagte: Unsere Absicht in dieser Abhandlung geht dahin die Tendenz, welche in dem Buch ‚Metaphysik des Aristoteles‘ zu Grunde liegt, zu zeigen und die ursprünglichen Teile dieses Buches anzugeben. – Denn viele Leute haben die vorgefasste Meinung, dass der eigentliche Sinn und Inhalt jener Schrift der sei, dass in ihr die Lehre von dem Schöpfer, dem Intellect, der Seele und dem darauf Bezüglichen handelt würde; ferner, dass die Lehre von der Metaphysik und von der Einheit Gottes ein und dieselbe sei.

Wir finden nun, dass die meisten Menschen, welche darüber speculiren, in Verwirrung und auf Abwege geraten sind; denn wir sehen, dass der grösste Teil jener Schrift durchaus dieser Tendenz entbehrt. Nur in dem elften Buch, welches mit dem Buchstaben Lambda (L) bezeichnet ist, finden wir eine Specialabhandlung über diesen Gegenstand.

Nun existirt aber bei den Alten kein Commentar von diesem Buch für sich, so wie wir solche für die übrigen Bücher haben, vielmehr giebt es nur einen unvollständigen Commentar von Alexander (Afrodisias) und einen vollständigen von Themistius. Die anderen Abschnitte (der Metaphysik) werden entweder nie commentirt, oder diese Commentare haben sich, wie man meint, nicht bis auf unsere Zeit erhalten.

Das Letztere nimmt man an, weil in den Büchern der späteren Peripatetiker eine Betrachtung darüber angestellt wird, ob Alexander das Buch vollständig commentirt habe. Wir aber wollen die Tendenz und den Inhalt einer jeden der Abhandlungen darlegen.

Wir behaupten nun, dass ein Teil der Wissenschaften particulär, ein anderer Teil derselben aber universell sei.

Particulär nennen wir solche Wissenschaften, die eigenes Vorhandene und einiges Gedachte zum Object haben, und beschränkt sich die Untersuchung derselben auf ihre ihnen eigentümlichen Accidenzen.

So gilt von der Physik, dass sie einiges von dem Vorhandenen behandle, nämlich den Körper, sofern er sich bewegt, sich verändert und von der Bewegung ausruht, auch sofern derselbe Anfänge und Anhänge hat. Dasselbe gilt von der Geometrie. Denn diese Wissenschaft behandelt die

Maasse, inwiefern sie die ihnen speciell zukommenden Eigenschaften annehmen, dann aber die in ihnen stattfindenden Beziehungen, die sowohl in ihren Grund – als Folgesätzen statthaben, und auch inwiefern sich dies alles so verhält. Die Arithmetik behandelt ebenso die Zahl, und die Medicin die menschlichen Körper, sofern dieselben gesund oder krank sind. Ein gleiches gilt von den übrigen partiulären Wissenschaften. Keine derselben behandelt das, was allem Vorhandenen gemeinsam ist.

Dagegen betrachtet die allgemeine (universelle) Wissenschaft das, was allem Vorhandenen gemeinsam ist, so das Sein und die Einheit und zwar in ihren Arten und Anhängen, dann die Dinge, welche nicht speciell jedem einzelnen Object der particulären Wissenschaften zukommen, so das Früher und Später, die Potentialität und Actualität, das Vollkommene und das Mangelhafte, und alles Derartige. Dann aber betrachtet dieselbe den allem Vorhandenen gemeinsamen Anfang d. h. dasjenige, was mit dem Namen des Herrlichen Gottes benannt werden muss.

Die universelle Wissenschaft kann nur eine sein, denn gäbe es zwei allgemeine Wissenschaften, so müsste eine jede der beiden auch ein besondere Object haben. Die Wissenschaft aber, welche ein besonderes Object hat, und nicht das Object einer anderen Wissenschaft mit umfasst, ist eine particuläre. Dann wären aber diese beiden Wissenschaften particuläre, und ergäbe dies einen Widerspruch. Somit ist die allgemeine Wissenschaft nur Eine.

Die theologische Wissenschaft aber muss zu dieser Wissenschaft gehören, denn Gott ist zwar Anfang für das absolut Vorhandene (Sein), aber nicht für jedes beliebige. Es muss somit der Teil der Wissenschaften, welcher das Princip des Vorhandenen angleicht, die theologische Wissenschaft sein, weil diese Gegenstände der Naturwissenschaften nicht speciell zukommen. Dieselben stehen vielmehr höher, und sind allgemeiner als die Physik und ist somit auch die theologische Wissenschaft erhabener als die Naturwissenschaft und folgt sie nach derselben (μετὰ τὰ Φυσικά). Es ist deshalb notwendig, sie die Wissenschaft der Metaphysik zu nennen.

Was nun die mathematische Wissenschaft betrifft, so kann man dieselbe, wenn sie auch höhersteht als die naturwissenschaftliche, weil ihre Objecte frei von den Stoffen sind, doch nicht Metaphysik nennen, weil das Freisein

ihrer Objecte von den Stoffen nur ideell, 36 nicht essentiell ist. Im Sein existiren dieselben nur an den Naturdingen.

Die Objecte dieser Wissenschaft haben z. T. durchaus kein Sein in den Naturdingen, weder ein ideelles noch reelles und kann man somit nicht sagen: „die Einbildungskraft abstrahirte sie nur von den Naturdingen“, vielmehr ist ihr Sein und ihre Natur nur abstract; z. T. aber existiren diese Objecte in den Naturdingen. Denn wenn man auch sie sich als davon abstrahirt vorstellt, so finden sich doch nicht ihrem Wesen nach so darin, dass ihr Sein davon nie frei wäre. Es sind also Dinge, deren Bestand in den natürlichen Dingen liegt, oder besser gesagt, sie kommen dem Natürlichen und dem Nichtnatürlichen von den reell oder nur ideell immateriellen Dingen zu.

Somit ist die Wissenschaft, die würdig ist mit diesem Namen benannt zu werden, eben diese Wissenschaft und ist sie somit allein vor allen übrigen Wissenschaften die Wissenschaft der Metaphysik.

Das erste Object dieser Wissenschaft ist das absolute Sein, so wie das, was demselben in der Allgemeinheit gleich kommt, nämlich die Eins. Da nun aber das Wissen von dem Einandergegenüberstehenden nur eins ist, so fällt auch die Untersuchung über das Nichts und das Viele unter diese Wissenschaft.

Nach der Begründung dieser Objecte, betrachtet dann diese Wissenschaft die Dinge, welche die Stelle der Arten inne haben, wie die zehn Aussagen über das Vorhandene (Kategorieen) auch die Arten der Eins, wie Eins im Individuum, Eins in der Art, Eins in der Gattung, Eins in der Wechselbeziehung und die Teile eines jeden hiervon. Dasselbe gilt von den Arten des Nichts und des Vielen, dann von den Anhängen des Vorhandenen, wie Potentialität und Actualität, das Vollkommene und das Mangelhafte, die Ursache und das Verursachte, auch die Anhänge zur Einheit, wie die Wesenheit, die Aehnlichkeit, die Gleichheit, die Übereinstimmung, das Parallelseins, die Gleichartigkeit und andres. Dann folgen die Anhänge des Nichts und des Vielen. Darauf behandelt diese Wissenschaft die Principe von jedem Einzelnen derselben, macht Zweig- und Unterabteilungen davon, bis sie zu den Objecten der Teilwissenschaften gelangt. Damit ist dann die Universalwissenschaft zu

Ende und treten in ihr die Principe aller Teilwissenschaften an wie auch die Abgrenzungen ihrer Objecte klar hervor.

Abh. I dieses Buchs enthält gleichsam die Einleitung und Vorrede zu dem Werk, indem sie klarmacht, dass alle einzelnen Ursachen bei einer ersten Ursache enden.

Abh. II enthält eine Aufzählung der (Aporien) schwierigen Fragen, welche bei diesen Gegenständen entstehen, und giebt eine Darlegung von den Arten ihrer Schwierigkeiten, sowie eine Aufstellung der sich einander gegenüberstehenden Argumente. Dies hat den Zweck den Verstand auf das Ziel der Untersuchung aufmerksam zu machen.

Abh. III zählt die Objete dieser Wissenschaft auf d. h. die darin behandelten Begriffe, so wie auch die ihnen eigentümlichen Accidenzen, d. h. die oben von uns Aufgezählten.

Abh. IV enthält die einzelnen Bedeutungen eines jeden der Ausdrücke, welche die Gegenstände dieser Wissenschaft bezeichnen, denn die Arten ihrer Objecte, so wie deren Anhänge, sei es, dass diese aus Mitnamigkeit (Synonymität), Zweideutigkeit, oder wirklichen Homonymität hervorgehen.

Abh. V legt die wesentlichen Unterschiede klar, die bei den drei theoretischen Wissenschaften, der Physik, der Mathematik und der Theologie vorherrschen, und zeigt, dass es eben nur drei gebe. Ferner findet sich hier die nähere Bestimmung über die theologische Wissenschaft und wird hier dargelegt, dass sie zu dieser Wissenschaft (der Metaphysik) gehöre, besser gesagt, dass sie in gewisser Hinsicht diese Wissenschaft selbst sei. Denn sie betrachtet die Wesenheit, die an sich ist, aber nicht die nur accidentell seiende; dann aber wird hier gezeigt, welche Gemeinschaft diese mit der Topik und mit der Sophistik haben.

Abh. VI giebt eine gründliche Erklärung des sogenannten „wesentlich für sich Seins“ und zwar besonders des substantiellen Seins. Sie giebt die Teile der Substanz an d. h. Stoff und Form, und das aus beiden Zusammengesetzte. In Betreff der richtigen Definition zeigt sie, bei welchem Vorhandenen sie statt hat, wenn sie einem Vorhandenen zukommt und bei welcher Substanz, wenn sie einer Substanz zukommt. Ferner lehrt sie, wie man das Zusammengesetzte definiert, auch welche

Teile bei den Definitionen sich vorfinden, welche Formen abstracte sind und welche nicht, auch dass die Urbilder keine Existenz haben.

Abh. VII zieht die Summe der vorhergehenden Abhandlung und giebt dieselbe dann den Schluss der Untersuchung über die platonischen Ideen und zeigt, dass das Entstehende zu seinem Entstehen derselben nicht bedürfe. Desgleichen findet sich hier eine gründliche Belehrung über die Definition der immateriellen Dinge. Wenn diese ins Sein treten, ist ihr Sein ihr Wesen selbst.

Abh. VIII behandelt die Potentialität und Actualität, sowie ihre Priorität und Posteriorität.

Abh. IX Behandelt das Eine und das Viele, das Andre, den Widerspruch und den Gegensatz.

Abh. X behandelt die Unterscheidung zwischen den Principen und Accidenzen dieser Wissenschaft.

Abh. XI behandelt das Princip der Substanz und alles Seins, sie stellt das Ansichsein derselben fest. Sie sei eine Welt im wahren Sinne. Dann handelt diese Abh. Über das hierauf folgende immaterielle Sein, und zeigt, wie die Existenz des Vorhandenen sich von ihm aus ordnet.

Abh. XII Über die Principe der Physik und Mathematik. So weit die klare Darlegung von der Tendenz dieses Buchs und seiner Teile“. (Dieterici, 1892)

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Klimawandel und kulturelle Aspekte in zwei Dörfern der Provinz Isfahan, Iran

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Zusammenfassung:

Der Klimawandel ist ein globales Phänomen, das alle Aspekte des Lebens der Menschen weltweit beeinflusst, insbesondere in Entwicklungsländern, wobei viele indigene Völker unverhältnismäßig betroffen sind. Diese Forschung konzentriert sich darauf, wie lokale Gemeinschaften auf diese Veränderungen reagieren, indem sie durch ihre Handlungen Anpassungen vornehmen. Mit einem qualitativen Ansatz untersucht die Studie, wie Kultur und lokale Wahrnehmungen die Bewältigungsstrategien und Anpassungen an den Klimawandel in indigenen Gemeinschaften in zwei Dörfern im Osten Irans beeinflussen. Die Datenerhebung erfolgte durch eine Kombination von Schneeball- und gezielten Samplingmethoden. Insgesamt nahmen 47 Personen (35 Männer und 12 Frauen) aus den Dörfern sowie organisatorische und lokale Informanten an 33 Einzelinterviews und vier Gruppeninterviews teil. Die Ergebnisse zeigten die Entstehung von zwei Subkulturen in den Dörfern, die durch Geographie und soziale Verbindungen geprägt waren. Diese Subkulturen beeinflussten die Reaktionen der Dorfbewohner auf die durch den Klimawandel verursachte Wasserknappheit. In Nord-Baraan diversifizierten die Dorfbewohner ihre einkommensschaffenden Tätigkeiten, schützten Wasserressourcen und forderten einen Anteil an den Wasservorräten des Dorfes von den Regierungsbehörden. Im Gegensatz dazu wählten die Bewohner von Süd-Baraan die Migration und gerieten in Konflikte mit ihren Nachbarn über Wasserquellen. Zusammenfassend lässt sich sagen, dass die geografische Lage eines Dorfes und seine Kultur der gemeinschaftlichen Teilnahme eine bedeutende Rolle bei der Gestaltung von Strategien zur Minderung der Auswirkungen von Dürre und Klimawandel spielen.

Schlagerwörter: Klimawandel, Anpassung, kultureller Faktor, Provinz Isfahan, Iran

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تغییرات اقلیمی و جنبه‌های فرهنگی در دو روستا از استان اصفهان، ایران

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چکیده:

تغییرات اقلیمی یک پدیده جهانی است که تمام جنبه‌های زندگی روستایی در کشورهای در حال توسعه را تحت تأثیر قرار داده و بسیاری از مردم بومی به طور نامتناسبی تحت تأثیر قرار می‌گیرند. این پژوهش بر اقدامات جوامع محلی در سازگاری با این تغییرات متمرکز است. این مطالعه با استفاده از یک رویکرد کیفی، چگونگی تأثیر فرهنگ و ادراکات محلی را بر استراتژی‌های مقابله و سازگاری با تغییرات اقلیمی در میان جوامع بومی، در دو جامعه در شرق ایران، بررسی می‌کند.

داده‌ها از طریق ترکیبی از روش گلوله برفی و نمونه‌گیری هدفمند جمع‌آوری شد. در مجموع ۴۷ نفر (۳۵ مرد و ۱۲ زن) از روستاها به همراه مطلعان سازمانی و محلی در ۳۳ مصاحبه انفرادی و چهار مصاحبه گروهی شرکت کردند. نتایج حاکی از شکل‌گیری دو خرده فرهنگ در روستاها به دلیل روابط جغرافیایی و اجتماعی بود. این خرده فرهنگ‌ها بر واکنش روستاییان به کمبود آب ناشی از تغییرات اقلیمی اثر گذاشته است. در برآن شمالی، روستاییان فعالیت‌های درآمدزا را متنوع کردند، از منابع آبی حفاظت کردند و از سازمان‌های دولتی تقاضای سهم آب روستای خود را نمودند. در مقابل، ساکنان برآن جنوبی مهاجرت را انتخاب کردند و بر سر منابع آب با همسایگان خود درگیر شدند.

در نتیجه، موقعیت جغرافیایی یک روستا و حضور فرهنگ مشارکت در جامعه، استراتژی‌هایی را برای کاهش اثرات خشکسالی و تغییرات اقلیمی شکل می‌دهد.

واژگان کلیدی: تغییرات اقلیمی، سازگاری، عامل فرهنگی، استان اصفهان، ایران

Climate Change and Cultural Considerations in Two Villages of Isfahan Province, Iran

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Abstract

Climate change is a global phenomenon that impacts all aspects of people's lives worldwide, especially in developing countries, with many Indigenous peoples being disproportionately affected. This research focuses on how local communities are adapting to these changes through their actions. Using a qualitative approach, the study explores how culture and local perceptions influence coping strategies and adaptations to climate change among Indigenous communities, in two communities in eastern Iran.

Data was collected through a combination of snowball and targeted sampling methods. A total of 47 individuals (35 men and 12 women) from the villages, along with organizational and local informants, participated in 33 individual interviews and four group interviews. The results revealed the formation of two subcultures in the villages due to geography and social connections. These subcultures influenced villagers' responses to water scarcity caused by climate change. In North Baraan, villagers diversified income-generating activities, protected water resources, and demanded a share of village water from government agencies. In contrast, residents of South Baraan chose to migrate and engaged in conflicts over water sources with neighbors.

In conclusion, it can be stated that the geographical location of a village and its culture of community participation play a significant role in shaping strategies to mitigate the impacts of drought and climate change.

Keywords: climate change, adaptation, cultural factor, Isfahan Province, Iran

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1. Introduction

Climate change is one of the most complex challenges facing the world today. An increase in the mean seasonal temperature can reduce the duration of many crops, leading to lower yields. In regions where temperatures are already near the maximum tolerance for crops, warming will have an even more immediate impact (Clarke et al., 2019). Climate change is inevitable in Iran. Over the past 50 years, Iran has experienced an average temperature increase of approximately 1.5 to 2 degrees Celsius, exceeding the global average (Yazdi, 2018). The northern and southern Baraan villages in Isfahan Province are located in the arid climate of the Zayandeh River basin, and their livelihoods depend on the Zayandeh River (Fig. 1). In this region, recent droughts and rising air temperatures have led to severe water shortage problems. This has led to a 72% reduction in cultivated areas and a decrease in household income (Kiani Salami and

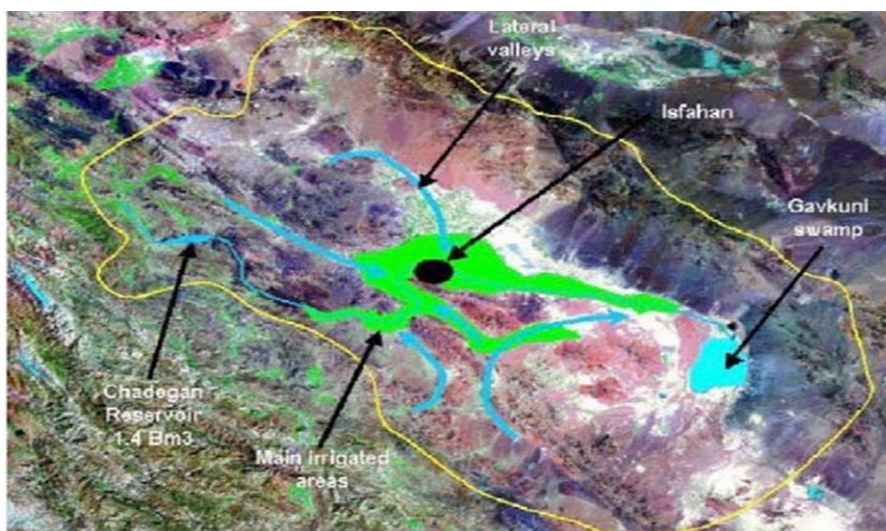


Fig. 1. Zayandeh River located in Isfahan Province with its irrigated areas

Amini Faskhoodi, 2018).

As climatic conditions change, communities respond by adjusting economic activities, changing land use practices, introducing public health initiatives to combat heat hazards, and altering the design and implementation of infrastructure.

Robert Chambers emphasized the role that ordinary people play in the process of development, a role that is embedded in what sociologists refer to as „indigenous knowledge“. Among villagers he includes not only farmers who produce crops in large and small patches of land but also buyers of such crops, salespeople of agricultural products, and other rural people whose primary income is not derived from cultivated land (Azkia and Firouzabadi, 2006). Generally, the relevance and need to understand and integrate culture, as well as local knowledge into issues of climate change adaptation and development processes have long been recognized. While this may seem to be the case, it is also widely acknowledged that the integration of these elements will greatly enhance drought management, information dissemination and preparedness (Adaawen, 2021). Adaptation responses may be anticipatory (proactive), concurrent (during) or reactive (responsive) (Watson et al., 2001). Adaptation responses can be short-term or longerterm; employed locally; or more widespread and can be technological, behavioral, financial, institutional or informational (Smit et al., 2000). In response to the challenges posed by climate change, some villagers have developed adaptive solutions. These include selling agricultural land, reducing the diversity and cultivated area, and transitioning to service jobs to address their financial difficulties (Firouzabadi and Khamseh, 2023).

Within the literature, clusters describing farmer classification are often created with the intention of deriving implications for rural policy design (Hien et al., 2014). The classification of farmers seeks to classify farmers as “types” (Arbuckle et al., 2017); on the basis of shared perceptions. This classification is appropriate for improving the understanding of the factors influencing the adoption of agricultural practices (Hyland et al., 2016; Robert et al., 2017).

Several studies have been conducted on the various responses of farmers to climate change around the world. Maldonado-Méndez et al. (2022) analyzed three key determining dimensions for classifying producers in Mexico: producer sensitivity, production destination, and production risk due to climate change. This study aimed to identify which types of producers face the most significant challenges in today’s production environment. Foguesatto et al. (2019) conducted a study on farmers’ perceptions and responses to climate change in Brazil and identified four

distinct types of farmers: „Worried“, „Apathetic“, „Anthropocentric“, and „Eco centric“. Each group has responded to climate change in a different way. Adams (2019) investigated variations in responses to vulnerability from climate-related disasters. The study revealed that residents often engage in multiple economic activities to increase their economic status and reduce vulnerability. Shukla et al. (2019) highlighted significant differences in the perceived impacts of climate change on annual income, food self-sufficiency, crop quality, water resources, and social bonds, emphasizing the diverse concerns of farmers in the Himalayas.

Nazari Nooghabi et al. (2020) conducted a survey on the differentiation of vulnerability among wheat farmers in Northeast Iran and its implications for their adaptive capacity. The results revealed three distinct clusters of vulnerability. Based on Keshavarz et al. (2010) three types of drought management could be constructed by farmers: (i) technical (reducing cultivation, improving water conveyance systems, constructing water reservoirs, and lining canals), (ii) psych economic (migrating, finding a second job, and selling lands), and (iii) integrated. Karami (2006) studied farmer's irrigation methods considering drought and resulted that more than a quarter of the farmers were either inappropriate adopters or inappropriate non-adopters.

Although studies have been conducted in Iran on farmers' behavior in fields such as drought and climate change, none have focused on their response to climate change with a focus on cultural factors. This study aims to fill this gap by examining different types of farmer behaviors in response to climate change, taking into account cultural differences.

The main goals of this study are to delineate and characterize various types of farmers' base on: (1) the characteristics of their village of residence, (2) their management practices within the village, and (3) the differences in response to climate change that result from these characteristics.

2. Materials and methods

2.1 Study area

Isfahan Province covers an area of approximately 105,937 square kilometers, situated between 30 degrees and 43 minutes to 34 degrees and 27 minutes north, and is 49 degrees and 36 minutes to 55 degrees and 31

Climate Change and Cultural Considerations in Two Villages of Isfahan Province, Iran
minutes east longitudes from the Greenwich meridian. The province is divided into two regions: high (west and central) and low (east) (Fig. 2).

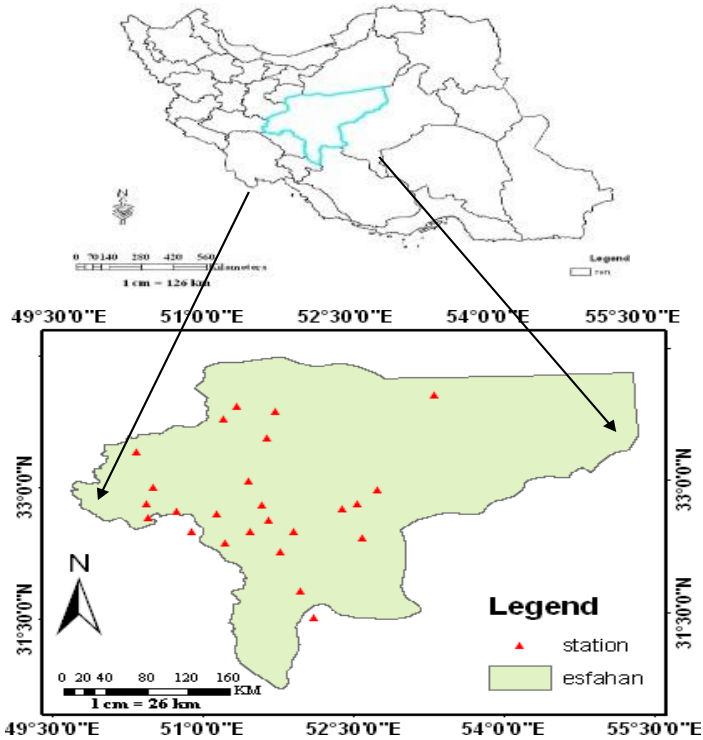


Fig. 2. Geography location of study area in Iran

Baraan is a vast, flat plain with abundant water, leading to dry desert in the surrounding area. The historical plain was characterized by many water, reeds, and marshes, particularly due to its proximity to the Zayandeh River (Shafaghi, 2006). However, drought, exacerbated by changes and disruptions in the climatic balance in recent decades, has had a significant impact on various aspects of human societies and the natural environment (Norouzi and Teymouri, 2015).

The study was conducted in two villages, one located in northern Baraan and the other in southern Baraan. In these villages, most of the grain work was done. The villages that had aqueducts also engaged in summer work,

cultivating watermelon and cotton. River water was used for growing rice, irrigating gardens, and summer work, and then directed to the fields in the fall to grow wheat and barley. However, due to drought conditions, farmers have stopped growing certain crops and are now cultivating fewer crops.

2.2 Data acquisition

Before entering the field, four individual interviews and one group interview were conducted with seven organizational informants (five men and two women) from various organizations within Isfahan Province to ensure the selection of the appropriate area, which led to the selection of two villages in North and South Baraan. Using snowball and targeted sampling methods and considering theoretical saturation, a total of 29 semistructured individual interviews were subsequently conducted during five trips to the study area. These interviews involved 40 participants (30 men and 10 women) who were local informants and village residents. Additionally, three group interviews were conducted with members of the studied society. Group interviews lasting approximately one and a half to two hours were conducted with two groups of four people and one group of three people.

The purpose of this study is to gain a deep understanding of the current situation of local communities affected by the consequences of climate change and determine the reasons for the varying responses of farmers in these two villages to the same conditions. During the data analysis stage, the recorded interviews were edited and converted into text. After sorting the collected data, the analysis began. The interviews were examined line by line and the sentences and paragraphs were coded as basic concepts emerged. After cleaning and removing similar concepts, 157 concepts remained out of the initial 215. The main research questions were subsequently answered via a thematic analysis approach.

3. Results

3.1 Regional situation

Global warming and mismanagement of government organizations have had detrimental effects on the environment. This situation has led to various events that have negatively impacted the region's natural resources like water, soil, vegetation and air. For this reason, these resources have been depleted to the point of destruction.

Changes in temperature have reduced rainfall and water in the region is noticeably scarce. Additionally, this area has been home to numerous aqueducts since ancient times. However, due to climate change and geothermal heat, these aqueducts have also dried up. Over the past 18 years, the region has experienced a gradual decrease in rainfall, resulting in numerous challenges for farmers and residents, making life and livelihood increasingly difficult each year.

Also, geothermal activity and drought have both contributed to a decrease in soil quality in this region. Field observations indicate that the soil in the eastern region of Isfahan has become discolored and lumpy. In most areas, the growth of Alhagi, a highly droughtresistant plant, has been observed. The presence of this plant is an indication of severe dryness in the area. The depletion of underground water resources has also led to subsidence in this region. Additionally, the depletion of surface and underground water resources has severely damaged the vegetation in the region.

Due to climate change and government agencies' ability to close rivers for 10 months to allocate water, the air in the region has become extremely hot. Additionally, the reduction in water resources has led to desertification of the area, resulting in sand storms. The reduction in Zayandeh River water has also resulted in a loss of biodiversity in the region. According to older residents, prior to the drought, the wetlands surrounding the Zayandeh River were home to animals such as foxes, jackals, and various species of birds. Additionally, there was a species of carp in the river that villagers would catch and sell to generate income. Unfortunately, this type of fish has now disappeared.

3.2 The situation of farmers

3.2.1 Economic issues

It is evident that the losses of assets and decreases in agricultural production have led to economic hardship and livelihood challenges for village residents. Farmers used to have multiple sources of income from growing various crops, but now their cultivation is limited to only a few. Additionally, those who had to give up animal husbandry due to expensive fodder also experienced a loss of income. On one hand, farmers have lost a portion of their income, and on the other hand, they now have to spend part of their income on purchasing items like beets and summer vegetables that

they used to produce and consume themselves. Additionally, the procurement of meat and dairy products has become a household expense. Prior to the drought, these expenses were not incurred by the family, as the farmer would produce them for personal consumption. This scenario, characterized by high levels of job insecurity, has pushed farmers into poverty and deprivation.

3.2.2 Social issues

Climate change and drought along with economic challenges, have led to numerous social issues in villages including the following:

- **Migration:** Many residents, especially village youth have been forced to leave in search of sources of income. They now live in cities and work in jobs that, according to their parents, are not worthy of them but are better than unemployment.
- **Aging population:** The migration and departure of young people from villages have led to the issue of an aging population in the village.
- **Conflict:** The depletion of water resources and challenges in accessing them have resulted in conflicts and eroded trust among villagers, as well as between them and government organizations.
- **Changing job structure:** Due to drought, agriculture is no longer the dominant occupation of villagers. Instead, most residents of both villages are now engaged in service jobs to cover their living expenses.
- **Emergence of a new social class:** After agriculture in villages has failed, the sale of agricultural land has become a popular way to combat poverty. In the process, a new social class comprising land dealers emerged. According to villagers, these brokers are now among the wealthiest individuals in communities (Fig 3).

Notably, the issues discussed in this section are more severe in South Baraan village than in North Baraan village. The reasons for this distinction will be explained in the following sections.

3.3. Different responses from the farmers

There is persistent diversity within farming communities, stemming from various social, economic, cultural, and institutional factors. As a result, farmers in this region do not form a homogenous group; instead, specific

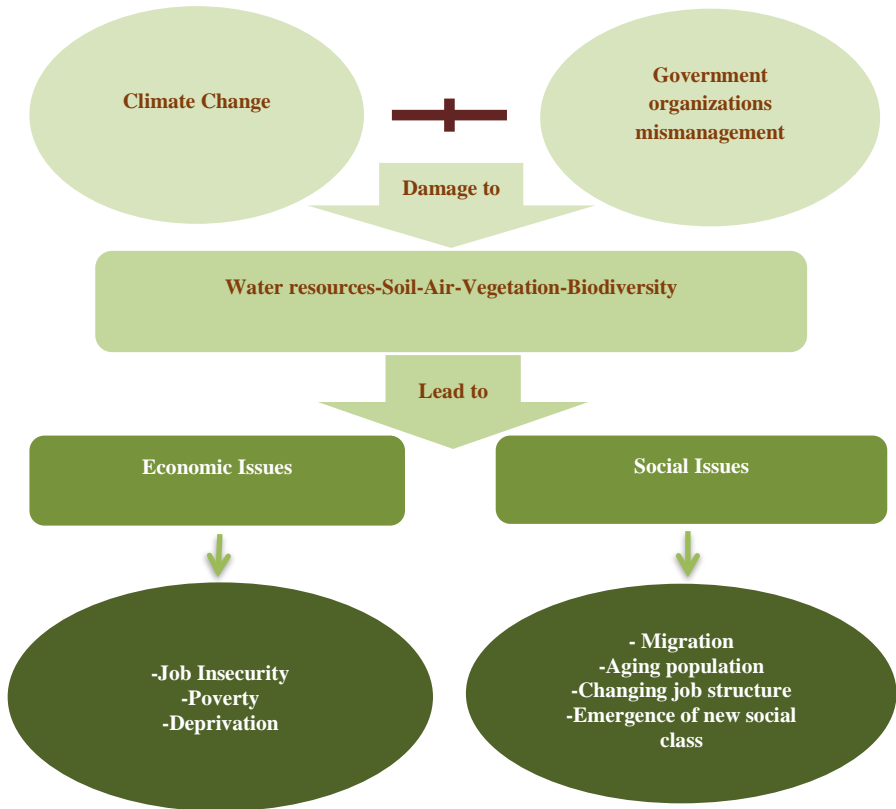


Fig. 3: The situation of environment and its effect on villagers

subgroups or farmer types, exist. Within this classification, we have observed that cultural distinctions have emerged in these two villages due to factors such as their proximity to urban centers and the presence or absence of traditional forms of participation. These disparities have resulted in different reactions to climate change and drought in each village.

3.3.1. Migration

Following climate change and drought in the studied area, the younger generation in South Baraan village has been compelled to migrate to nearby cities in search of employment opportunities. On the other hand, the situation in North Baraan village is vastly different. Situated just 10 km from

Isfahan city, North Baraan village is closer to other major cities compared to South Baraan village, which is 25 km away. Due to this proximity, residents of cities like Isfahan and Sepahan have a strong desire to temporarily reside in North Baraan village. To fulfill this desire, urban residents have purchased agricultural lands and transformed them into private villas. Presently, only a portion of these lands can be cultivated, with a significant part being converted into villas. These urban dwellers choose to reside in North Baraan village during the hot months of the year, when living in cities becomes challenging due to extreme temperatures, allowing them to enjoy pleasant weather. Additionally, several tourism complexes have been established in North Baraan village, providing temporary stays for those seeking to spend weekends in a charming village and relish nature. The influx of urban dwellers into villages has led to the creation of jobs related to urban life that were previously nonexistent in the village. These jobs include:

- Maids at tourism complexes: Tourism complexes require a workforce capable of providing proper services to tourists. Some residents of Baraan North village are now employed in the tourism complexes established in the village.
- Ready-meal shops: villagers sometimes prefer to buy food from these stores instead of cooking at home. Urban dwellers who temporarily stay in their villas in the village are also frequent customers of these stores.
- Caretaking: The private villas have created a new job opportunity for villagers to look after the villas for ensuring that the equipment and facilities are safe from thieves, as well as cleaning and maintaining the villas.
- Delivery person: Those in this role are responsible for delivering various items such as groceries, prepared foods and other goods from stores to their buyers. Online taxi driving: With the increase in travelers and temporary residents in North Baraan village, the demand for online taxi driving jobs has become apparent.

As a result, some villagers have purchased taxis and entered the business.

- Vegetable and fruit processing: After agriculture decline, some rural women, have started processing fruits and vegetables and sell these products to temporary residents of the village.

Due to the job opportunities in North Baraan village, residents choose to remain there instead of migrating to cities. Additionally, farmers from the eastern region of Isfahan are also coming to the village in search of work.

Significantly, the villagers of South Baraan village also sold their land to urban dwellers. However, the number of villas and jobs in South Baraan is much lower than that in North Baraan.

3.3.2. Participation in conserving water resources

The residents of North Baraan have largely maintained the spirit of cooperation and traditional methods of participating in the use of water resources. This cultural factor has played a significant role in the appropriate consumption and preservation of the village's limited water resources:

3.3.2.1. Constructing water storage pools

In response to requests from the farmers, the Agricultural Service Center of Isfahan Province constructed a communal water storage pool for the villagers. According to interviews, these communal water storage pools have proven to be an effective way to collect water from village canals, store it, and utilize it during crop cultivation. Currently, there are several shared pools in North Baraan village, one of which has 60 members.

3.3.2.2. Repairing water transition canals

According to the farmers, water was being wasted in parts of the water channels that were not piped, where the water flowed in earthen channels, or in areas where the water pipes were broken. By repairing these canals, farmers were able to prevent significant water wastage.

3.3.3. Conflict

After the drought, farmers have entered into conflicts both with each other and with government agencies. Government organizations in Iran, like those in many countries in the Middle East, are responsible for managing water resources. Limited access to water resources in the region has led to disputes between residents of neighboring villages. These issues have



Fig.4. A valve divides the water between South Baraan village and the downstream village. A guard is assigned in this area to take care of the water distribution. Water theft from the village occurs when someone secretly opens the valve and redirects the water to the downstream village. Source: field observations

resulted in water theft from neighboring villages, causing concern for the farmers of South Baraan village. A valve was installed between the water channels of South Baraan village and the downstream village to divide the water between the two villages (Fig. 4). The rule states that when allocating the water share of South Baraan village, the valve should be closed to ensure that the water does not flow to the downstream village. However, the downstream villagers are constantly trying to take more than their fair share of water. Therefore, residents of South Baraan have assigned a guard to watch over the water distribution valve to prevent theft of water.

In this context, the key distinction between these two villages is that, conflicts among farmers and their neighbors or with people from neighboring villages, is more common in South Baraan village compared to North Baraan village.

3.3.4. Reliance on local organizations

For years, farmers in South Baraan village have been attempting to negotiate with government organizations for water allocation for their agricultural lands with the assistance of local organizations. However, these local organizations have not been very successful in securing the water share for South Baraan village.

In contrast, the residents of North Baraan village have relied less on local organizations and instead negotiate with government organizations through influential individuals who are temporary residents of the village. They seek to secure their fair share of water resources with the assistance of these influential figures (Table 1).

Table 1: Areas of difference between two villages

| Areas of Differences | Villages | |
|--|--|---|
| | North Baraan | South Baraan |
| Migration | Villagers have stayed put in the village because of job opportunities | Villagers have migrated to nearby cities in search of jobs |
| Participation in conserving water resources | Villagers have been trying to conserve water resources by taking actions such as constructing water storage pools and repairing water canals collaboratively | Collaborative actions rarely take place in the village |
| Conflict | Villagers are in conflict with government organizations over access to water resources | Villagers are in conflict with their neighbors over access to water resources |
| Reliance on local organizations | Villagers rely more on influential individuals than on local organizations | Villagers rely on local organizations |

4. Discussion

In this study, we developed a rural classification to examine how cultural factors drive the varied responses of local communities to climate change.

We present the results of our research through a case study conducted in Isfahan Province, Iran. The innovation of this study lies in the fact that no previous research has been conducted on the classification of farmers in response to climate change in Iran considering cultural factors.

4.1. Employment opportunities

In response to climate change, North Baraan villagers diversified their sources of income. Meanwhile, residents in South Baraan village either relocated or simply sold their lands without taking any further action. This aligns with the findings of Adams (2019). When villagers have access to job opportunities within their village, they are less likely to consider leaving the village. Immigration presents its own set of challenges and problems. Several studies have revealed the importance of rural tourism in creating employment opportunities in rural areas (Haldar, 2007; Pröbstl-Haider et al., 2014; Lun et al., 2016).

The tourist attractions in North Baraan village have attracted urban dwellers to the area, creating job opportunities and potential income for the villagers. However, unlike their counterparts in South Baraan village, this village has not been as successful in attracting tourists because of two reasons. First, South Baraan is farther from major cities like Isfahan and Sepahan compared to North Baraan, making urban dwellers more inclined to purchase land in the latter, closer to their urban residences. Second, North Baraan has a more favorable climate than South Baraan, making it a more attractive choice for urban dwellers. Therefore, while migration from South Baraan village to the cities occurred, North Baraan village also received immigrants.

The possibility of staying in the village has created another cultural difference between the residents of the two villages. The people of North Baraan village have a strong attachment to their village, which makes them feel responsible for the problems and situation of it faces. This feeling not only strengthens the social bond between people, but also fosters a sense of community. In contrast, the residents of South Baraan village who were forced to leave do not share the same connection to their village.

4.2. The forgotten factor

The occurrence of drought led to the villagers to implement solutions such as reducing cultivation, improving water transition canals, constructing water storage pools, lining canals, migrating, finding a second job, and selling land. These findings are consistent with those of Keshavarz et al. (2010).

The tradition of participation has long existed in the villages of Iran. In the traditional management system of water resource exploitation in agriculture under the Lord and serf system in Iran, the construction of aqueducts, the creation of traditional channels from rivers and the maintenance and dredging of aqueducts to the farm were the responsibilities of lords and serfs based on the amount of their water share (Fallah Rastgar et al., 2011). However, after the land reforms of the 1960s, when government organizations took over the management of the villages, they increased the villagers' dependence on the government and decreased their spirit of self-reliance and participation (Taleb and Najafi Asl, 2010). Nevertheless, this feature still exists among rural people in some areas like North Baraan village, although the participation rate is not as high as it was in the past. Regarding the optimal use of scarce water resources, there is a noticeable difference between the two villages. North Baraan villagers have had communal wells for a long time, whereas few people in this village have private wells. People have believed that, when there are 10 wells on one road, the water in all of them is scarce. This way of thinking has maintained a culture of participation among the villagers. According to the interviews, this cultural difference has encouraged people to address not only water and agriculture related issues, but also other problems in the village. These include repairing public places like the school or mosque, as well as handling financial challenges of these places, in a collaborative and cooperative manner. On the other hand, the residents of this village have taken measures to optimize the use of scarce water resources collaboratively. These people have harnessed the power to conserve limited water resources instead of engaging in conflict and war with each other.

4.3. Who is being blamed?

The conflict in South Baraan village has arisen among villagers, while North Baraan villagers have primarily clashed with government organizations responsible for distributing water to agricultural lands. Karl Wittfogel, in

his book "Oriental Despotism", introduced the idea that the development of irrigation works in Mesopotamia and Egypt led to the use of mass labor, an organizational hierarchy for coordinating and directing activities, and increased government control to ensure proper water distribution (Vidale, 2018). Despite government organizations in Iran being responsible for water allocation since ancient times, villagers often blame their neighbors and conflict with them instead of seeking answers from these organizations. This was the case in South Baraan village. The situation in North Baraan village is different. The powerful seasonal residents of North Baraan village hold a favorable view of the village residents and advocate for their demands with organizations. Favoritism means behaving better toward one person or group of people than toward others and showing the personal preferences of those who are decision-makers (Kwon, 2005). The presence of these influential individuals in North

Baraan has increased villagers' self-confidence. Based on the author's observations and considering the behavior and speech style of interviewees, residents of North Baraan exhibit more assertive behavior when addressing issues of mismanagement in Isfahan Province than those in South Baraan village. They have successfully compelled organizations to address their concerns. For example, when the drinking water in the region was polluted by industrial and urban wastewater discharge into water sources, the residents of North Baraan were the first to access safe drinking water. They achieved this by sabotaging the Zayandeh River water transfer pipe to Yazd Province and creating a branch from it.

The residents of North Baraan village have a noteworthy approach: they do not blame their neighbors for the lack of water resources, but instead attribute all related issues to the inefficiency of government organizations. Empowered by influential urban individuals in their village, they have taken a stand against these organizations. In contrast, the residents of South Baraan village, who lack the ability to confront government organizations, blame their neighbors for the drought problems, leading to conflict between the two villages.

The presence of powerful people has resulted in the development of a culture where villagers demand more from government organizations. This culture serves as a motivating factor for people to pursue their requests

from these organizations. Villagers claim that they have been successful in fulfilling their demands most of the time, which is not the case in South Baraan village.

5. Conclusion and Policy Implications

5.1. Conclusion

This study examines the different responses of farmers to climate change and its impacts in Isfahan Province, located in the central part of Iran. The findings show that climate change has led drought and damage to all types of environmental resources in the affected area. The dwindling water resources each year have caused many farmers to lose their crops and struggle to make ends meet after a drought.

In the early years of coping with drought and climate change, the residents of both villages implemented similar solutions. These solutions included reducing the amount of cultivation and limiting the diversity of agricultural crops. However, as the effects of climate change worsened and conditions of life in the villages changed, the responses of the village residents diverged. Residents of North Baraan village diversified their sources of income by moving to non-water occupations, allowing them to stay in the village. In contrast, residents of South Baraan village migrated to nearby cities in search of jobs and income.

To explain this variety, the distance of the village from major cities, especially Isfahan city, and its favorable climate may explain the differing reactions of the villagers to common issues. These responses can help enhance people's ability to adapt to challenges and problems related to drought and water scarcity, which are issues facing the entire country today. In addition to geographical factors, the longstanding sense of participation among the residents of the village in North Baraan, combined with the preservation of rural values and traditions, has strengthened a culture of participation that continues to persist among these individuals to a significant degree. In this way, the villagers have been able to protect the scarce water sources. Climate change is not an issue that can be mitigated by individuals alone. However, the residents of North Baraan village have been able to reduce the consequences and effects of these changes on the lives of the villagers. While our study outlines the different responses of

farmers to climate change, further research is necessary to elucidate the socio-psychological factors driving these behaviors.

The findings of these studies can be helpful in formulating strategies to address climate change and drought, which are currently affecting various parts of Iran.

5.2. Policy Implications

1. Iran is situated in an arid and semi-arid region of the earth, where climate changes have led to drought in many areas of the country. Therefore, it is recommended to prioritize the cultivation of crops that require less water.
2. Given the long standing history of drought in Iran and the increasingly severe conditions in recent years; it is preferable for there to be a greater number of non-agricultural jobs compared to agricultural jobs.
3. An important measure may solve the problems related to climate change and drought is to revise the water resources management methods and correct the mismanagement that has been applied by relevant organizations for more than four decades.
4. Prioritizing agriculture's allocation of water resources can help alleviate economic issues that contribute to migration, an aging population, and unemployment.
5. Climate change could be mitigated through actions such as transitioning to green fuels instead of fossil fuels, utilizing solar energy instead of gas energy, and replacing gasoline and diesel used by transportation vehicles with environmentally friendly fuels.

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Ali Schariati und Emile Durkheims Religionssoziologie

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Zusammenfassung:

Als der iranische Soziologe Ali Schariati Anfang der 1960er Jahre nach Frankreich kam und 1964 an der Pariser Sorbonne promovierte, wurde er als Student der Soziologie nicht nur mit marxistischen Ideen, sondern v.a. auch mit der Religionssoziologie Émile Durkheims konfrontiert. Für Schariati, der sich der Religion zugewandt hatte und eine revolutionäre Interpretation des Islam entwickelte, stellte Durkheims Soziologie in mehrfacher Hinsicht eine große Herausforderung dar. Dem französischen Soziologen Émile Durkheim wird nicht nur das Verdienst zugeschrieben, die Soziologie als formale Disziplin in Europa etabliert, sondern ihr durch die Übernahme der Methoden der Naturwissenschaften bei der Untersuchung der Gesellschaft auch eine wissenschaftliche Basis verliehen zu haben. Seine Methodik entspringt dem Positivismus, einem Konzept, das erstmals vom französischen Mathematiker und Philosophen Auguste Comte (1798-1857) eingeführt wurde. Der Positivismus Durkheims stellte für Schariati gewissermaßen eine „methodische Herausforderung“ dar, da er alles Metaphysische und Religiöse als unwissenschaftlich verwarf. Weiterhin gilt Durkheim auch als Begründer des Funktionalismus, der die Religion letztlich nur in der Bedeutung ihrer gesellschaftlichen Funktion würdigte, was für Schariati als religiösen Menschen, für den die Religion eine ganz besondere Bedeutung hatte, ein Problem darstellen musste. Ein weiterer wichtiger Punkt ist der, dass Durkheim in seinem Werk *Les formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse* („Die elementaren Formen des religiösen Lebens“) bei seiner Untersuchung des Totemismus in einem Stamm der australischen Aborigines die Urreligion der Menschheit entdeckt zu haben glaubte, was eine wirkliche Herausforderung für Schariatis Denken darstellte. In diesem Artikel sollen zunächst die drei angesprochenen bedeutenden Aspekte der Religionssoziologie Durkheims kurz dargestellt werden und der iranische Soziologe Ali Schariati dem deutschen Leser kurz vorgestellt werden. Anschließend wird Schariatis Auseinandersetzung mit der Durkheimschen Religionssoziologie anhand dieser Punkte verdeutlicht und seine Denkweise dabei herausgestellt. Die Ergebnisse werden am Ende zusammengefasst

Schlagwörter: Ali Schariati, Emile Durkheim, Religionssoziologie, Totemismus, Urreligion

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علی شریعتی و جامعه‌شناسی دین امیل دورکیم

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چکیده:

زمانی که جامعه‌شناس ایرانی، علی شریعتی، در اوایل دهه‌ی ۱۹۶۰ میلادی به فرانسه رفت و در سال ۱۹۶۴ در دانشگاه سوربن پاریس دکترای خود را دریافت کرد، نه تنها با ایده‌های مارکسیستی، بلکه به‌ویژه با جامعه‌شناسی دین امیل دورکیم نیز آشنا شد. برای شریعتی، که به دین روی آورده بود و تفسیری انقلابی از اسلام ارائه می‌داد، جامعه‌شناسی دورکیم از جهات مختلف چالشی بزرگ محسوب می‌شد. امیل دورکیم، جامعه‌شناس فرانسوی، نه تنها به‌عنوان کسی که جامعه‌شناسی را به‌عنوان یک رشته‌ی علمی در اروپا تثبیت کرد شناخته می‌شود، بلکه از طریق بهره‌گیری از روش‌های علوم طبیعی در مطالعه‌ی جامعه، مبنای علمی محکمی برای آن فراهم آورد. روش‌شناسی او برگرفته از اثبات‌گرایی (پوزیتیویسم) است، مفهومی که نخستین بار توسط ریاضیدان و فیلسوف فرانسوی، آگوست کنت (۱۷۹۸-۱۸۵۷)، مطرح شد.

اثبات‌گرایی دورکیم، برای شریعتی تا حدی یک «چالش روش‌شناختی» محسوب می‌شد، زیرا این نگرش، هرگونه امور ماوراءالطبیعی و دینی را غیرعلمی تلقی می‌کرد. علاوه بر این، دورکیم به‌عنوان بنیان‌گذار کارکردگرایی نیز شناخته می‌شود؛ مکتبی که دین را صرفاً از منظر کارکرد اجتماعی آن مورد توجه قرار می‌دهد. این دیدگاه، برای شریعتی که فردی مذهبی بود و برای دین جایگاهی خاص قائل بود، چالشی جدی به‌شمار می‌آمد.

یکی دیگر از نکات مهم، نظریه‌ی دورکیم در کتاب اشکال ابتدایی حیات دینی (Les formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse) است. او در این اثر، با مطالعه‌ی توتمیسم در یکی از قبایل بومی استرالیا، معتقد شد که دین اولیه‌ی بشریت را کشف کرده است. این ادعا، چالشی اساسی برای اندیشه‌ی شریعتی محسوب می‌شد.

در این مقاله، ابتدا سه جنبه‌ی مهم جامعه‌شناسی دین دورکیم به‌طور مختصر بررسی می‌شود و جامعه‌شناس ایرانی، علی شریعتی، به خوانندگان آلمانی معرفی خواهد شد. سپس، مواجهه‌ی شریعتی با جامعه‌شناسی دین دورکیم بر اساس این موارد تحلیل شده و نحوه‌ی تفکر او روشن خواهد شد. در پایان، نتایج این بررسی جمع‌بندی می‌شود.

واژگان کلیدی: علی شریعتی، امیل دورکیم، جامعه‌شناسی دین، توتمیسم، دین نخستین

Ali Schariati and Emile Durkheim's Sociology of Religion

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Abstract

When the Iranian sociologist Ali Shariati came to France in the early 1960s and received his doctorate at the Sorbonne, Paris, in 1964, he was confronted not only with Marxist ideas as a student of sociology, but also with the sociology of religion of Émile Durkheim. For Schariati, who had turned to religion and developed a revolutionary interpretation of Islam, Durkheim's sociology posed a major challenge in several respects. The French sociologist Émile Durkheim is not only credited with establishing sociology as a formal discipline in Europe, but also with giving it a scientific basis by adopting the methods of the natural sciences in the study of society. His methodology stems from positivism, a concept first introduced by the French mathematician and philosopher Auguste Comte (1798-1857). To a certain extent, Durkheim's positivism represented a 'methodological challenge' for Schariati, since he rejected everything metaphysical and religious as unscientific. Furthermore, Durkheim is also considered the founder of functionalism, which ultimately only appreciated religion in terms of its social function, which had to pose a problem for Schariati as a religious person for whom religion had a very special meaning. Another important point is that Durkheim believed he had discovered the original religion of humanity in his work *Les formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse* ('The elementary forms of religious life') in his study of totemism in an Australian aboriginal tribe, which was a real challenge for Schariati's thinking. In this article, the three important aspects of Durkheim's sociology of religion will first be briefly presented and the Iranian sociologist Ali Shariati will be briefly introduced to the German reader. Subsequently, Shariati's examination of Durkheim's sociology of religion will be illustrated on the basis of these points and his way of thinking will be highlighted. The results will be summarised at the end.

Keywords: Ali Shariati, Emile Durkheim, sociology of religion, totemism, religion

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1. Forschungsfrage und Vorgehensweise

Als der iranische Soziologe Ali Schariati Anfang der 1960er Jahre nach Frankreich kam und 1964 an der Pariser *Sorbonne* promovierte, wurde er als Student der Soziologie nicht nur mit marxistischen Ideen, sondern v.a. auch mit der Religionssoziologie Émile Durkheims konfrontiert. Für Schariati, der sich der Religion zugewandt hatte und eine revolutionäre Interpretation des Islam entwickelte, stellte Durkheims Soziologie sein Denken in mehrfacher Hinsicht vor größere Schwierigkeiten.

In diesem Artikel soll dargestellt werden, wie Schariati der Herausforderung durch Durkheims Religionssoziologie begegnete. Man kann konstatieren, dass diese Schwierigkeiten insbesondere in drei wichtigen Punkten deutlich wurden. So stellte Durkheims Positivismus für Schariati zunächst einmal eine „methodische Herausforderung“ dar, da Durkheim damit alles Metaphysische und Religiöse als „unwissenschaftlich“ verwarf. Weiterhin gilt Durkheim auch als Begründer des Funktionalismus, der die Religion letztlich nur in der Bedeutung ihrer gesellschaftlichen Funktion würdigte, was für Schariati als religiösen Menschen ein großes Problem darstellen musste. Ein weiterer wichtiger Punkt ist der, dass Durkheim (in seinem Werk *Les formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse* („Die elementaren Formen des religiösen Lebens“)) bei seiner Untersuchung des Totemismus in einem Stamm der australischen Aborigines die Urreligion der Menschheit entdeckt zu haben glaubte, was eine wirkliche Herausforderung für Schariatis Denken darstellte.

In diesem Artikel sollen zunächst die drei angesprochenen bedeutenden Aspekte der Religionssoziologie Durkheims kurz dargestellt werden und anschließend Ali Schariatis Auseinandersetzung mit ihnen erörtert werden. Dabei wird zu verdeutlichen versucht, wie Schariati auf die Herausforderung durch die Durkheimsche Religionssoziologie reagierte und sich mit ihr auseinandersetzte. Die Ergebnisse werden am Schluss zusammengefasst.

2. Zur Bedeutung von Émile Durkheims Soziologie

Der am 15. April 1858 in Épinal, Frankreich, geborene Émile Durkheim wird neben dem französischen Mathematiker und Philosophen Auguste Comte (1898-1957) auch häufig als zweiter Gründer der Soziologie angesehen. Auf Durkheim ist es übrigens auch zurückzuführen, dass Auguste Comtes Positivismus (mit dem wir uns später näher befassen) einen so großen Einfluss auf die Soziologie des 20. Jahrhunderts nehmen konnte. (Giddens 1999, S. 39)

Émile Durkheim trug dazu bei, die Soziologie als formale akademische Disziplin zu etablieren, indem er 1895 die erste europäische Abteilung für Soziologie an der Universität Bordeaux gründete und im selben Jahr seine Regeln der soziologischen Methode veröffentlichte. In seiner Schrift *Arbeitsteilung in der Gesellschaft* (1893) stellte Durkheim weitere Überlegungen an und seine Theorie darüber vor, wie sich Gesellschaften von einem primitiven Staat in eine kapitalistische Industriegesellschaft verwandeln konnten. Laut Durkheim steigen Menschen aufgrund ihrer Verdienste auf die ihnen zustehende Stufe in der Gesellschaft auf. Durkheim glaubte, dass Soziologen objektive soziale Fakten untersuchen könnten (Poggi 2000, S. 56). Er glaubte auch, dass es durch solche Studien möglich sein würde, festzustellen, ob eine Gesellschaft „gesund“ oder „pathologisch“ sei. Gesunde Gesellschaften waren stabil, während in pathologischen Gesellschaften die sozialen Normen zusammenbrachen.

1887 stellte Durkheim seine Konzeption von der Soziologie als Wissenschaft dar (*La Science Positive de la Morale en Allemagne*). Mit seinen 1895 verfassten *Les règles de la méthode sociologique* ("Regeln der soziologischen Methode") liefert Durkheim eine Anleitung für das soziologische Arbeiten und versuchte, eine systematische Soziologie zu entwickeln. Von Comte übernahm Durkheim die Auffassung, dass das Ganze mehr als die Summe seiner Teile ist, was in diesem Fall auf die Gesellschaft übertragen wird. Durkheim interessiert sich im Wesentlichen für das, was die Gesellschaft zusammenhält. Der methodische Rahmen für alle seine späteren Arbeiten wurde in seinen „Regeln der soziologischen Methode“ entwickelt. Er analysierte soziale Fakten, die sich mit den methodischen Problemen der Nutzung empirischer Forschung in der wissenschaftlichen Untersuchung der Gesellschaft auseinandersetzten. Durkheim definierte die Soziologie

als eine Wissenschaft sozialer Fakten. Die Gesellschaft ist demnach die Realität *sui generis*. Nach Durkheim sind nur soziale Tatsachen real, objektiv und von außen wahrnehmbar. Man kann die sozialen Fakten nur durch soziologische Gesetze verstehen, es gibt demnach keine psychologische Erklärung für diese Tatsachen. Die Soziologie kann Durkheim zufolge nicht durch das Prinzip des Nutzens oder der Motivation des Einzelnen erklärt werden. Durkheim folgte dem Positivismus von Auguste Comte (1798-1857), worauf an anderer Stelle noch ausführlicher eingegangen wird. Er forderte einen Bruch mit den bisherigen philosophischen Tendenzen im Umgang mit sozialen Fakten. Stattdessen müsse die Soziologie eine empirische Wissenschaft sein, die angewandt wird, um soziale Gesetzmäßigkeiten zu entdecken. Wenn Soziologie nach Durkheim nicht wissenschaftlich angewandt werde, sei sie für die Gesellschaft wertlos. Für Durkheim ist die Gesellschaft die höchste Ordnung und sie benötigt demnach eine unabhängige Wissenschaft, die Gesetzmäßigkeiten entdeckt und die Gesellschaft sowohl empirisch als auch objektiv erklären kann.

Im Jahr 1897 versuchte Durkheim die Wirksamkeit seiner Regeln der Sozialforschung zu demonstrieren, als er ein Werk mit dem Titel *Le Suicide: Étude de sociologie* veröffentlichte. Durkheim untersuchte Selbstmord-statistiken in verschiedenen Polizeibezirken, um Unterschiede zwischen katholischen und protestantischen Gemeinden zu untersuchen. Er unterscheidet darin den egoistischen, altruistischen und „anomischen“ Selbstmord. Er führte die Unterschiede eher auf sozio-religiöse Kräfte als auf individuelle oder psychologische Ursachen zurück. Seine Studie über den Selbstmord (*Le Suicide: Étude de sociologie*) wurde zum Musterbeispiel der empirischen Sozialforschung.

Einen Großteil seiner akademischen Laufbahn verbrachte Durkheim mit dem Studium der Religionen, insbesondere mit den Religionen kleiner Stammesgesellschaften. Ihn interessierte vor allem der Totemismus im primitiven Verwandtschaftssystem der australischen Ureinwohner als „elementare“ Form der Religion. Diese Forschung bildete die Grundlage für Durkheims Werk *Les formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse* („Die elementaren Formen des religiösen Lebens“) aus dem Jahr 1912, welches zu den bekanntesten Studien der

Religionssoziologie gehört. Durkheim betrachtete die Religion im Kontext der Gesellschaft und beschäftigte sich mit ihrer Rolle bei der Beeinflussung des Denkens und Verhaltens in ihr.

3. Kurzbiographie Ali Schariatīs

Der iranische Soziologe Ali Schariati wurde 1933 in Mazinan (Provinz Khorasan, Iran) geboren. Vor Beginn des 1. Weltkriegs kam es im Iran zwischen 1905 und 1911 zu einer konstitutionellen Revolution, deren Ziel es war, die Macht der Monarchie durch eine verfassungsgebende Versammlung mit gesetzgebender Autorität zu kontrollieren. Doch eine neue Dynastie löste die alte ab und der erste Monarch wurde von den Invasoren Großbritanniens und der UdSSR zur Abdankung gezwungen. Der neue Schah übernahm 1941 mit dem Segen der Briten die Macht. In dieser Zeit war Ali Schariatīs Vater, ein islamischer Gelehrter, unter den politischen Aktivisten, die sich organisierten, um eine Verletzung der Verfassung durch den Schah oder das Majlis (Parlament) zu verhindern, eine einflussreiche Persönlichkeit. Ali Schariati engagierte sich schon früh politisch. Bevor er die Hochschule abschloss, übersetzte er das Buch „*Abu Zhar: A God Worshipping Socialist*“ aus dem Arabischen ins Persische. In den 1950er Jahren trat Ali mit seinem Vater den (den damaligen Premierminister Mossadegh unterstützenden) „Gottverehrenden Sozialisten“ (Socialistha-ye Choda Parast) bei. (Khaweh 2005, S. 16) Schariati beteiligte sich seit dem Putsch von 1953, der die demokratisch gewählte Regierung von Dr. Mossadegh stürzte, aktiv am Widerstand gegen den Schah. Nach Abschluss seines Bachelor-Studiums im Iran ging er Anfang der 1960er Jahre nach Frankreich, wo er 1964 an der Pariser *Sorbonne* promovierte. Dabei wurde der Student der Soziologie nicht nur mit marxistischen Ideen, dem Existenzialismus von Jean Paul Sartre und dem politischen Denken von Frantz Fanon bekannt, sondern v.a. auch mit der Religionssoziologie Emile Durkheims konfrontiert, der doch insbesondere in Frankreich als der „Klassiker“ der Soziologie schlechthin gilt.

Für Schariati blieb jedoch auch trotz des großen Einflusses der Marxisten in dieser Zeit Imam Ali das Symbol für den Kampf gegen die Unterdrückung, er bezeichnete Ali als Sozialisten. (Kaweh 2005, S.

31). Ali Schariati wurde somit sowohl in den traditionellen Lehren des Islam als auch in den westlichen Sozialwissenschaften unterwiesen und er bemühte sich, die modernen Sozialwissenschaften mit den traditionellen Glaubens-vorstellungen des Islams zu verbinden und entwickelte auf diese Weise ein neues Paradigma der islamischen Sprache, das in der Lage war, gerade auch die jungen Leute für eine nunmehr revolutionäre islamische Welt-anschauung zu gewinnen. (Rahnema 2000, S. 128) Schariati schaffte es - auch durch seine herausragende persische Prosa und Rhetorik - zu einem beliebtesten iranischen Denker seiner Zeit zu werden, weshalb er auch einen entscheidenden Beitrag zur Revolution im Iran von 1979 leisten konnte. Ohne die Rolle von Schariati in der iranischen Revolution überzubewerten und dabei nicht auf Persönlichkeiten wie Ayatollah Morteza Motahari und Ayatollah Khomeini zu verweisen, kann man doch die Tatsache nicht leugnen, dass Ali Schariati als der Theoretiker anerkannt wurde, der "die iranische Jugend am meisten auf den revolutionären Umbruch vorbereitet hat." (Dabashi 1993, S. 106).

Während seines kurzen Lebens verfasste Ali Schariati 36 Bände seiner gesammelten Werke mit fast 18.000 Seiten über alle Aspekte des gesellschaftlichen Lebens und die philosophischen Grundlagen. Schariati beschäftigt sich darin insbesondere mit den Bereichen der Religion, Kultur und politischen Ökonomie.

Schariatis Lesart von Ibn Khaldun und seine Kritik an Durkheims Religionssoziologie nehmen einen bedeutenden Stellenwert bei Schariati ein. Einen Schwerpunkt seiner Arbeit legte er auf der Dekolonisierung der indigenen Erkenntnistheorie durch die Wiederbelebung authentischer kultureller Ressourcen als Mittel zur Emanzipation. Im Iran brachten Schariatis Interpretation und Popularisierung von Frantz Fanon (1925-1961), seine Interpretation der Lehre von Karl Marx und eine Neubewertung des revolutionären Potenzials des Schiismus ein einflussreiches Werk hervor. Ali Schariati wurde zu einem lautstarken Kritiker der Herrschaft des Schahs. Prof. Nadim Hasnain äußerte sich zum Werk von Ali Schariati wie folgt:

„Er war ein muslimischer Muhajir, der sich aus den Tiefen des Ozeans der östlichen Mystik erhob, zu den Höhen der gewaltigen Berge der

westlichen Sozialwissenschaften aufstieg und dennoch nicht überwältigt wurde, und er kehrte mit all den Juwelen dieser fantastischen Reise in unsere Mitte zurück.“ (Hasnanin 2013, S. 160)

4. Schariat's Auseinandersetzung mit Durkheims Religionssoziologie

4.1. Ablehnung des Positivismus

Émile Durkheim gilt als der Soziologe, der diese neue Wissenschaft als formale Disziplin in Europa etabliert und auch als derjenige, der ihr durch die Übernahme der Methoden der Naturwissenschaften bei der Untersuchung der Gesellschaft eine wissenschaftliche Grundlage verliehen hat. Durkheims Methodik entspringt dabei dem Positivismus, einem Konzept, das erstmals vom französischen Mathematiker und Philosophen Auguste Comte (1798-1857) eingeführt wurde. Das Charakteristische am Positivismus ist der Versuch, die Sozialwissenschaften nach dem Vorbild der Naturwissenschaften auszurichten. Es wird davon ausgegangen, dass in der Gesellschaft die gleichen Gesetze gelten würden als in der Natur. Wenn man diese Gesetze mit wissenschaftlichen Methoden entdecken kann, wäre es möglich, gesellschaftliche Probleme zu lösen und die Gesellschaft zu vervollkommen. Die Positivisten vertreten die Auffassung von der Einheit der Methoden in den Natur- und Sozialwissenschaften. Sie fordern daher, dass die Sozialwissenschaftler die naturwissenschaftlichen („positiven“) Methoden übernehmen müssten, um die Gesetzmäßigkeiten des menschlichen Zusammenlebens entdecken zu können. Nicht metaphysische Spekulationen, sondern empirische Fakten, „positive“, sinnlich wahrnehmbare, messbare und somit überprüfbare Tatsachen müssten die Grundlage von Erkenntnissen bilden. Aus methodologischer Sicht ist der Begriff „positiv“ in polemischer Abgrenzung zu den metaphysischen Abstraktionen der traditionellen Philosophie konzipiert. Durch die Anwendung der Methoden der Naturwissenschaften auch in den Geisteswissenschaften soll demnach eine einheitliche Sicht auf die in der Welt auftretenden Phänomene ermöglicht werden. Die Positivisten berücksichtigten allerdings die einfache Tatsache nicht, dass sich die Geistes- oder

Sozialwissenschaften mit dem mit einem freien Willen ausgestatteten und zur Verantwortung fähigen Menschen beschäftigt, während sich die Naturwissenschaften mit dem Bereich des "objektiv notwendigen" befassen, der wie in der Physik oder der Chemie in Gesetze gefasst werden kann. (Weber 1988) Der Positivismus stand in der Tradition der Aufklärung und war vom Fortschrittsglauben des 19. Jahrhunderts geprägt. Er ist gekennzeichnet durch die entschiedene Ablehnung von Metaphysik, Spekulation und auch der Religion.

Ali Schariati konnte es nicht akzeptieren, dass Glaube und Offenbarung im Positivismus nicht als Wissensquelle akzeptiert wurden. Schariati lehnte die Erkenntnistheorie des Positivismus in den Sozialwissenschaften ab und argumentierte, dass diese ein Ergebnis der Entwicklung in den westlichen Gesellschaften gewesen und von Traditionen geprägt sei, die wiederum ein Resultat der europäischen Geschichte (man denke z.B. an die Aufklärung) gewesen sei. Der Positivismus von Comte und Durkheim entstand in der Zeit der Industrialisierung Europas und der Entstehung des Proletariats und diese Entwicklung hatte nichts mit der zeitgenössischen sozialen Realität einer Gesellschaft wie dem Iran gemein. So hat es im islamischen Kulturkreis den Konflikt zwischen Glauben und Wissenschaft nicht gegeben, der eben zu dieser scharfen Ablehnung der Religion im Westen geführt hat. Im Hinblick auf die Analyse der iranischen Gesellschaft ist der Positivismus Schariati zufolge denkbar ungeeignet. Er machte deutlich, dass "eine Analyse der bestehenden Realitäten nur möglich ist, wenn man auf die Begriffe, Ausdrücke und Konzepte zurückgreift, die in unserer Philosophie, Kultur, Religion und Literatur existieren und die in einigen Fällen reicher und genauer sind als ihre Entsprechungen in anderen Sprachen" (Schariati 1979c, S. 31).

Ali Schariati lehnte auch die Auffassung ab, dass der Sozialwissenschaftler bei der Erforschung der Gesellschaft wertneutral sein könne. (Mushtaq 2019, S. 39) Schariati vertrat eine revolutionäre Interpretation der islamischen Weltanschauung (wie wir später noch sehen werden) und in seinem Denken stellt *der tawhīd* die Grundlage für die Untersuchung der Gesellschaft dar. Ali Schariati verstand unter

tawhīd nicht nur die Einheit Gottes, sondern die Einheit aller Dinge mit Gott in dieser Welt. Er selbst erklärt den *tawhīd* wie folgt:

„Man kann sagen, dass der *tawhīd* vom Himmel auf die Erde herabsteigt und die Kreise der philosophischen, theologischen und wissenschaftlichen Diskussion, Interpretation und Debatte verlässt und in die Angelegenheiten der Gesellschaft eintritt. Er stellt die verschiedenen Fragen, die die sozialen Beziehungen betreffen - Klassenbeziehungen, die Orientierung des Einzelnen, die verschiedenen Dimensionen der Sozialstruktur, den sozialen Überbau, die sozialen Institutionen, die Familie, die Politik, die Wirtschaft, die Kultur, das Eigentum, die Sozialethik, die Verantwortung des Einzelnen und der Gesellschaft. *Der Tawhīd* bildet somit die intellektuelle Grundlage für alle Angelegenheiten der Gesellschaft. (Schariati 1979c, S. 32)

Schariati bemühte sich, die modernen Sozialwissenschaften mit den traditionellen Glaubensvorstellungen des Islams zu verbinden. In zwei Vorträgen (*Über die Soziologie des Islam und Marxismus und andere westliche Irrtümer*" 1979 und 1980) versuchte er ein neues Paradigma islamischer Begrifflichkeiten zu entwickeln, um die iranische Gesellschaft zu analysieren und die Menschen in dieser Gesellschaft zu erreichen.

Statt empirischer Methoden betrieb Schariati Koranexegese - er betrachtete den Islam und den Koran aus soziologischer Sicht. Er vertrat die Auffassung, dass der Islam verschiedene Dimensionen und unterschiedliche Aspekte hat, und dass man den Koran aus verschiedenen Studienrichtungen betrachten und einen neuen Ansatz aus seinem Studienbereich entdecken kann. In der Religionssoziologie, versuchte er, Themen auf der Grundlage des Islams zu kodifizieren und sich dabei auf die Terminologie des Korans und der islamischen Literatur zu stützen. Er beschrieb seine Vorgehensweise wie folgt:

„Ich habe dem Koran eine ganze Reihe neuer Themen für Geschichte, Soziologie und Sozialwissenschaften entnommen. Der Koran selbst, oder der Islam selbst, war die Quelle von Ideen, philosophischen Theorien und Schemata der Soziologie und Geschichte, die sich vor mir

auftaten, und als ich sie später mit der Geschichte und der Soziologie überprüfte, stellte ich fest, dass sie völlig korrekt waren.“ (Schariati 1979c, S. 43)

4.2. Differenzen über den Ursprung der Religion

Durkheim glaubte nach seinen Forschungen und seiner ausführlichen Untersuchung des Totemismus in einem Stamm der australischen Aborigines, bei den Arrernte (Arunta), die er in seinem Werk *Les formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse* („Die elementaren Formen des religiösen Lebens“) darstellte, die Urreligion der Menschheit entdeckt zu haben (was inzwischen widerlegt ist). Ali Schariati betrachtete Durkheims Religions-soziologie als große Gefahr, weil sie die Religion auf einem hohen Niveau letztlich als ein Produkt des Menschen darstellen würde. Émile Durkheim hat demnach Schariati zufolge letztlich "die anspruchsvollste These gegen die Religion aufgestellt." (Byrd & Miri, 2018, S. 95). Damit versperre die Religionssoziologie Durkheims den Menschen den Zugang zu Gott, führe ihn in die Irre und sogar in den Abgrund der Hölle. Schariati zufolge gebührt Durkheim der zweifelhafte Verdienst, »den Totemismus als moderne soziologische These gegen die Religion konzipiert“ zu haben und dieser sollte als »die ausgefeilteste antireligiöse These in der heutigen Zeit betrachtet werden.« (Schariati 2009, S. 60). Bei seiner Studie von Totems war Durkheim bemüht, das "kollektive Bewusstsein" hervorzuheben, für das die Gesellschaft bei der Verehrung des Totems eintritt. Ali Schariati lehnte eine solche Auffassung über den Ursprung der Religionen entschieden ab und vertrat stattdessen die islamische Sichtweise, nach der der erste Mensch, Adam, bereits der erste Prophet war. Der Monotheismus war demnach die ursprüngliche religiöse Form und Gott habe im Laufe der Zeit immer wieder Propheten entsandt, wenn die Menschen den Pfad des Glaubens an den einen Gott verließen. Gott ist nach islamischer Überzeugung der Schöpfer des Universums und auch des Menschen und es verhält sich nicht so, dass die Existenz Gottes der menschlichen Vorstellung oder der menschlichen Gesellschaft entspringt.

4.3. Ali Schariati und der Funktionalismus Durkheims

Émile Durkheim gilt auch als der Begründer des „Funktionalismus“. Er glaubte, dass Menschen dazu neigen, religiöse Symbole, Gegenstände und Rituale, die heilig sind, von den alltäglichen Symbolen, Gegenständen und Routinen des Daseins, die als „profan“ bezeichnet werden, zu trennen. Oft werde dabei angenommen, dass heilige Gegenstände göttliche Eigenschaften haben, die sie von profanen Dingen unterscheiden. Selbst in fort-geschritteneren Kulturen betrachten demnach die Menschen heilige Objekte immer noch mit einem Gefühl der Ehrfurcht, auch wenn sie nicht mehr daran glauben, dass diesen Objekten eine besondere Kraft innewohnen würde.

Durkheim argumentierte auch, dass es bei Religion nie nur um den Glauben gehe, sondern auch um regelmäßige Rituale und Zeremonien seitens einer Gruppe von Gläubigen, die dann ein Gefühl der Gruppensolidarität entwickeln und stärken. Rituale seien notwendig, um die Mitglieder einer religiösen Gruppe zusammenzuhalten, und sie ermöglichten es dem Einzelnen, den alltäglichen Aspekten des täglichen Lebens in höhere Erfahrungsbereiche zu entfliehen. Heilige Rituale und Zeremonien sind besonders wichtig, um Anlässe wie Geburten, Hochzeiten, Krisenzeiten und Todesfälle zu begehen. Durkheims Religionssoziologie veranschaulicht beispielhaft, wie Funktionalisten soziologische Phänomene untersuchen. Durkheim zufolge sehen die Menschen Religion als einen Beitrag zur Stabilität und zum Fortbestand der Gesellschaft im Allgemeinen. Die Funktion der Religion besteht somit darin, die Mitglieder der Gesellschaft zu binden, indem sie sie dazu anregt, ihre gemeinsamen Werte und Überzeugungen regelmäßig zu bekräftigen.

Durkheim prognostizierte, dass der Einfluss der Religion mit der Modernisierung der Gesellschaft abnehmen würde. Er glaubte, dass das wissenschaftliche Denken mit der Zeit das religiöse Denken ersetzen würde, wobei die Menschen Ritualen und Zeremonien nur minimale Aufmerksamkeit schenken würden. Er war auch der Ansicht, dass der Begriff „Gott“ vom Aussterben bedroht sei. Stattdessen befürwortete er eine Gesellschaft vor, die die „Zivilreligion“ förderte, in der beispielsweise Bürgerfeste, Paraden und Patriotismus an die Stelle von Gottesdiensten traten. Wenn die

traditionellen Religionen jedoch fortbestehen würden, so, würde dies seiner Meinung nach nur als Mittel zur Wahrung des sozialen Zusammenhalts und der sozialen Ordnung geschehen. Durkheim behauptete, dass seine Theorie auf Religion im Allgemeinen anwendbar sei, stützte seine Schlussfolgerungen jedoch lediglich auf eine begrenzte Anzahl von Beispielen.

Durkheim lehnte die Religion keineswegs als reine Fantasie ab, sondern betrachtete sie vielmehr als einen entscheidenden Teil des sozialen Systems. Die Religion biete den Menschen demnach soziale Kontrolle, Zusammenhalt und Sinn, und sie sei ein weiteres Kommunikations- und Versammlungsmittel für Individuen, um miteinander zu interagieren und soziale Normen zu bekräftigen. Shariati hielt Durkheims Beitrag für bedeutend, kritisiert jedoch Durkheims angeblich engstirnige Sichtweise von Religion als gesellschaftlicher Kraft und die Tatsache, dass er Religion nicht als wertvolle Ressource für das Lernen über die gemeinsame menschliche Situation anerkennt. Eine Reduzierung der Religion in der Gesellschaft auf eine reine Funktion, zu der sie dort gebraucht wird, hat Shariati zufolge allerdings nichts mit dem religiösen Bedürfnis des Menschen und der Herkunft und Rückkehr des Menschen zu Gott zu tun. Shariati argumentiert, dass Durkheim die Frage der Elementarität missverstanden hat, indem er die „kollektive Seele“ und die „religiöse Emotion“ gleichsetzt, da diese beiden nach Shariatis Ansicht in Art und Inhalt grundlegend verschieden sind.

Im Unterschied zu den atheistischen marxistischen Intellektuellen betonte Shariati auch die Rolle der Religion als potenziell emanzipatorische Kraft. Bei seiner Interpretation des Islam verwendete Shariati eine radikale, bewusstseinsbildende dialektische Methode. Er verstand den Islam als eine „Weltanschauung“ jenseits aller dogmatischen und institutionellen Formen, letztlich als eine Befreiungsbewegung und das Auftreten des Islam als eine wirkliche Revolution in der Geschichte der Menschheit. Shariati ging es um die authentischen islamischen Konzepte, die er für universell anwendbar hielt. Dazu müsste der authentische Islam allerdings erst wiederbelebt bzw. wiederhergestellt werden, nachdem diese Religion jahrhundertlang von Herrschenden, Unterdrückern und Beamten

missbraucht worden sei. Nichtwestliche Intellektuelle, die von den Erfolgen des Westens fasziniert seien, müssten erkennen, dass der „zivilisierte Westen“ durch eine zweistufige kulturelle Entwicklung entstanden sei, nämlich der Protestantismus des 16. Jahrhunderts und die antireligiöse Bewegung der Aufklärung. Shariati schwebte ein „islamischer Protestantismus“ vor, eine Revolte gegen die institutionalisierte Form des Islam. Shariati begann, religiöse Symbole, Korangeschichten der Propheten, theologische Lehren und andere religiöse Texte neu zu lesen und neu zu interpretieren, aber er betrachtete die Religion nicht einfach als ein Element des „Überbaus“ (wie im Marxismus).

5. Eine revolutionäre Interpretation des Islam - „Jeder Tag ist Kerbela, jeder Tag ist Aschura“

Schariati war ein revolutionärer Intellektueller und Sozialtheoretiker, dessen Idee einer sozialen Revolution oft missverstanden wird. Für Schariati kann eine soziale Revolution nur dann erfolgreich sein und ihre Mission erfüllen, wenn sie auf einem tiefgreifenden Wandel im sozialen Bewusstsein und einer gut durchdachten Alternative vor der Zerstörung der alten Ordnung basiert. In der Dialektik von Selbst (Handlung) und Gesellschaft (Struktur) ist der Protest gegen die unterdrückende Realität die Essenz des gesellschaftlichen Lebens. Der Intellektuelle müsse Verantwortung gegenüber Mensch und Gesellschaft übernehmen, ein Symbol und Ausdruck der stets nach Verbesserung strebenden Menschheit. Auf dem langen Weg zur Befreiung ist Bewusstsein unerlässlich. Nur durch Bewusstsein könne Freiheit verwirklicht werden, aber es gebe keine Gewissheit.

Schariati musste sich mit den damals dominierenden Einflüssen der marxisti-schen Anschauungen auseinandersetzen. Während Schariati im sozialen Bereich durchaus sozialrevolutionäre Vorstellungen vertrat, lehnte er allerdings den westlichen Säkularismus und Liberalismus ab und forderte eine Rückkehr zur eigenen Identität und Religion. (Vgl. Schreiner 1982, S. 54) Mit diesen Ideen einer „konservativen Revolution“ wurde Schariati zu einem der bedeutendsten Theoretiker der islamischen Revolution im Iran 1979. Er prägte die Parole: „Jeder Tag ist Kerbela, jeder Tag ist Aschura“. Statt

sich in den jährlichen schiitischen Trauerzeremonien zu Muharram selbst zu geißeln, sollten sich die Anhänger Alis vielmehr jeden Tag im Kampf um eine gerechtere Welt engagieren. Überhaupt verstand er den so praktizierten wahren Islam nicht als eine „Partei Alis“; sondern es handelt sich um „nichts anderes als de(n) Islam.“ (Ebenda, S. 153) Die Auseinandersetzung zwischen Sunniten und Schiiten könnten der Vergangenheit angehören, denn sie sollten sich vereinen im Kampf für Gerechtigkeit und gegen Unterdrückung.

Zusammenfassung

Ali Schariati hat sich intensiv mit der Durkheimschen Religionssoziologie auseinandergesetzt, da sie für ihn - neben wertvollem - eine antireligiöse Komponente enthielt, die er für problematisch hielt, weil sich Durkheims Soziologie auf einem hohen Niveau bewegte.

Schariati lehnte die Erkenntnistheorie des Positivismus in den Sozialwissenschaften ab, Der Positivismus mit seiner Fortschritts- und Wissenschaftsgläubigkeit war für Schariati gewissermaßen ein Produkt des „Eurozentrismus“, lässt sich nicht auf andere Kulturen übertragen und hat mit der zeitgenössischen sozialen Realität einer Gesellschaft wie dem Iran nicht viel gemein. Im Gegensatz zum Positivismus konnten Glaube und Offenbarung Schariati zufolge durchaus als Wissensquelle akzeptiert werden. Für Schariati war *der tawhīd* die Grundlage für die Untersuchung der Gesellschaft, worunter er nicht nur die Einheit Gottes verstand, sondern die Einheit aller Dinge mit Gott in dieser Welt.

Aufgrund des hohen Niveaus von Durkheims Argumentation hielt er die These von der Urreligion der Menschheit für besonders gefährlich, da sie die Religion letztlich als Produkt des Menschen darstellte. Als überzeugter Muslim war für Schariati nicht der Totemismus, sondern der Monotheismus die ursprüngliche Religion und Adam der erste Prophet. Die Menschheit kam demnach immer wieder von diesem ursprünglichen Monotheismus ab, was den Grund für die Entsendung neuer Propheten darstellte.

Wenn Schariati auch Durkheims Beitrag für bedeutend hielt, so kritisierte er doch Durkheims seiner Auffassung nach engstirnige

Sichtweise der Religion als gesellschaftliche Kraft, die Religion wird demnach von Durkheim nur in ihrer gesellschaftlichen Funktion betrachtet. Eine Reduzierung der Religion in der Gesellschaft auf eine reine Funktion hat Schariati zufolge allerdings nichts mit dem religiösen Bedürfnis des Menschen und der Herkunft und Rückkehr des Menschen zu Gott zu tun.

Bei seiner Interpretation des Islam verwendete Schariati eine radikale, bewusstseinsbildende dialektische Methode. Er verstand den Islam als eine Weltanschauung jenseits aller dogmatischen und institutionellen Formen und letztlich als eine Befreiungsbewegung. Das Auftreten des Islam war für ihn eine wirkliche Revolution in der Geschichte der Menschheit. Schariati ging es um die authentischen islamischen Konzepte, die er für universell anwendbar hielt. Dazu müsste der authentische Islam allerdings erst wieder-hergestellt werden.

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Original Research Paper

Tendenz zur ontologischen Einheit in der westlichen und islamischen Philosophie im 17. Jahrhundert, eine Fallstudie zu Spinoza und Mulla Sadra

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Zusammenfassung:

„Einheit oder die Vielfalt des Seins“ waren eines der wichtigsten philosophischen Anliegen unter westlichen und islamischen Denkern im 17. Jahrhundert. Diese Forschung, die mit der Methode der Bibliotheksrecherche und unter Bezugnahme auf islamische und westliche philosophische Werke durchgeführt wurde, zielt darauf ab, die Gemeinsamkeiten und Unterschiede zwischen den Denkern, insbesondere Spinoza, dem niederländischen Philosophen, und Mulla Sadra, dem muslimischen Weisen, bezüglich der Einheit des Seins zu finden.

Beide Denker betrachteten die äußere Vielfalt als unwirklich und suchten nach einer einzigen Wahrheit hinter der scheinbaren Vielfalt. Sie unterscheiden sich jedoch in der Art und Weise, wie sie diese Einheit ausdrücken. Der wichtigste Unterschied zwischen den beiden liegt in der Identifikation und Nicht-Identifikation der ultimativen Realität der Welt. Laut Spinoza gibt es nur eine Essenz im Sein, und die Vielfalten, die in den Objekten der Welt erscheinen, besitzen keine unabhängige Wahrheit. Es findet sich jedoch kein Hinweis auf die Intelligenz, Vernunft und Einzigartigkeit dieser Essenz.

Dagegen widmet sich ein wesentlicher Teil von Sadras Philosophie der Beschreibung der Vollkommenheit der ultimativen Realität. Diese beiden Weisen haben weitere Punkte der Unterschiede und Gemeinsamkeiten in Bezug auf die Einheit des Seins, die in diesem Artikel behandelt werden.

Schlagerwörter: Existenz, Vielfalt, Einheit, Mulla Sadra, Spinoza, Essenz

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گرایش به وحدت‌شناسی وجودی در فلسفه غرب و اسلام در قرن هفدهم، مطالعه موردی

در باب اسپینوزا و ملاصدرا

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چکیده:

«وحدت یا کثرت هستی» یکی از مهم‌ترین مسائل فلسفی در میان اندیشمندان غربی و اسلامی در قرن هفدهم بود. این پژوهش که به روش مطالعه کتابخانه‌ای و با ارجاع به آثار فلسفی اسلامی و غربی انجام شده است، در پی یافتن نقاط اشتراک و تفاوت‌های میان اندیشمندان، به‌ویژه باروخ اسپینوزا، فیلسوف هلندی، و ملاصدرا، فیلسوف مسلمان، درباره وحدت وجود است.

هر دو اندیشمند، کثرت ظاهری جهان را غیرواقعی دانسته و در جستجوی یک حقیقت واحد در پس این تنوع ظاهری بوده‌اند. با این حال، آن‌ها در نحوه بیان این وحدت تفاوت‌هایی دارند. مهم‌ترین تفاوت بین این دو در تعیین یا عدم تعیین حقیقت نهایی جهان است. از دیدگاه اسپینوزا، تنها یک جوهر در هستی وجود دارد و تمامی تنوع‌هایی که در اشیای جهان دیده می‌شود، فاقد حقیقت مستقل هستند. با این حال، در اندیشه او اشاره‌ای به هوش، عقل و یگانگی این جوهر نشده است.

در مقابل، ملاصدرا بخش مهمی از فلسفه خود را به توصیف کمال حقیقت نهایی اختصاص داده است. این دو فیلسوف علاوه بر این تفاوت‌ها، نقاط اشتراک و اختلاف دیگری نیز در زمینه وحدت وجود دارند که در این مقاله مورد بررسی قرار گرفته است.

واژگان کلیدی: هستی، کثرت، وحدت، ملاصدرا، اسپینوزا، جوهر

Tendency to ontological unity in Western and Islamic philosophy in the 17th century, a case study of Spinoza and Mulla Sadra

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Abstract

The concept of unity (the state of being one) or multiplicity (the quality of being numerous) of existence was one of the most significant philosophical concerns among Western and Islamic thinkers in the 17th century. This research, with the method of library research and referring to Islamic and Western philosophical works, seeks to find the points of commonality and difference between them, specifically Spinoza, the Dutch philosopher, and Mulla Sadra, the Muslim sage, about the unity of existence.

Both thinkers considered the external multiplicity unreal and searched for a single truth behind the apparent multiplicity. However, they differ in expressing this unity. The most important difference between these two is in the identification and non-identification of the ultimate reality of the world.

According to Spinoza, there is only one essence in existence, and the multitudes that appear in the world's objects do not have an independent truth, but we do not find any reference to the intelligence, reason and uniqueness of this essence, while a significant part of Sadra's philosophy is dedicated to the description of the perfection of the ultimate reality. These two sages have other points of difference and commonality in the subject of the unity of existence, which is mentioned in this article.

Keywords: Existence, Multiplicity, unity, Mulla Sadra, Spinoza, Essence

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Introduction

As Discovering the enigma of existence, the howness of its genesis and the reality behind the perceptible appearance of the universe are among the most prominent issues that have always engaged the minds of the great thinkers.

Many philosophers assert that there is an intrinsic harmony and uniformity underlying the apparent diversities. The proponents of this theory, known by various citations as "The theory of Oneness of Existence," include a vast range of thinkers and mystics. These range from Indian religions and Platonic philosophers to Plotinus, Pahlavi sages, medieval peripatetic philosophers, and followers of Mulla Sadra, as well as recent intellectuals. In this article, after a brief explanation about the quintessence of this theory and its history, we have studied and compared two philosophical views of two precursors of Pantheism, one in the Europe and the other in the Islamic East.

Lexicology

The term "Existential Unity" combines two concepts: existence and unity. A basic understanding of this term relies on comprehending these two concepts. In its literal meaning, "unity" signifies that since the thing is single, it cannot be divided (Nakary,(n.d)). In contrast, diversity refers to variety, abundance, and the idea of becoming numerous (Dehkhoda, 1373). The correlative meaning of these two words is in such a way that any attempt to understand the former depends on the latter's understanding and inevitably leads to the other (Mulla Sadra,1384). Existence and unity are coextensive, meaning that each entity since it has existence has unity and since it has unity, it exists (Mulla Sadra,1379). Therefore, if we consider diversity as an entity, definitely it possesses a kind of unity (Avicenna, 1376).

Each complex that its persons or components participate in doing something, arbitrary though, from that perspective will have unity. For instance, if some people that have nothing to do with each other come together with a single purpose, they are interpreted as a group. Since these two concepts are parallel they have said: " whatever that truly exists, truly

has unity and whatever that truly has unity, it truly exists."(Motahhari, 1383)

Accordingly, where there is true diversity, true unity does not exist rather it is arbitrary; inevitably its existence will be arbitrary as well. Therefore, diversity in something that is diverse is not something actual; it is arbitrary (Motahhari, 1383)

Unity is considered a secondary ineligible, referring to meanings that exist in the mind while their qualification is rooted in the objective world (the reality outside our thoughts). This means that these concepts do not have a separate presence outside the mind; rather, the mind abstracts them by comparing the relationships between acquired concepts from the objective world. According to this, unity does not have a separate existence from entities; rather it indicates an attributive existence between them.

In the section of propositions (in philosophical books), identity (it-is-it-ness) is considered as one of the effects and attributes of unity. It-is-it-ness or identification is the union between the subject and the predicate of a proposition and it is considered as the cause of the authenticity of the predication. (Tabatabaei,1359). If unity did not exist between the world's objects and only diversity were actual, basically, predication is wrong and it-is-it-ness cannot exist.

Unity and diversity of existence in philosophy and mysticism

One may claim that the first explanation offered in the history of philosophy has been about unity and diversity (Copleston,1385), though some thinkers believe that the scientific and philosophical introduction of this subject was from Mulla Sadra era onwards (Motahhari, 1383). Many philosophers assert that there is an intrinsic harmony and uniformity underlying the apparent diversities.

In simple terms, the objective of the advocates of Unity of Existence is to assert the oneness of the universe; indicating that there exists only absolute unity in this world, without any duality among its creatures. Existence includes all the diversities and it is the unifier of all the discrepancies and dispersions; it is common to all beings and it flows everywhere, for everyone and everything. On the contrary, the intention of diversity is its existence that the universe is sheer multiplicity and there is no common

point of existence in all beings (Amin,1997). Greek-Ionian philosophers' efforts to refer everything in the world to a common root whether this common root is water, as Thales stated or it is air as Anaximenes of Miletus claimed, are indications of none dual attitude of the first scholars of the history of philosophy to the world surrounding them.

Heraclitus of Ephesus recognized fire as the origin of all beings and his word indicates the originality of becoming and changes in the world. In other words, it was an indicator of the belief in some kind of unity in diversity (Copleston, 1385). Parmenides, on the contrary, argued that unity and stability reigns in the world and change and diversity are nothing but illusions (ibid). This opinion radically continued in the votes of pluralistic Pythagoreans; they considered numbers as the root of everything in the world. Rejecting the unity, they accepted absolute diversity in the world.

Aristotle and following him the peripatetic philosophers, as it is attributed to them, knew the diversity of existence and existent as an indicator of the world's condition (Motahhari, 1402).

It should be noted that this issue in ancient Greek was more used to explain the creatures of the world; we can hardly find any hints concerning the unity of the origin of the universe in their words. On the contrary, we would rather say that we cannot find any cues concerning the denial of polytheism in Greek. Greek's image of God is far from being equal to the Supreme Being or ontological perfection that is the meaning of this concept in the divine religions. As evidence, Plato considered that divinity contains a class consisting of multiple objects, or Aristotle's Unmoved Mover did not possess God's special place in the Old Testament in Jewish and Christian world (Gilson, pp68-71).

Among the Alexandrian scholars, the Neo-Platonic philosopher's votes were based on the Existential Unity (Dinani, 1986). Based on Mulla Sadra's citation from the teachings of the advocates of this notion who are famous as the School of Pahlavi in the works of Islamic philosophers, existence like light is a gradational truth and has degrees. Therefore, it has diversity in unity. This fact can be fathomed from the gradation point of view of the flow of existence (Sabzevari, n.d)

Another theory that is dealt with in the works of Islamic philosophers is attributed to the researcher Dawani. This theory has become famous as the

Unity of Existence and Diversity of Beings or "the Tasting of Theosophy". Based on this theory, the existence in the external world is solely a unique truth that inside it, diversity can be found neither in the type nor in the degree, and the ostensible degrees and diversities in creatures are not real. However, their existence is due to their attribution to Necessary Existent. Thus, if they are called existent, it is illusory. The theory of diversity of existence and existent was modified to some extent by the late peripatetic such as Al-Farabi, Avicenna and Bahmanyar. Via researching and developing of the Gradation Unified theory and the Fundamental Reality of Existence by Mulla Sadra, this issue finely found a novel philosophical justification for itself (ibid).

The last famous theory that has been offered with this regard is the Mystical Unity. The mystics believe that the existence and the existent have unity, all the world's objects (quiddities) are the manifestations of Almighty God; they are emerged with one manifestation; they are the necessities and presentations of that very first manifestation; in another words, they are its epiphanies (Dinani,1986).

The mystics believe that except God and his names, attributions, perfections and properties there is nothing existent and the manifestation of creations and universe is arbitrary and virtual (Amoli,1988). They reject any kind of real existent beside God, they called it God's partner and they consider believing in it as idolatry. Therefore, the division of existence to necessary, possible, perfect and imperfect is meaningless and whatever that exists in the universe is sheer unity to them. The most famous promoter of this view, known as "Particular Unity of Existence," is Muhyiddin Ibne Arabi. He recognizes God's existence as absolute and knows nothing but God and his names and attributions in the world; to him, all the world of creation is something arbitrary and unreal (Kabir, 2005). According to this viewpoint, the relation of diversities to God's existence is similar to the relation of the shadow to its owner or that of the mirror to the picture. The entire universe is the shadow of that unified Being and all creatures are manifestations of that single essence.

The Unity of Existence theory has had different interpretations and this has caused some discrepancies as far as its attribution to mystical intellectual groups of the Islamic World is concerned. For instance, some researchers

have attributed the Unity of Existence and Existent to a group of Sufis (Ashtiyani, 1382).

Another group of researchers have considered this attribution as unbecoming to Sufis dignity. They believe that the statements and poems of mystics with this regard do not mean that the existence of diversities and possibilities is the same as the existence of God, or that the existence and existent is one and there is no existence and existent but Him (Zenozi, 1997).

If we ascribe to Muslim mystics believing in the incarnation of God's essence in the creatures, it is an unfounded interpretation and this has never been and never will be in the minds of great Islamic mystics and wise theosophists (Motahhari, 1369).

The theory of the Unity of Existence in this recent meaning has a long history. Some have searched its oldest derivation in Indian schools, they have referred to Upanishads as one of the oldest Indian religious texts that if only its surface value is regarded, they believe in the oneness of God and the universe (Stais, 1375). The influence of the first Indian Muslim Sufis is also mentioned frequently to the extent that some consider Bayazid Bastami's thoughts under the influence of Indian's thoughts and those of Vedanta (Schimmel, 1377). Additionally, some have considered Hallaj's speeches and the mentioned teachings as pertinent (Yasrebi, 1372)

In return, Al-Farabi ascribes the belief in the monopoly of existence in one existent to some of the ancient Greek philosophers. Another group also believe that most references to this theory can be found in the works of Alexandrian philosophers or Neo-Platonic (Kakaei, 2002). Among the Jewish and Christian thinkers, we can refer to people such as Baruch Spinoza, Meister Eckhart and Malebranche that despite different interpretations, they have been loyal to the Unity of Existence theory (Kakaei, 2002)

Some of the contents of the Jewish Bible can enhance the perspectives of Unitarians in the Jewish and Christian thoughts (Kakaei, 2002). For instance we read in the Holy Scripture: " Moses said to God: " now, as I go to the sons of Israel and tell them that the God of your fathers have sent me to you, if they ask me what his name is, what should I tell them God said to Moses: I am who I am" (New International Version, 2011, Exod. 3:14)

This statement very well signifies the oneness of the quiddity and existence in God's essence, the point that later became known as "the Unity of Selfhood and Identity of God" in peripatetic philosophy. Mystic Muslims in order to prove their claims have referred to some verses of Quran as confirmations of the Unity of Existence theory. Among these verses are:

"Verily I am God; there is no god but I; therefore serve me, and perform the prayer of my remembrance." (Quran,20:14),

"It is He that created the heavens and the earth in six days then seated Himself upon the Throne. He knows what penetrates into the earth, and what comes forth from it, what comes down from heaven, and what goes up unto it. He is with you wherever you are; and God sees the things you do." (Quran,57:4)"

And also "To God belong the East and the West; whithersoever you turn, there is the Face of God; God is All-embracing, All-knowing." (Quran,2:115)

Moreover, is the verse 3 of surah al-Hadid: "He is the First and the Last, the Outward and the Inward; He has knowledge of everything".

Or verse 62 of surah al- Hajj: " That is because God, He is the Truth, and that they call upon apart from Him, that is the false; and for that God is the All-high, the All-great."

And many other verses that refer to the same thing.

Unity and diversity in theologian argumentation

The scope of the unity debate extended to theological subjects and a special part of the works of theologians was devoted to it. However, not only was it in a sense utilized in the mystic and philosopher's dialogue that is mentioned above, but also in other issues such as divine descriptions and how they relate to God's essence. With this regard, followers of Ash'arite School considered God's attributes as diverse and separate from his nature, on the other hand, rejecting this theory, followers of Mu'tazilite School recognized it as leading to polytheism. Oppositely they posed the theory of the negation of attributes and deputation of essence from attributes so as to remove the suspicion of polytheism and composition from God's essence. However, unwillingly they were trapped in the

inability of human reason to understand divine attributes (which is known as *Tatil theory*).

On the other hand, Shia theologians strived to find a way to avoid being trapped by both polytheism and the idea of God's composition, as well as by *Tatil* and the incomprehensibility of God's attributes. They conceptually understood divine attributes as multiple and different, but existentially recognized all attributes as united and integrated with the divine essence.

Seventeenth century witnessed the emergence of two great thinkers in the area of Western and Islamic thoughts and both of them are considered as promoters of Existential Unity with its mystical readings. One of them is Mulla Sadra, the great philosopher of Shiraz school and the other one is Baruch Benedict Spinoza, Dutch philosopher. In this essay attempts have been made to have a comparative perspective to the viewpoints of these two scholars

Mulla Sadra

Sadr al-Din Muhammad known as Mulla Sadra was born in 1574 in the city of Shiraz. After preliminary training, he moved to Isfahan for higher education and for many years he benefited from the philosophical school of Mirdamad, Sheikh Baha'i and Mirfendereski that were considered as great sages of Isfahan school. In his mid-life he achieved a new compilation of philosophical methods of former scholars that were divided into two major groups of peripatetic and Illuminationists.

This compilation that had observed the theoretical basis of mysticism and was done under the authority of the religious belief system of the People of the House of the Prophet (**AhlulBayt**), had remarkable impact on the later philosophical thoughts. Many of the philosophers for decades in their intellectual efforts were his followers. He, was subject to excommunication and cursing of the ignorant fanatics of his time and eventually in 1629 when his reputation was extended to all borders of Iran, passed away.

Several works have remained from Mulla Sadra, among which the most famous are: *Al-Hikmat-ol-Motaaliah Fil-Asfar-el-Aqlyat-el-Arbaah* (Divine Transcendental Wisdom in Four Rational Journeys), *Al-Shawahid Al-Rububiyah fil Manahij al-Solukiyyah* (The Divine Evidences in the Ways of Mysticism), *Almabda val-Maad* (The Beginning and The

Resurrection), *Mfatih ol-Gheyb* (Keys of the Unseen World), and *Almashaer* (The Feelings). These works highlight his contributions to philosophy and mysticism within Islamic thought. All of these works are allocated to explain his particular philosophical bases that is known as transcendent theosophy.

Spinoza

Baruch (Benedict) Spinoza was born in 1632, three years after the departure of Mulla Sadra, in a Dutch Jewish family. He studied the classic philosophical works such as Descartes. In 1656, because of the statements that ostensibly were incompatible with the contents of the Bible, he was tried on the grounds of blasphemy and heresy. Then with specific Jewish procedures, he was excommunicated from Jewish community and was cursed by them. The event similar to which happened to Mulla Sadra of course with less severity.

Spinoza's prominent works include "*Treatise on the Religion and Government*", "*Treaties on the Correction of Understanding*", "*Treaties on Policy*" and most famously "*Ethics*" that contains his ideology and intellectual principles. Before witnessing the world's attention to his works, in 1677 at the age of forty-five, Spinoza passed away (Durant, 1335).

He spoke about the Unity of Existence, unlike many of the proponents of the Unity of Existence, not only did not he treat it solely based on illuminative manner, but also, he offered his statement with logical reasoning and particular geometric arrangement that is why some called his philosophy as illumination and his mannerism as peripatetic.

The unity of existence from Mulla Sadra's lens

Understanding Mulla Sadra's reading of the Unity of Existence depends on the understanding of his philosophical principles. Therefore, we will briefly discuss these principles.

Existentialisms and arbitrariness of quiddity

Since the mind interprets two different aspects named quiddity and existence, the question is what aspect the origin of effect and the externality of the real object is. Mulla Sadra, not only in his education but also in the early part of his intellectual genuine believed in existentialisms and regarding this issue he followed his precious master Mirdamad. However,

later he changed his statement and adduced some reason on Existentialisms and claimed that what is truly in the outer world is the existence of the object and quiddity does not have an independent existence; on the contrary, it will gain quiddity due to existence (Mulla Sadra,1379). Quiddity is merely the interpretation that the mind has regarding the limitations of the external existences, and in his essence, it is neither existent nor nonexistent; however, with the accession of existence it comes into existence and becomes external objects.

The necessity of compatibility between Cause and Effect

Mulla Sadra and many other philosophers have considered compatibility between cause and effect as essential; because otherwise there is the possibility of emanation of each creature from another one and there would be no necessary causality in the world.

Cause is the emanation of the effect's existence

This principle is also considered as the results of the Existentialism and arbitrariness of the quiddity. In contrast to this theory, we can refer to the votes of people that what is emanated from cause to effect is the quiddity of effect or the becoming of quiddity is nonexistent to existent.

Longitudinal and latitudinal diversity

Mulla Sadra believed in two types of diversity for the existence. Latitudinal diversity is the result of the discrepancy and difference between individuals of each level of hierarchy due to the addition of existence to quiddity such as the existing diversity in our surrounding objects (Amin, 1376). longitudinal diversity that is the hierarchy and ranks of the causes and effects that are manifested in the orders of the arrangements of essence, names, attributions, intellects, imaginal and purgatorial existence and bodies and material objects.

Mulla Sadra, with his emphasis on the above-mentioned points, leads the readers of his works to the conclusion that the world of being is the unique truth containing myriad ranks of degrees and extensive layers of existence. The highest order is the mere fact of the Necessary Being, which represents pure actualization and absoluteness, devoid of deficiency and limitation,

while the lowest rank is the first matter, which lacks actualization but possesses acceptability and the potential for change into new actualizations.

According to this order, the effect has no reality but to connect and to rely upon another. Prior to its particular existence, it has always been actualized in its causal position.

Although Mulla Sadra has stated many times in his writings that his purpose of the above explanation, known as Special Gradation, had been to refer to the howness of the ordering of universe, but we witness his propensity to mystic theories and to propound personal unity of existence and particular gradation.

For instance, he wrote somewhere: "every being except the One, is the lightning and scintillation of his luminosity. All beings have a single origin and it is He who actualizes the objects; therefore, He is the origin and the rest is his epiphanies. He is the First and the Last and the Manifest and the Inward of the entire universe" (Mulla Sadra, 1984A)

Mulla Sadra reasons elsewhere that: the causal relation is between the existence of cause and the existence of effect rather than its attributions. What the perfect cause diffuses is the origin of effect and not its attributions. Otherwise, effect in its existential origin would be self-contained; meaning that effect is Necessary Existent and it contradicts its being an effect, therefore effect in its existential origin depends on the cause and this is truly belonging and linkage. Given that the causality of cause and effect is in their existences, it becomes evident that what is called effect does not have an identity and reality inconsistent and segregated from its cause and logically we cannot consider two separate identities as cause and effect. Effect does not have a true reality but its connection and relation and dependence on cause.

Regarding that the chain of beings which include causes and effects has a unique truth, this becomes clear that all creatures have one origin that is gracious to all of them, it is He who is the true existence and the rest is his grandeur and minutiae (Mulla Sadra, 1384).

In another section of his writings, he acknowledged that though he previously considered duality in the existence of cause and effect, as the result of the illumination, he realized that cause is what is original and effect

is a rank and a status of its statuses. The meaning of causality is referenced to the conversion of cause from one state to another) (Mulla Sadra,1984A)

Spinoza and the Unity of Existence

The most prominent and controversial lesson of Spinoza that happens to be pertinent to this paper, is his unitary viewpoint toward universe and existence; inevitably to have an in-depth understanding of his lesson, some key concepts of his philosophy are addressed here.

The first key concept in Spinoza's cosmology is "essence". This word has had a long narrative in the history of philosophy. Plato in order to clarify existence propounded the Platonic archetypes. The design of this theory caused the bifurcation of philosophers into followers of Idealism and realism and the platonic archetypes. He believed that the essence should not be pursued in the outside elements as it used to be the case in the philosophers before Socrates. The outside elements are not sheer reality, what truly exist are archetypes or ideas such as justice, beauty and mankind. Thus essence is the archetype and the soul is his relative. So, for the first time essence was noticed in its spiritual sense. He believed in Herakleotic instability and Pythagorean plurality. However, beyond that, he believed in the stability and unity that governs the world of ideas, a stability and unity beyond plurality and the changes of the descended world. (Wahl, 1380)

By refuting his master, Aristotle defined essence as something that concerns neither the subject nor what it regards. He fathomed the Platonic mistake as the confusion between universal and essence and his essential perception of universal concepts such as virtue and justice. In his opinion, the true essence is the person that can be pointed at, but universal is the attribution that concerns the type or the matter of the objects and it exists in the objects. What is meant by "existing in the objects" is that it cannot exist without its container (Parkinson, 2002).

The discussion of essence and its reality has been always prevalent among the occidental and oriental philosophers until Rene Descartes. Following the theory of "cogito ergo sum" (I think; therefore I am), in response to the question that who then I is, he replied that I is a thinker entity. Thus, from the act of thinking he perceived an intelligent substance. He also introduced extension and God as two other substances (wahl,1380).

However, Spinoza's perception of substance is something that is inside itself and is conceived by itself; meaning that its conception is not halted by the entity from which it has been created. (Copleston, 1385)

Based on Spinoza, it is concluded that the substance is whatever that possesses an independent existence, and in the case of plurality of substances, there would not exist any cause-and-effect relationship between them, and no substance can create another substance. Moreover, regarding how Spinoza proved God's existence, it is concluded that the real meaning of a self-existent substance is God that is equal to nature (Copleston, 1385).

He knows God as a substance that is absolutely infinite; meaning that He possesses infinite attributions and it is not possible to take away any of those attributions. Such entity necessarily exists (Spinoza, 1364).

Now that we talked about attributions, it is useful to know its meaning in Spinoza's encyclopedia. In Spinoza's opinion, the attribute is what the intellect fathoms as subsistence of the essence of substance. This point that every entity must be understood based on an attribute is the clearest thing in the universe, Spinoza believed. If two substances are supposed, they ought to possess two different realities and attributes, they should not have any shared traits. (ibid)

According to Spinoza, substance cannot be created by any external object; therefore, it must be its own cause; accordingly so as to clarify its essence, it must be searched for inside and not outside of it. In other words, the essence and quiddity of the substance is dependent on its existence (Parkinson, 2002). The unity of God and substance in Spinoza's philosophy becomes clearer when he proves in his book, *Ethics*, that there is only one God, also there is only utmost one substance and it is not possible to exist any substance other than God or even to be conceived of. (Spinoza. 1364)

Spinoza assigns numerous and infinite attributes to God. However, among them he believed that human beings can only recognize the attributes of extension and thought (Parkinson, 2002). These two attributes are means by which the universe is understood since extension or dimension has a corporeal origin and thought or knowledge is the origin of spirituality, and the whole universe via these two attributes are recognizable and clarified.

The third terminology with this regard is mode. Mode is something that exists in something else other than itself and is conceived by means of other things (Spinoza, 1364). Therefore, an entity either exists by itself which is called substance or it exists in another entity which is called mode.

God, in Spinoza's philosophy is an absolutely infinite entity, meaning that it is a substance which is subsistence by infinite attributes each one of which clarifies his eternal and infinite essence. None of them can be taken away from him and such an entity necessarily exists. Spinoza claims that there exists utmost one substance and that is God (Parkinson, 2002/ Copleston, 1385). To prove the uniqueness of this substance, he reasons that with the infiniteness of the substance and that every entity should be clarified via an attribute in mind, in case there is another substance other than it, such substance should be clarified by means of some of the God's attributes (Parkinson, 2002). It necessitates the existence of two substances with one or two common attributes and this is impossible since the attributes clarify the essence. The uniqueness of substance or God can be inferred in another way as well; God is an absolutely infinite entity, due to his absence of finiteness, there is no other place for anything else.

Now we can better state the fundamentals of Spinoza's cosmology. He considers all objects to have two features; extension and thought. However, he points out that what we witness in bodies is the finite extension and thought that emanate the extension and infinite knowledge of the Creator's essence. Infinite extension takes the feature and mode of movement and the infinite knowledge takes the mode of comprehension and volition. These two modes as become limited, they become the prelude to corporeality and spirituality. Thus, all corporeal creatures are countless but limited modes of movement dimension (Foroughi, 2000).

The reality of the body is dimension. Dimension or extension is the attribute of substance, we can say that the body is limited aspect of the attribute extension and extension is the attribute of substance. In other words, if substance is considered to be limited, it is called the body. The accidental quality of substance is called mode by Spinoza and since the real meaning of substance is only the essence of the Creator, all modes and whatever that exists are within Him, and without Him nothing can exist and be

intellectualized, it means that whatever that exists is a mode of the Necessary Being's modes (Copleston, 1385).

He himself states that "I do not mean that God is the body. Rather I say that the body is not a substance that has an independent nature from the essence of the Necessary Being, and the creature does not mean that it is a substance that is created by the cause, since substance is not made from anything. Thus, the body cannot be known as substance, independent essence or artifact. Therefore, we state that creatures (bodies) are attributes and modes of the Necessary Being (Foroughi,2000).

Now the lesson of unity in Spinoza's cosmology can be better comprehended. God, or substance, is a unique, necessary, and self-existent entity that possesses infinite and limitless attributes. He is the only existent substance, while other objects are accidental states and modes of Him; they have come into being according to His essence, which does not imply the creation of objects separate from Himself. However, fundamentally, there is nothing but Him that desires to be created. These things have never truly come into being, so we cannot clarify their creation.

The diversity of objects is the result of our fantasized understanding of the attribute "extension" that may seem in the forms of limitations and corporeal bodies. Otherwise, the essence of the universe is nothing but the existence of the Necessary Being and the rest is nothing but its descriptions and modes. Spinoza added that there is nothing possible in the nature, but the existence of all entities in their existences, and deeds are determined in a particular way by the necessity of divine nature and nothing can be called possible unless by our lack of knowledge. The difference between God as an infinite substance and finite objects is that God in his existence or deeds is not the cause of anything outside its essence (Copleston, 1385).

Comparison

After a brief consideration of the subject "unity" from Mulla Sadra and Spinoza points of views, we can elaborate on their similarities and differences.

Spinoza's Unity of Existence is very similar to the Unity of Existence that is offered in Islamic mysticism specifically its personal type; it seems that Mulla Sadra also believed in that. Spinoza believes that existence is

exclusive to substance which is God or Nature and anything other than it is null and void. Also, Mulla Sadra believed that quiddity has no genuineness; causality is nothing but existence because the effect is the same as connection and belonging to the cause and the cause emanates the origin of the effect's existence not an attribute of its descriptions. What is called an effect does not have a segregated, inconsistent and contradictory quiddity from his cause, and logic cannot refer to two independent issues as cause and effect. Thus, the effect does not have any reality but its attribute to its existential cause and without its connection and consideration of cause, the effect has no meaning.

With due attention to the finiteness and the return of cause and effect to the unique truth, it becomes clear that all entities have a common origin and stem. God has realized the reality of the objects in his essence. God is the real truth and the rest is his dignity, descriptions and names. He is the origin and the rest is his branches. Whatever that has existence, is nothing but the mode of cause. The dignity is the Unique Almighty and all of the effects are its sparks of light of existence. Both philosophers forewarn their readers that they may misinterpret their words or they may interpret the relation of the Necessary Being and objects as infusion (incarnation) and union because the utilization of the word union and incarnation may cause the illusion of the previous duality between the Necessary Essence and the objects. Although Mulla Sadra considers himself as of the adherents of the gradational unity, in some cases he claims the personal unity (Tabatabaei; 1380). If we pay attention to the comparison of Descartes and Spinoza which is made by Parkinson, we will find more common grounds between them.

Parkinson writes: "there is a fundamental difference regarding Descartes and Spinoza's way of defining God. For Spinoza, God is an absolutely infinite entity Vis-à-vis for Descartes, the most complete entity is God. In fact the absolute infiniteness of God seems to put aside the possibility of existence of other substances. It would not allow the existence of a substance other than the absolute and infinite entity. So God must be the only substance. But Descartes, besides his most complete entity, talks about created substances which are corporeal and intellectual that are relatively independent and they only need Divine Grace for their existence.

Spinoza claims that there is only one substance; meaning that there is only one absolutely independent entity, this entity is in a way that contemplating about him necessitates nothing else. Substance is its own cause meaning that its existence is self-evident. This unique substance is God; every attribute fundamentally is the same as what God is. He considers intellect and extension as two of these attributes. The substance also possesses some modes that exist in it and cannot be imagined without it (Parkinson,2002).

Although Mulla Sadra and Spinoza's cosmology may seem ostensibly very similar, Spinoza's philosophy differs in clarifying the grades and degrees of the world of witness. For instance, as a weak point, there is no mention of the intermediate worlds between the tangible matter and God. In Spinoza's opinion, the universe is the manifestation and modes of the attributes of dimension and extension, extension is also God's attribute. Thus, in Spinoza's philosophy there is only one truth that we can consider it as a maximum two-dimensional tolerance; one is the origin at the heart and the other one is its attributes and the modes of that attribute. He notifies one of them as the creative nature and the other one as created nature. This supposition becomes stronger when we understand that Spinoza has regarded extension to have the same meaning as matter (Spinoza, 1364).

In this case, the clarification on the case that the division of extension into matter and abstract would make clear the intermediate world via the attribute of extension would be futile. Vis-à-vis in the thought order of Sadra, the objects of the apparent universe are the faces of the divine names and they are shadows and the manifestations of the separated worlds (Mulla Sadra,1984B)

Mulla Sadra has allocated a detailed chapter of his works to the clarification of the universe or the intermediate universes between the exalting origin of the universe and the material and corporeal universe. In other words, despite Spinoza's philosophy, not only has Mulla Sadra's philosophy emphasized the Unity of Existence, also he has paid due attention to the diversity of the universe as well.

Another feature of Sadra's philosophy is his particular attention to the presence of the facts and esoteric behavior as the prerequisite to fathom the intellectual and Gnostic findings. This gap (this point is not mentioned in Spinoza's philosophy) is felt in Spinoza's philosophy which is stated quite

intellectual and logical due to its rigid patterns of Euclidean geometry. However, some historians indicated the denomination of his most important philosophical book as ethics as an evidence for his zeal to obtain tranquility and spirituality by means of philosophical thinking (Copleston, 1385).

Another difference between these two philosophical systems is the consideration of God as the ultimate end and the finiteness of universe which is considered as one of the philosophical principles of Mulla Sadra's philosophy. Mulla Sadra's world has an analogical gradation, considering the substantial movement and verse 156 of sura Baqara, the universe is becoming and the ultimate end of the creation is the Almighty God himself (Mulla Sadra, 1984B). On the contrary, not only does Spinoza reject the concept that there is a God that is the ultimate end of the universe, but also, he clearly denies that God is purposeful since when something is absolutely infinite, lacks nothing that cause Him to do some actions for it (Parkinson, 2002).

From this point Spinoza proved the necessity and the perfection of the universe, Mulla Sadra has also affirmed this point but with a different reason. Spinoza's world is an unmatched version of which a more complete one is not possible to imagine. Whatever we imagine is in God's power and it must necessarily exist. If it is otherwise, it means that there are certain things that are probable to exist but do not exist; and this in turn means that the universe is not complete and infinite. Altogether, God would be imperfect and this is contradictory to the infiniteness of God's essence.

Another point of distinction of these two philosophies is the concept of God. In Mulla Sadra's philosophy as he insists on the applicable unity of the universe, the existence of God is a personal existence and the word God refers to a clear transcendent being. This point is in tandem with the teachings of religions, whereas in Spinoza's philosophy God is the heart of the universe and the visible world is the attributes of extension and thought which is more compatible with the teachings of Indian schools rather than those of Abrahamic religions. considering God and nature as one entity is another affirmation of this understanding; its expression by Spinoza consequently lead to his excommunication and expulsion from Jewish community.

The nature has an infinite order within which there are infinite chains of causes; but the totality of this infinite chain exists only because the nature exists. Partial objects are all effects of nature. However, this does not mean that objects cannot be clarified based on their relation and lineage. We should bear in mind that the creative nature does not have a separate substance from the created nature.

Some philosophers, such as Hegel, do not consider Spinoza's philosophy as denying God. Instead, they view his concept of Existential Unity as denying everything but God, since, according to his teachings, the absolute truth and existence should be attributed to God rather than to the universe, which is seen as a limited existence (Copleston, 1385).

What can be concluded is that although Mulla Sadra and Spinoza share Unitarian views regarding the universe, they have clear differences in their understanding of Divine Essence. These differences extend to the quality of their explanations about the origin of the universe in relation to the world of diversity, the finiteness of the universe, and their clarifications of degrees of existence and the intermediate worlds. By studying the views of these two philosophers, the dominance and superiority of Mulla Sadra's philosophy and its capability to analyze the universe becomes more evident.

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