Imam Khomeini, Ethics and Politics

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The volume is a discussion on ethics and its relation to politics from the viewpoint of Imam Khomeini. The discussions in this book are presented in three parts. The first part is a view on the ethical principles of Imām Khomeinī's Islamic thought and his fundamental views on ethics. The second part is a deliberation on the relation between ethics and politics. The third part deals with ethical politics and ethical elements in politics

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Unless otherwise stated, the translation of Qur'anic passages is based on Marmaduke Pickthall's *The Meaning of the Glorious Qur'an: Text and Explanatory Translation* (Karachi: Taj Company, Ltd., 1984) while the New International Version (NIV) of the Bible (Colorado: International Bible Society, 1984) is chosen for the biblical passages. The translation of quotations from the *Nahj al-Balghah* is based on that of Syed 'Ali Raza (Qum: Foundation of Islamic Cultural Propagation in the World, 1995). For the quotations from Imam Khomein□'s *Sharh-e Chehel Had□th*, Mahliq□ Qar□'□ and 'Al□ Q□l□ Qar□'□'s translation [*Forty Had□ths: An Exposition of Ethical and Mystical Traditions* (Tehran: The Institute for Compilation and Publication of Im□m Khomein□'s Works, 2003)] is hereby adapted.

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In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Dear Mr. Sayyid Hasan Islm,

The selection of the research work, *Imm Khomein*, *Ethics and Politics* [*Imm, Akhlq, Siysat*] as the cultural research work of the year shows the inestimable value of your endeavor, and deserves acknowledgment and appreciation.

The extensiveness of the scope and diversity of the facets of knowledge and culture in the ancient and vast land of Iran, on one hand, and dear Islam's and the Islamic Republic of Iran's patronage of research and investigations in Islamic sciences and humanities for understanding the problems and difficulties and proposing solutions for them with a view to inculcating true values and promoting the authentic culture on the other hand, has opened a wide area for undertaking diverse studies and presenting their clear-cut achievements to this noble nation. Those who are devoting their time and talent in this pursuit do indeed merit profound honor and respect.

On behalf of the great nation of Iran, I do acknowledge your efforts, and I implore God to grant you continued success.

Sayyid Muhammad Khtam
President of the Islamic Republic of Iran

The thrust of the present volume is ethics and its relation to politics from the viewpoint of Imm Khomein, may his soul be sanctified. The discussions in this book are presented in three parts. The first part is a view on the ethical principles of Imm Khomein's Islamic thought and his fundamental views on ethics. The second part is a deliberation on the relation between ethics and politics. The third part deals with ethical politics and ethical elements in politics.

Standing on the proposition that ethics has a special place in Imm Khomein's way of thinking, the author of these lines has put forth his argument and has shown that the Imm was viewing politics as an extension of ethics and was treating it from the ethical aspect. He believed that politics with all its intricacies can and should be ethical. It is because ethics from his outlook is not confined to teachings and recommendations of a secondary nature and to individuals.

Rather, it is deemed as the bedrock of both individual and collective life as well as the fountainhead of felicity in both the worlds. Ethics is not a marginal issue as it is the basis for the movement and progress of society, encompassing all social manifestations. As such, politics cannot be considered as being detached from it.

It is hoped that this book would be able to present a part of the Imām's thoughts on social issues and serve as the prelude to more extensive and profound endeavors with respect to this matter.

Wallāhu walī at-tawfīq [And Allah is the Owner and Grantor of success].

Sayyid Hasan Islāmī

In the heart of Imām Khomeinī's[1] way of thinking, ethics has a [special] place, and in fact, all areas of knowledge revolve around this pivot. According to his view, by citing a *hadīth* (Prophetic tradition) from the Messenger of God (*s*) ([2]), all kinds of knowledge can be placed in three general categories. It is because the human being possesses three existential presences and three types of world: one, external and sensory; another, the allegorical world; the third, the intellectual one.

Social science, juristic precepts and transactions are examples of the first category while rational sciences are instances of the third type. Yet, what is related and complementary to the second type is called *ethics*. If man wants to go beyond logic and the law of instincts, then he needs ethics in its broad sense. Ethics in this context cannot be confined to merely a number of ethical rules; instead, it is in fact a knowledge which searches for the deepest recesses of man's existence, and which cures him.

This ethics is, indeed, a sort of theoretical and practical anthropology. It is awareness of fixed principles and their application. It is owing to this that this knowledge can be considered as the noblest one and the raison d'être of the prophets'(*s*) ([3]) summons.

The Messenger of God's (*s*) sayings were a manifestation of such kind of ethics which he made known as the purpose of his mission. In this sense, man can be needless of many types of knowledge; yet, he cannot consider himself needless of ethics since this knowledge is the capital asset of felicities in both worlds:

The purpose and result of the summons of the Seal of the Prophets (*s*) is the perfection of morality. In the noble traditions, both that are brief and those which are elaborate, moral excellences have been

given more importance than anything else after doctrinal teachings [*ma'rif*]... And their importance is greater than what we are capable of explaining adequately, but that which we know for certain is that the asset of the everlasting life of the hereafter and the capital asset of the life of that abode is the acquisition of noble dispositions and the possession of moral excellences.

The paradise which is given to man for the sake of moral excellence is the paradise of Attributes, incomparable to the physical paradise of Act.[4]

Ethics, with this peculiar status, has always had Imam Khomein's attention. From the very beginning when he was a regular teacher up to the time when he was in the midst of the political arena, led the people's uprising, and established the Islamic Republic, he always paid particular attention to morality, and viewed almost all socio-political issues from the moral perspective. His recommendations and political messages to the officials and the people speak for this, and these [recommendations] can be treated, apart from the occasion of their issuance, as profound moral lessons from which we can learn.

However, from his point of view morality cannot be restricted to some recommendations and decrees. Rather, it is anchored in profound philosophical, theosophical and anthropological principles and precepts. His view on morality is a philosophical one. It is in this sense that he keenly scrutinizes moral vices and virtues, discusses them wisely, and enumerates the benefits and harms of this and that item. In fact, he has a remarkably profound belief in religious morality and uncovers vices and virtues from the heart of the narrations [*ahadith*] from the Infallibles [*ma'sumin*][5] (*'a*); nevertheless, he does not content himself with the tradition of quoting, but perfectly utilizes intellect in analyzing these narrations [*ahadith*] and in elucidating moral concepts.

This mode of striking a balance between the intellect [*'aql*] and narration [*naql*], which has been acceptable to the great Sh'ah scholars, is very manifest and conspicuous in the moral discourses of the Imam. Anyone who assiduously scrutinizes the ethical and gnostic works of the Imam can deduce his system of ethics.

The truth of the matter is that he has based his code of ethics and mystical-moral understandings on theoretical principles, which he does not specify so much. In the same manner that he juxtaposes the fragments of a riddle with one another, so also the researcher must carefully find these principles and place them together. In doing so, he could present the Imam's code of ethics, which is rooted in a long-standing tradition and founded on the great gnostic and ethical heritage of the Muslim mystics and teachers of ethics.

The writer of these lines has tried his best to accomplish this task to the best of his ability. Thus, by pondering on the ethical writings of the Imam, particularly the *Sharh-e Chehel Hadith* [Exposition of Forty *Hadith*s],[6] which is replete with philosophical, ethical and psychological intricacies and subtleties, he has attempted to infer and expound on the principles that he considers as being the

underpinning of the Imām's system of ethics.

The outcome of this study is the presentation and explanation of the Imām's eight fundamental tenets and the results that emanate from them. Undoubtedly, the comprehensiveness of such kinds of studies cannot be claimed and the first person who perceives its flaws is the researcher himself. The reason for this is that if, after a few days, he reads what he has written, he feels there is something to be added and omitted from it. This, in itself, indicates that such handiworks of man are, like him, is an unfinished matter and an open question.

What must be said is that these tenets and principles are theoretical teachings on the basis of which the system of practical ethics takes form, and so one can talk about practical ethics. These discussions are mainly theoretical in form. The framework of practical discourses and the manner of ethical behaviour must be dealt with elsewhere. The teachings which will be discussed in this section and can be considered as the bedrock of the Imām's code of ethics are as follows:

1. Indescribability of the human being;
2. Man in the state of nature;
3. Man as the arena of conflict between good and evil;
4. Regulation of instincts;
5. This world and the hereafter;
6. The philosophy behind suffering;
7. Knowledge as a mental aid, or burden; and
8. Behaviour as emanating from ethical principles.

The terrestrial world in which we live is a world full of existing activities and innumerable potentialities yet to appear. In the parlance of philosophy, this world's phenomena possess two facets of 'present' (*being*) and 'potential' (*becoming*). If we take into account a date stone, it is a fruit stone with all its peculiarities, having a particular weight, volume and colour. But it is not merely a fruit stone. Rather, given all the necessary conditions, it can become a big date-palm, which in turn can produce thousands of other dates, date stones and date-palms. This feature can be witnessed in all phenomena of this world, whether living or non-living things. The gap between what is considered as the present state of a phenomenon and what it can become being always wide.

This movement of the phenomena from *what they are* toward *what they can be* (from *being* to *becoming*) and the realization of the potentialities, like removing an old garment and wearing a new one, or like wearing clothes over other clothes, which in the parlance of philosophy is called 'putting off' and 'putting on' [*khal' va labs*] or successive donning [*labs pas az labs*], respectively, has no ending at all. The

appropriate divine wisdom is that every phenomenon should attain its own possible state of perfection and to reach whatever is reachable.

The human being, too, is not an exception to this transcendental and immutable law, and like other phenomena, is subject to change and transformation. He sets foot in this world with the greatest potentialities and talents and with the least activity, and in the beginning when he is born; he is more hapless compared to many of the other creatures. Yet, during the short or long span of his life he always tests himself, shows his capabilities in the sphere of good and evil, and moulds and shapes himself. He then abandons his previous form, obliterates himself, and adopts another form. He is like a portraitist who often draws an object, erases it, and then draws another one.

This possibility of change exists in all stages of life. Although the changeability of man in the initial part of his life and his formative years are strong, this transformation becomes more difficult with advancing age; however, the principle of such a possibility does not disappear. Therefore, the possibility of changing oneself exists for everybody until the end of his life.

In other words, there is no certain conclusion and end of every person's life story and his destiny cannot be considered as being predetermined. Here, we proceed to another issue and that is, the indescribability of man.

Every phenomenon, in our analytical view, possesses two facets: one is its 'being' ("is") and the other, its 'manner' ("what is"). For instance, an apple as a concrete reality has subsistence and along with this subsistence, the essence of its nature can be included and expressed in its description.

Therefore, all terrestrial things possess subsistence and disposition, which in philosophical jargon are called 'existence' and 'essence'. Now, let us see what the nature of man is. The existence of various explanations on the essence and nature of man only indicates the divergence of views on this issue. For example, after stating the manner of man's creation, God, the Most Sublime, praised and named Himself as the most Excellent Creator.[7]

Yet, at the time of giving account to the trust, which the heavens and the mountains trembled for taking responsibility but which man shouldered, God introduces him as iniquitous and imprudent.[8]

If we pursue this trend, we will encounter other descriptions and explanations. As a result, we can say that man has various explanations, or is essentially indescribable. Man is all of these; but at the same time he is beyond all descriptions. In a sense, man is the only terrestrial creature that has neither definite essence nor a specific limit, and he has such potentialities and capabilities that one's nature cannot be foretold before their realization.

According to the existentialists, all beings possess a definite nature that could be made known to them in advance. However, a human being is the only creature whose existence takes priority over his nature, or he 'builds' his own nature. John Paul Sartre,[9] the most famous expounder and exponent of

existentialism, opines on this matter thus:

Man's conception of himself is not only what he has in his mind; it is also what he wants of himself. It is the concept (of himself) that he exhibits after its manifestation in the world of existence. It is that which he seeks from himself after moving toward existence. Man is nothing but what he makes of himself. This is the foremost principle of existentialism. [10]

This point is part of the incontrovertible principles of Islamic philosophy and gnosticism which has been asserted differently, the most prominent formula of this viewpoint being thus stated by Shaykh Ishr□q—Shah□b ad-D□n Suhraward□:[11] "The self and the creatures superior to it are mere beings."[12]

The Im□m articulates this principle in this way:

Man cannot be confined to one of the worlds—the higher and the lower worlds. For, the people as well as the people of Yathr□b[13] has no position and from the descension point of view have *hay□l□*[14]rank which can manifest their God's power, and from ascension point of view they have a high horizon and the station of annihilation at the Threshold of Unity. Thus, the chief of the Illuminationist [*Ishr□q□*] School[15] says that vocal self has no nature and it has the station of unity and union of all the truths of the world of creation and affair.[16]

Understanding and comprehending these explanations requires familiarity with Islamic gnosticism. Nonetheless, the end result of this discussion is that the essence of man is not determined and fixed; he can traverse all the spheres of existence.
As such, any attempt to present a specific and absolute explanation of man is an exercise in futility. It is only after the realization of all the potentialities and aptitudes of man that we can offer a perfect explanation of him. From these indisputable principles of philosophy, the Im□m arrives at the following three ethical inferences:

1. The possibility of nurture and training in all conditions;

2. Coexistence of fear and hope; and

3. Suspension of judgment.

The possibility of nurture and training in all conditions

A teacher asked his student: “Who has created you?” Contrary to the expectation of the teacher, the student answered: “My creation has not yet finished.”[17]

Ethics and education holds meaning only if we admit that the ‘creation’ of man is not yet completed and that man has still a long way to go so as to consider his creation as having been completed. What is meant by ‘creation’ is not only the appearance of that earthly and ephemeral body since it is indubitable to many that such an aspect of ‘creation’ is not the termination of human perfections; it is only part of the things that should take place for man.

Thus, the ‘creation’ of man has not yet ended, and this is the starting point of any philosophy of education and system of morality. We can only talk of ethics and education when we accept that man is a changeable, imperfect and incomplete creature.

Once we deny this principle or have an iota of doubt about it, then we can no longer talk about ethics, and thereby closing the way to any sort of omission and reform concerning man’s existence. Anyone who believes that human nature is wicked and that there is no possibility for it to change, or who likens man to a bitter tree the irrigation of which with sweet and honeyed water is worthless, will not be able to derive benefit from ethics and is traversing this path to no avail. This approach which is against nature can be well seen in the following couplets of Firdaws (Ferdows):[18]

درختی که تلخ است وی را سرشت گرش برنشانی به باغ بهشت

ور از جوی خُلد ش به هنگام آب به بیخ، انگبین ریزی و شهد ناب

سر انجام گوهر به بار آورد؟ همان میوه تلخ بار آورد

A tree which by nature bears bitter fruit,
Even if it is located in the garden of paradise,
If in the paradise when watering it instead of water
You pour grape juice and pure milk,
At the time of fruit-bearing, will it produce sweet fruit?
Nay, it will bear the same bitter fruit.

Our literature (i.e. Persian literature) is replete with such allusions and metaphors, all referring to one point which is the negation of the fundamental and undeniable essence of man's changeability and indescribability. At times, the manifestations of this qualm on the essence of changeability are disclosed in proverbs such as, "What is bred in the bone will come out in the flesh" or "a walnut on a dome".

And sometimes while admitting the essence of changeability, the time constraint serves as a pretext in negating it. For instance, it can be asserted that so long as the twig is wet (i.e. small and weak), its curve can still be straightened. In like manner, so long as a human being has not yet fully grown up and is still flexible, he can be moulded, but when he passes a particular age, he becomes like dry wood and no amount of nurture will work in his case.

Occasionally, this type of understanding in the sayings such as, "Our time has already passed" signifies the same approach wherein the speaker, in stating it, passes up any possibility of reform and shuts the door to any sort of growth and progress. If man is changeable and unpredictable so long as he is alive, it then follows that he can choose a path whenever he wants or he can change his past ways and set out in a new direction.

In our religious culture, repentance [*tawbah*] essentially implies the same thing. That is, man turns back from the path he has taken and rebels against himself. The Imām has time and again emphasized on this fact, and asserts that one can always speak of nurture and reform. Therefore, as long as man remains in this world, which is the source of the tree of primal matter with its substantial, formal, and accidental changes and transformations, he can deliver himself from all levels of deficiency, wretchedness, polytheism [*shirk*],and hypocrisy and attain the higher levels of perfection and spiritual felicity.[19]

This teaching is anchored on the same definite philosophical principle of man's changeability. More importantly, if we doubt this principle, it follows that all the missions of the prophets (*'a*) and the revelation of all heavenly books would be fruitless since they only make sense if we accept the fact that man is transformable. Taking this reality into account, the Imām states:

All habits [*malikāt*] and psychic dispositions are capable of change. As long as the soul remains in this world of change and transition, it is subject to time and renewal; and as long as it is associated with matter [*hayūlā*] and potentiality [*quwwah*], the human being can change all his dispositions and transform them into their opposites. This claim is affirmed, besides metaphysical proof [*burhān*], by experience, as well as by the summons of the prophets (*'a*) and the true religions to noble dispositions and their restraining people from the opposite qualities.[20]

From the Imām's vantage point, doubt on the possibility of nurture springs from the satanic insinuations [*wasāwis*; sing. *waswasah*] and guiles of the carnal self [*an-nafs al-ammārah*]. These two are the

brigands along the path of human perfection who, by bringing excuses such as, “Our time has already passed,” deter man from reforming the self:

Do not think that psychic, moral, and spiritual vices are not curable; this is an erroneous notion that has been inspired in you by Satan and your carnal self that want to keep you from treading the path of the Hereafter and to frustrate your efforts at rectifying your self. As long as man exists in this realm of transition and change, it is possible for him to transform all his attributes and moral characteristics.[21]

Of course, this is not to say that reforming the self and cultivating psychic perfections are always easy. We cannot deny the fact that the degrees of educability in various ages are different, and that the human being, in the initial stage of his life, is more educable and shows more flexibility. The Commander of the Faithful [*am□r al-mu’min□n*] ‘Al□ (*‘a*) points out this reality, thus: “The young heart is like an unsown land which accepts whatever you plant in it.”[22]

The more a person advances in age, the less is he able to control his annoying habits and increasingly becomes a prisoner of his own unbecoming behaviour because with every day that passes, his disagreeable attributes become more deeply rooted while his power diminishes.

Mawl□n□[23] has a story which conveys this reality. There was a person who planted a bramble along a public way. The thorny shrub took root, grew and became a nuisance to the wayfarers, so much so that they complained to the ruler. The ruler summoned him and asked him to uproot the bramble. The person promised to do so but kept on procrastinating. In this manner, as the days passed by, the plant became stronger while the person became weaker and older:

خاربُن‌در قوّت ویرخاستن　　خارکَن‌در پیری‌ودرکاستن

خاربُن‌هر روز و هردم سبز و تر　　خارکَن‌هر روز زار وخشکتر

او جوانترمی شود، توپیرتر　　زودباش‌و روزگارخود مبر

The thornbrush (*is*) *in* (*process of gaining*) *strength and* (*in*) *ascent;*
Its digger (*is*) *in* (*process of*) *aging and decline.*
The thornbrush every day and every moment is green and fresh;
Its digger is every day more sickly and withered.

It is growing younger, you older:
Be quick and do not waste your time![24]

With respect to his habits and characteristics, the human being is like that thorn pricker. Thus, as time passes by, uprooting those habits becomes more difficult. According to the Imām, as long as man exists in this realm of transition and change, it is possible for him to transform all his attributes and moral characteristics. However strong his habits may be, as long as he is living in this world he can quit them. The only thing is that the effort required to throw them off varies with the degree of their strength and intensity. A bad habit in the early phase of its formation, of course, requires only a little self-discipline and effort to eradicate it.

It is like uprooting a young plant that has not run its roots deeply into the ground. But when a quality becomes firmly rooted in one's nature, becoming a part of one's spiritual makeup, it is not easily uprooted, but requires much effort, like the tree that becomes old in age, having sent down its roots deep into the earth; it cannot be easily extirpated. The more you delay the decision to eradicate the iniquities of the heart, the more time and effort it will require.[25]

Hence, one must guard against any misunderstanding about this, and must realize that the possibility of transformation for man is always there and that the difficulty of doing anything does not mean that it is impossible. On the other hand, it is this danger or insinuation [*waswasah*] that we accept unconditionally as the entire principle of changeability and deem it an excuse for procrastinating and not reforming ourselves. We are oblivious of the fact that it is itself one of the insinuations of Satan which dissuades man from acting on time, encourages him to ruin his precious opportunities, and promises him the chance of many tomorrows. So, man must always be wary and not give himself the promise of the never-to-come tomorrow:

هین‌مگو: فردا که‌فرداهاگذشت تا بکلی‌نگذرد ایام‌کشت

Beware! Do not say 'Tomorrow'—for (*many*) *tomorrows have passed*
Let not the days of sowing pass away altogether.[26]

This imaginary tomorrow has no reality and it is the greatest snare laid by the brigand Satan to trap the new seeker of the way. Thus, the Imām draws attention to this issue and warns us, thus:

If the tree of sinfulness growing in the orchard of the human heart reaches maturity and fruition, its roots

becoming strong, the results are calamitous, one of which is to turn away man totally from repentance. Even if once in a while it comes to his mind, he keeps on postponing it from day to day and from one month to another… Don't imagine that man can perform *tawbah* [repentance] after the strengthening of the roots of sinfulness or meet its conditions. Therefore, the springtime for *tawbah* is the time of youth when the sins are fewer, the inner darkness of the heart incomplete, the conditions of *tawbah* easier, and their fulfilment less difficult… Even if it be admitted that man can succeed in performing *tawbah* in old age, there is no certainty of reaching old age and of not meeting one's death in youth in the condition of habitual disobedience.[27]

In a nutshell, from the Imām's viewpoint the possibility of moral refinement always exists and is present as long as man is alive. Although this possibility of reform diminishes gradually, it never ceases to exist. Thus, the insinuations of Satan, which at times consider reform as impossible and at the other times promise plenty of opportunities for this to be done, must be eschewed, and time (one has) must be used to full advantage.

Coexistence of fear and hope

If there are thousands of possibilities and potential ways for the human being and the realization of every possibility and traversing of every path yields specific results for him, in that case, man would be full of hope and self-confidence in relation to his future, because he can choose a path and select anew whenever he wants to do so. On the other hand, this sense of freedom entails a responsibility for him and he does not know what ensuing consequences these choices and selections would have, and what his action would lead to. This circumstance makes him abhorrent of the future and dreadful of freedom.

It is this very point which makes many people heartily abhorrent of freedom; they are always waiting for somebody else to chart their destiny. Erich Fromm[28] labels this psychic propensity as 'escape from freedom' and discusses its psychological causes. With regard to this issue, one of the contemporary Arab thinkers named Muhammad at-Tālibī says, "If I had found a flawless person, I would have followed him and relieved myself of thinking; but the flawless person does not exist."[29]

Although all claim freedom and seek it, in reality they run away from it. It is because to be free means acceptance of responsibility for the consequences of one's choice, and there are only a few who have attained awareness to such an extent.

The inevitable outcome of the logic of change in the terrestrial world is that nobody is able to express a definite opinion about his own future. The Glorious Qur'an unequivocally stresses this point and states: *"No soul knoweth what it will earn tomorrow, and no soul knoweth in what land it will die. Lo! Allah is Knower, Aware."*[30]

Absolute knowledge and awareness of all things including the future which is yet to happen belongs to God and to Him alone. As such, to live without the certainty of the future is a reality that must be accepted; nevertheless, this state of affairs gives hope to some while making others fearful. A group regards the uncertain future as their achievement and the product of their deeds, and they move forward with high spirits and enthusiasm.

On the other hand, this sense of hope makes them inebriated and overflowing with selfishness to which they succumb after some time and roll in the pit of destruction. People become anxious and dejected by such a state of affairs; they entrust themselves to the storm of events and behave like a log which is a captive of the stormy waves of the sea of existence.

Both fear and hope are necessary in the life of man and are regarded as essential for his felicity. If fear and hope did not exist in the life of man, he would quickly claim divinity and forget his being mortal. And if it were not for hope, nobody would take a single step nor do anything even to the extent that "not a single mother would breastfeed her baby."[31] In all spheres of man's actions, hope—manifest and hidden—exists and without it, life would be void and meaningless.

Thus, the Glorious Qur'an, on one hand, cautions us against becoming proud of ourselves, feeling secure from God's scheme and the deceptions of the world, regarding these as symptoms of the losers and the wretched. It states: ***"Are they then secure from Allah's scheme? None deemeth himself secure from Allah's scheme save folk that perish."***[32]

On the other hand, God Almighty warns man against despair and depression, which are the roots of unbelief [*kufr*] and summons him to hope, stating: ***"And despair not of the Spirit of Allah. Lo! None despaireth of the Spirit of Allah save disbelieving folk."***[33]

Anyhow, these two attributes are essential for living properly. But in what proportion should each of them be in man's existence? How much of each is essential for him? This issue has been discussed in the books of ethics under the heading, "Fear and Hope" [*khawf wa raj*□]. By citing Qur'anic passages and Prophetic narrations, scholars of ethics are of the opinion that these two attributes must be in equal proportion in a human being so as to urge him to move, as well as to dissuade him from pride, self-conceit [*'ujb*] and selfishness.

It has been recorded in the Prophetic narrations that fear and hope are two lights glowing in the heart of a believer and neither of which is more intense than the other.[34] It is only in such a case that man seeks the path of moderation in life, while refraining from going to extremes and from overindulgence or negligence. For this reason, Im□m 'Al□ (*'a*) states: "The best course is (to have) an equiponderance of fear and hope."[35]

Hope and fear should be so pervasive in man as to induce him to perform every worthy and meaningful deed, however serious it is, and keep him away from every contemptible act, however trivial and small it is. It is with this in mind that the sage Luqm□n used to say to his child:

“Have such a fear of God, the Sublime and Exalted, that were you to come to Him with the virtues of the two worlds [*thaqalayn*] He would still chastise you, and put such a hope in God that were you to come to Him with the sins of the two worlds He would still have compassion for you.”[36]

Accordingly, another consequence of the principle of man’s indescribability is his coexistence with fear and hope, in such a way that these two attributes are equiponderant in him. Imām Khomeinī has devoted a whole *hadīth* chapter in *Forty Hadīth* to this issue of fear and hope, and has examined the station of these attributes from the aspect of gnosticism. According to his view, the cause of fear and anxiety of a believer is that since he evaluates the relation between himself—one that is utterly in want—and God Almighty—Who is Absolute Self-Sufficiency—and sees one side as total deficiency and shortcoming and the other side as All-Beauty and Splendour, and as he fails to acknowledge and respect the right of God as He deserves, he experiences dread and apprehension. His hope also stems from the fact that he discerns that God, the Most Sublime, has bestowed everything upon him without the least claim, and given him the promise of excessive forgiveness and clemency. In short, he is hopeful of the perpetual mercy of God.

Hence, man should always be moving back and forth between these two views: neither should he ever close his eyes to his defects and shortcomings in fulfilling the duties of creaturehood [*‘ubūdiyyah*], nor should he ever take his eyes off the expansive and all-encompassing mercy, love and compassion of God Almighty.[37]

But, why must these two attributes be equiponderant without either one of them prevailing over the other? The Imām’s mystical reply is thus:

The gist of the matter is that the self is in a state of utter imperfection and shortcoming, and God at the height of greatness, glory, all-embracing mercifulness and grace, and the devotee is always in a median state of fear and hope between these two views. And since the Divine attributes of glory and perfection cast their light simultaneously on the wayfarer’s heart, none of the two, fear or hope, exceeds the other.[38]

Suspension of judgment

In view of the fact that the human being has no specific nature and builds his own self, and also, that nobody has seen the future, no one can pass a definite judgment regarding himself. As a matter of fact, since no one knows what his end would be, how his life story would turn out and come to a close, he is

neither able to have a correct picture nor express a proper opinion of himself.

Of course, anyone who earnestly engages in self-meditation and desists from offering lame excuses for himself will be able to perceive his existing condition and present a relatively precise account of himself. The Glorious Qur'an, therefore, states: ***"Oh, but man is a telling witness against himself."***[39]

But our remarks concern the judgment that is final, conclusive and all-embracing. At any given moment, nobody can accurately predict his future state as well as the consequences of his deeds, and as a result, give a verdict concerning it.

Those who are negligent of this fact, by relying on their past and present deeds, pruned themselves of their wickedness and considered their future as guaranteed. The Glorious Qur'an rejects this sort of thinking and God, the Most Exalted, concerning such people, states: ***"Hast thou not seen those who praise themselves for purity? Nay, Allah purifieth whom He will, and they will not be wronged even the hair upon a date-stone."***[40]

Similarly, God purges these imaginations—that every individual only through reliance on himself and his act that he can take control of the future—and says: ***"Had it not been for the grace of Allah and His mercy unto you, not one of you would ever have grown pure. But Allah causeth whom He will to grow. And Allah is Hearer, Knower."***[41]

History is replete with the accounts of those who thought themselves to be pure and ultimately prosperous but ended up in a ruined state. Likewise, there were many who regarded themselves as ruined but turned out to be prosperous in the end. Bal'am son of B□'□r was one of the ascetics from among the Children of Israel [*Ban□ Isr□'□l*] whose supplications were always granted.[42] Yet, he utilized this spiritual excellence against the Prophet of God, Hadrat[43] M□s□ (Moses) (*'a*) and, as a result, destroyed himself. The Glorious Qur'an has made an example of the story of his life for mankind:

بلعم‌باعور راخلق جهان　　سُغبه شدمانندعیسای زمان

سجده‌ناوردند کس‌را جزنِ او　　صحتِ رنجور بودافسون او

پنجه‌زد با موسی‌از کبر وکمال　　آنچنان شدکه شنیدستی‌تو حال

صد هزارابلیس وبلعم درجهان همچنین‌بوده است‌پیدا و نهان

این‌دو را مشهورگردانید اِله تا که باشد این دو برباقی گواه

To Bal‘am son of B‘r the people of the world became subject,
(For he was) like unto the Jesus of the time.
They bowed (worshipfully) to none but him:
His spell was (giving) health to the sick.
From pride and (conceit of) perfection he grappled with Moses:
His plight became such as thou hast heard.
Even so there have been in the world, manifest or hidden,
A hundred thousand like Iblīs and Bal‘am.
God cause these twain to be notorious,
That these twain might be witness against the rest.[44]

On the other hand, Fadīl ibn ‘Ayyād[45] was a bandit and chief of robbers; yet, by hearing an *āyah* [verse] of the Glorious Qur’an, he was so transformed such that he became one of the celebrated mystics. The story [concerning him] runs as follows:

One night a caravan was passing. One of those in the caravan was reciting this verse, ***‘Has not the time arrived for the Believers that their hearts in all humility should engage in their remembrance of Allah?’***[46] As it was like an arrow shot at a virtuous heart, he said, ‘It came! And its time has already passed’.[47]

As such, no one can definitely ascertain his own future; this condition itself entails fear and hope, these being the guides of the faithful. It is the same fear and hope that restrain him from egotism or a feeling of abjectness. Now, if someone is not able to judge himself categorically, can he correctly assess others and pass judgment concerning them? Naturally, the answer is negative. If we do not know our own future, the more oblivious we are of the future of others. One of the secrets behind this is that all of those emphasized in our Prophetic narrations—that it is better to mind one’s own business and to restrain from judging others—is this very point.

The truth of the matter is that we cannot express an opinion about the fate of anyone, whether Muslim or polytheist [*mushrik*]. Judgment in this respect is a divine act and appropriate to God; not terrestrial creatures. As long as a person is alive his account is an open book and nobody can judge him. This principle knows no exception. Of course, taking into account his manifest actions and views, one can

assess his present state of affairs; but by relying on the past nobody can ever venture a definite opinion about the future of others.

Therefore, though the past could have far-reaching influences on one's future, the former can never prevail over, or dominate the latter. A human being can chart his own future differently, change it and lead himself in another direction. In the words of William James,[48] "Among all the creatures on the face of the earth, only is a human being able to change his moulds; only is he the architect of his own destiny."[49]

Such extensive tendencies of man and his uncertain destiny prevent him from being narrow-minded and from making hasty judgments while affording him the possibility of finding the deeper layers of reality. Similarly, it liberates him from any kind of restriction and predestination, and gives him the opportunity to repent. It is from this aspect that passing judgment even on disbelievers, and considering them to be damned is deemed wrong so long as they are alive and their 'book of deeds' is open. Considering the profundity of this point, the Imām has quoted thus from his mentor:

Our great master, the accomplished gnostic [*'ārif*], Shāhābādī[50]—may my soul be his ransom—used to say, 'Do not look down on even a *kāfir* [non-believer] in your heart. It is possible that the divine light of his inner nature may lead him to faith and your rebuke and disdain may lead you toward a wretched life in the Hereafter. Of course to practice *al-amr bi'l-ma'rūf wan-nahy 'an al-munkar* [enjoining right conduct and forbidding bad behaviour] is something different from the inner feeling of contempt.' He would even say, 'Never curse the unbelievers regarding whom it is not known that they will leave the world in the state of unbelief. If they leave the world as rightly-guided servants of God, their spiritual rectitude may prove to be an obstruction in the way of your own spiritual advancement.'[51]

The Imām cautions us against hasty judgments—which are sometimes noticed among some religious people—as well as assaults on, and accusations against, the spiritual wayfarers [*sālikān*] and mystics. He warns of the danger of such acts, and considers them to result from incapacity:

If we hear any of the truths from the mouth of a passionate *'ārif* or a heart-broken wayfarer, or a theosopher [*hakīm-e muta'allih*], immediately we make him the target of all kinds of curses and insults, calling him an apostate and a profligate, refraining not from any kind of slander and backbiting in regard to him, because our ears cannot bear to hear his words and self-love prevents us from realizing our own inadequacies. Alas, we bequeath a book as *waqf,* binding its user with the condition that he should curse, hundred times a day, the late Mullā Muhsin Fayd (Kāshānī)![52] We call Sadr al-Muta'allihīn (Mullā Sadrā),[53] who is the foremost of the adherents of *tawhīd,* a heretic [*zindīq*] and do not stop at any insult in regard to him.[54]

Yes, the most optimistic analysis regarding such assertions and indictments shows inadequacy and ignorance. The outcome of possessing such a mentality is that man always remains in complex

ignorance and increases his burden. Instead of an accurate understanding of the law of creation and the confession of one's own unawareness, it covers his ignorance with the cloak of piety. This is while one of the signs of piety is to be cautious about these things and not to pass judgment on others:

Our shaykh, an accomplished *ʿārif* that he was (i.e. Shāhābādī), may my soul be his ransom, used to say: 'Never call down curses [*laʿn*] on anybody, though he be a *kāfir* concerning whom you do not know how he made the transit from this world to the next, and unless an infallible *walī* informs you concerning his condition after death. For it is possible that he may have attained faith before the time of death. Hence let your curse be of a general character.' Here is one who has such a sacred spirit that he would not permit anyone who has died an apparent unbeliever to be insulted, for the probability that he might have acquired faith at the time of death, and there are the like of us![55]

Surely, if we consider this point with its implications as the guide of our deeds in life, how many virtues would we acquire and how many abominations and defects would we rid ourselves of.

One of the questions that preoccupy the thinkers' mind is this: In essence, what is man—angelic or devilish? Assuming that there had been no powerful institution to administer and control human beings, in such a case what would have been the people's behaviour toward one another? Would they have mutually respected and observed their rights, or would they, like wolves, have fallen on and torn one another apart?

Any sort of answer to this question necessitates the existence of a specific political and educational system. If we say that the human being is intrinsically wicked, in that case we will inevitably need to perpetually control individuals. If we declare that man is innately angelic, it follows that we have to remove all restrictions and limitations, and set him free.

In this context, in order to comprehend the Imām's viewpoint well, we cannot help but embark on the subject by touching on the views of other thinkers as well, and to study their historical circumstances. Hence, we will deal initially on the viewpoint of Thomas Hobbes[56] on this issue as well as his famous statement, "Man is the wolf of other man." Subsequently, we will explore the view of Jean-Jacques Rousseau,[57] and then examine the Imām's point of view. As such, we will approach the discussion from the following three (3) angles:

- Hobbes' view;
- Rousseau's view; and
- Imām Khomeinī's view.

Hobbes' view

Thomas Hobbes was one the greatest English political thinkers. He was a skeptic philosopher. As he failed to present exact and fixed foundations for ethics, he resorted to cynicism and accepted relativism in ethics. With the denial of the exact foundations of ethics, he had no alternative but to present a principle for it in society.

It is owing to this that he arrived at the conclusion that for the appearance of morality in society, we are in need of a centralized and resolute authority that would maintain and promote public morality. In the political realm, he was anti-democracy and a partisan of absolute monarchy. He believed that only in the presence of a centralized authority could the morals of society be preserved. His beliefs were greatly influenced by the events of those days in England as well as the civil wars there.

One of the key concepts of Hobbes is the expression, 'man in the state of nature'. What is meant by 'the state of nature' is a hypothetical state wherein there is no political institution and administrative organization existing in the society, the people being left to their own business and to do whatever they like.

Since the instinct of love and defence of one's self is very strong in everybody, the people would be at each other's throats and would destroy one another: "In the state of nature in which everybody is his own master, one is at odds with the others concerning the nomenclature of things, and it is these differences that give rise to disputes and conflicts."[58]

Life in such a society is very difficult, laborious and perilous; in the words of Hobbes it is "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short."[59] According to Hobbes, in no way is this kind of living to one's benefit and advantage. Therefore, members of society themselves come to the conclusion that they have to choose a person or persons and give them enough and complete prerogatives to maintain security and so prevent individuals from assailing one another. 'Civil society', 'commonwealth', '*civitas*' and 'country' are all born of this.

According to Hobbes' view, civil society is the opposite of the state of nature, the latter being nothing but life in the jungle and even worse, for it is possible for the animals to have rules and regulations for themselves and to respect one another's domain; yet human beings in the state of nature are not like that.

Such an approach to human beings draws Hobbes toward absolute monarchical rule, totally centralized authority and the creation of powerful and commanding supervisory organizations, drags him totally away from populism, and makes him conclude, thus: "It is, therefore, clear that so long as there is no

government over the people to compel them to obey, they will exist in a state, which they have named ‘a state of war’, this war pitting every individual against another.”[60]

Hobbes’ views on ethics, human beings and politics are highly controversial. Many are those who have repudiated or endorsed them, have uncovered their inner contradictions and shown his contradictory statements one by one. In the words of Richard Tock: Even during his life time Hobbes was reputed to have conflicting thoughts. He was regarded as a stubborn debater and an irascible dogmatist; yet, he would vigorously assail any kind of dogmatism. He was strongly against the notion of the authority of the Church as was, for example, exerted over the universities; yet, he wanted his philosophical works to be adopted as textbooks in them. While extolling and commending liberalism, he used to support absolute rule that exercises complete authority over intellectual activities.[61]

The most important criticism levelled against his pessimistic view on man is that if human beings, as what he says, are so bloodthirsty, how did they arrive at the conclusion that they themselves should create an establishment that would prevent them from transgressing against others? Hobbes replies that they had come to this conclusion through their sound reasoning. In that case, it is the same sound reasoning, which is superior to their instincts and directs them toward a life devoid of want and hostility; this, however, is not meant to be a critique of Hobbes’ outlook.

Rather, we are after articulating this perspective on man. It was an outlook that deeply influenced later thinkers who showed each of these influences in one way or another. The interesting point on the works of Hobbes is that he gave the title, *Leviathan*, to his most important political writing; what he meant by Leviathan was the same centralized ruling authority. Leviathan means a legendary sea-monster that devours everything. It is this oddity and irony that the government’s position can possibly annihilate its citizens and, at the same time, its existence is necessary.

Anyhow, Hobbes’ standpoint on the human being has its roots in the older tradition of Judeo-Christian faith. In fact, according to both the Old and the New Testaments, man is sinful and innately impure. It is this legacy that reaches Hobbes and which he theorizes, and on the basis of which he lays the foundation of his ideal political system. According to the Book of Genesis,[62] Adam and Eve ignored the commandment of God not to go near the forbidden tree, and due to the temptation of the serpent, they ate the fruit of the tree. As a consequence, they earned the wrath of God; they were expelled from heaven and were sent down to the accursed world.[63]

The sin that was committed by Adam and Eve, according to the Judeo-Christian tradition, did not embroil only them; rather, this sin passes down from generation to generation of humankind, and is deemed as being part of man’s nature. Accordingly, man is inherently sinful and, by nature, evil. This sinfulness is not only restricted to human beings for “even the heavens are not pure.”[64] According to the ancient Psalms of David, “Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.”[65]

Paul, the greatest official exponent of the Christian Church and the promoter of Christianity, in his epistle to the Roman Christians thus claims,

"What shall we conclude then? Are we any better? Not at all! We have already made the charge that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under sin. As it is written: 'There is no-one righteous, not even one; there is no-one who understands, no one who seeks God'."[66]

Elsewhere, he concludes that "the whole world is a prisoner of sin."[67]

At any rate, sin is among the rudimentary concepts in the Judeo-Christian tradition. The human being is said to be inherently imprisoned in its clutches; he will be born with it and it has a place in his natural disposition [*fitrah*]. Only through faith is it possible for him to absolve himself. Such an approach to the nature of mankind, regarding sin to be at one with man's nature, provided fertile ground for the emergence of pessimistic and anti-democratic notions of persons such as Hobbes. As a result, we come up against a theory that reckons man as wolf unto another, regards him as innately evil, and believes that there must always be an authority to control him by forcible means.

Rousseau's view

Jean-Jacques Rousseau's (1712-1778) view is diametrically in opposition to that of Hobbes. His thoughts had a positive influence on the Great Revolution of France. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, on which his famous statement has left its imprint, owes him too much. In the beginning of his celebrated book, *The Social Contract*, Rousseau writes, "Man is born free; but he lives everywhere in slavery."[68] Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights thus also states: "All human beings are born free and equal in…rights."[69]

In contrast to Hobbes' view and the traditional notion of the Church based on the sinful nature of man, Rousseau believed that man in the state of nature is decent, well-mannered, free-minded, and peace-loving, and that it is the society which corrupts him. In his opinion the debasement of man commences when he joins the civil society and relinquishes his own freedom. A human being left to himself would never resort to attacking others and waging war against anybody:

Man is by nature amiable and timid; he runs away from the least danger. He acquires a pugnacious temperament by virtue of habits and experience. Pride, interest, prejudgments, vengeance, and all yearnings that can draw man to welcome the risk of death do not exist in nature. It is only when man enters human society that the thought of assaulting others enters his mind. After becoming a citizen he changes into a soldier. Therefore, man, by nature, has no inclination to wage war against his fellow

human beings.[70]

So long as man lives in the lap of nature and is not a captive of society, he is in harmony and intimacy with all the constituent parts of nature. His needs are limited and can easily be met. Neither is there any sign of avarice and covetousness, nor envy and the killing of one another:

We see him eat his fill under the oak, drink water from the first spring that is within reach and quenches his thirst. He spreads out his bedding under the same tree that provided him with food. In this manner; all his needs are satisfied. The earth is absorbed in its natural productive processes, and a substantial part of it is covered with vast expanses of forest.[71]

It is regrettable that this state of affairs does not last long. It is not clear why man abandons this comfort and serenity, and decides to establish a human society. This act is tantamount to forfeiting one's own natural freedom and destroying one's own pure nature and natural disposition; for "it is the society that corrupts and defiles human beings… the more human beings gather together, to the same extent will they be further corrupted."[72]

The source of human wars and conflicts is the desire to own, which in turn is an offshoot of society. It is this longing for possession that drives human beings to kill one another, and causes so much bloodshed:

The first person who erected a wall around a plot of land and said, 'This is mine,' thinking the people to be so naïve as to believe him, was the actual founder of civil society. If someone had pulled out the wooden stakes around the above-mentioned land… and had shouted to his fellowmen, 'Do not listen to this swindler; land belongs to everybody,' the world might have possibly been safe from crimes, wars, homicide, rancour, vengeance, and suffering.[73]

In short, Rousseau's views which are mainly found in *The Social Contract* and *Desire and Discourse* on the origin of the lack of equality, gave rise to different and conflicting reactions and his naturalist understanding became highly controversial. One of the fiercest oppositions was expressed by Voltaire,[74] another one of the enlightened philosophers. Rousseau, who had much attachment to him, sent him in 1755, a copy of the book, *Discourse*, on the origin of the lack of equality. While expressing gratitude to him, Voltaire replied, thus:

I have received the book that you have written against the human race, and wish to thank you for it. Such intelligence had never been applied to fool us people. By reading your book, people would like to walk on their two hands and two feet. But for me, since I abandoned such a habit sixty years ago, I feel, with all regret, that to begin it again is beyond me. To search for the savage people of Canada is also not possible. The ailments with which I am afflicted have put me in need of European surgeons. Moreover, there is a war going on in those regions, and copying our actions has also made the savages

corrupt like ourselves.[75]

As such, contrary to Hobbes, Rousseau puts emphasis on the pure nature of man and regards the civil society as its demolisher. In view of the fact that there is no possibility of perpetuating the state of nature and, in effect, such a state has never existed, being more hypothetical than real, Rousseau's solution is the acceptance of civil society provided that it is based on the social contract and guarantees individual liberties. Yet, in practice, Rousseau's idea stems from either the negation of government and attacking society or results in a self-centered government. It is this point that thinkers have seriously dealt with but is beyond the ambit of our discussion.

However, what is interesting for us here is his outlook on the nature of man. He holds it immune from any kind of blemishes and has reckoned even training and education as corrupting this wholesome natural disposition [*fitrah*]. In the book, *Emile*,[76] he suggests that we should completely leave the child to himself to grow in whatever way he likes as in the case of wild pennyroyal, and be one with nature.

If Hobbes used to view the nature of man so pessimistically and regarded the existence of a powerful government to be indispensable for deterring human beings from aggression against one another, Rousseau stands on the proposition that in reality it is the society and government that tarnish the clear nature of man, the best state of man being that very state of nature.

Im□m Khomein□'s view

These two traditions and perspectives have both advocates and antagonists. They have been put to the test time and again and have shown their shortcomings. Doubtlessly, each of these two outlooks possesses a part of the truth.

If human beings are left to themselves and no law or moral principle controls them, certainly egoism would sway them to compete with and, finally, obliterate one another.

Apparently, the cynical outlook of Hobbes is more in consonance with reality than the positive view of Rousseau. In Islamic anthropology, strong threads [of the reality] can be seen from Hobbes vantage point.

According to Qur'anic narration, since God announced to the angels His intention of creating man and appointing him as His vicegerent on earth, they asked all together in protest: ***"Wilt Thou place therein one who will do harm therein and will shed blood, while we, we hymn Thy praise and sanctify Thee?"***[77]

In this objection of the angels, they indicated two points: one, this human creature would be a blood-

shedding being; the other, they (the angels) were more deserving than man to be the vice-regents of God. What is important for us is the first point. The angels, for certain reasons, used to point to the shedding of blood and cruelties of this creature, perceiving the big and disastrous wars written on his face.

Interestingly enough, God neither rebuffed their views, nor said to them that man will not be murderous. Instead, in various instances, including this one, He put the stamp of approval, and described man as iniquitous and imprudent.[78] God answered them with only a single sentence: ***"Surely I know that which ye know not."***[79]

This general statement conveyed to the angels the fact that God also knows the other side of the coin of man's existence while they see only his murderous aspect. In such a way, He told them that though man is murderous and cruel, there is a more important feature in him that justifies his creation and appointment as God's representative on earth. In this manner, murder and bloodshed have been moulded in the existence of man and he has an inborn inclination to transgress his bounds and perpetrate tyranny.[80]

Of course, this point should be mentioned that this trait has no relation whatsoever to the Christian notion of Original Sin. According to the Glorious Qur'an, both Adam and Eve, too, were recalcitrant and disobeyed God's commandment; as a consequence, they were expelled from paradise and sent down to earth.

Nevertheless, after realizing their error, they repented and God, in turn, accepted their repentance, and the spiritual taint of that recalcitrance was wiped out. God, the Most High, states that Adam was beguiled by Satan: ***"And Adam disobeyed his Lord, so went astray. Then his Lord chose him, and relented toward him, and guided him."***[81]

Thus, this point has no bearing at all on the Christian belief on the original sin of man. Such is the nature of man, egoist and self-centered.

This is the truth of the matter. Man possesses a predatory and destructive makeup. This is what Freud[82] called, 'instinct of annihilation' and considers it one of the two fundamental instincts of man. It is the same instinct that has been the cause of the ruinous and widespread wars throughout human history, has spawned great tragedies, and been responsible for father killing son, and son killing father. Of course, this instinct is vital in the life of man. If human beings were not egoistic, they would not have been able to contend with other animals and natural disasters, and would have been exterminated.

From this perspective, man is not different from predatory animals and is subject to the law of 'kill or be killed'. He destroys others in order to provide for himself, and gives priority to himself over others. The Im□m describes this aspect of man in the following terms:

It is evident that at the time of his birth, after passing through certain stages, man is no better than a weak animal and has no distinction over other animals, except for his potentiality of becoming a human being. That is, his humanness is potential, not present. Therefore, man is an animal in actuality in the initial stages of his life in this world. No power but the law of animal nature, which governs through the faculties of Desire [*shahwah*] and Anger [*ghadab*], rules over him.[83]

Historical observations and reflections of thinkers corroborate and uphold this view and perspective; yet, this is not the end of the story. Man is murderous; yet, his pursuit is not only bloodshed. He is an animal; yet, he does not remain within the bounds of being animal [*hayaw□niyyah*]. It is true that since the moment of his entering the world of existence, man is subject to the logic of animal life and in the words of the Im□m:

Though it is not directly relevant to our topic, it is essential to know that the human soul is by nature and instinct inclined to believe not only in the principle of *tawh□d* [monotheism], but to follow all truthful doctrines also. Yet, since the moment of birth and stepping into this universe, man starts growing and developing along with his natural urges and animal desires.[84]

In spite of this, man can let his other aspect prevail over this aspect. This other aspect of man is evident to God though hidden and concealed to the angels. This aspect of man's existence is the very *fitrah* [natural disposition], which has been given remarkable emphasis in our religious texts. The key solution to this concern is the *fitrah*, which have recently been given much attention by Islamic thinkers such as the late 'All□mah Tab□tab□'□[85] and Mutahhar□,[86] and on the basis of which they have proved and established a great deal of knowledge and learning.
Fitrah means natural disposition and origination. In reply to the question concerning the noble □*yah* [verse], which states: *"The nature* (*framed*) *of Allah, in which He hath created man,"*[87] Im□m as-S□diq (*'a*) stated that it meant that God created all the people with a monotheistic instinct.[88]
According to the Im□m, *fitrah* does not exclusively mean *tawh□d* [monotheism], as "it includes all the true teachings which God Almighty has ingrained in the nature of His slaves"[89] and these have been moulded in their being and personality.

The Im□m elaborates on the role and place of *fitrah* in the human instinct, as well as some of its manifestations, in the exposition of the eleventh *had□th* in his *Sharh-e Chehel Had□th*. The most important principle of man's *fitrah* is his being monotheist; second, belief in the hereafter; and third, acceptance of the principle of prophethood [*nubuwwah*]. Another decree on man's *fitrah* is:
The natural inclination to seek perfection [that] is so universal [in] that if all the eras of human existence are probed and each of human individuals, no matter to what group or nation he may belong, is questioned, a love of perfection will be found to be part of his nature and his heart will be found to be pulled toward it.[90]

It is possible that owing to the influence of some circumstances or type of upbringing, individuals may have diverse opinions on the meaning and connotation of perfection. In essence, however, nobody holds a dissenting view. Everyone is looking for something which he thinks is better [and] similar is the case of men of science and craft and that of the entire human species. Whatever the activity and field of their concern, their eagerness grows with achievement and is directed toward the higher degrees of perfection. The more they progress and advance, the more their eagerness grows for the higher degrees of perfection; its fire is never extinguished and becomes more intense every day.[91]

It is the same inclination to perfection and excellence that drives forward the caravan of human civilization and learning, and turned the early humans, who were afraid of the fierce and dreadful animals, into masters and rulers of the planets. It is the same penchant for perfection that eclipses man's murderous nature and makes him determined to overcome his defects and display the excellences in him. It is the same essence of *fitrah* that renders possible the founding of communities and civil society. It is the very quintessence that brings to the fore the murderous man's merit to be the Vicegerent of God and the epitome of divine attributes.

Had it not been for this essence, no social contract—whether in the world of imagination or in that of reality—would have been concluded; human beings would never be willing to give up some of his interests and tolerate others. So, Hobbes in saying that man is the wolf of another man and Rousseau in opining that man is, by nature, pure and peace-loving, are both right. Each of them has seen one facet of man's being. But if man were only wolf, the establishment of a civil society would not have been possible. On the other hand, if he were only angelic and peaceful in nature, do all these crimes and murders then make sense?

Hence, man is both this and that, but at the same time, is [purely] neither this nor that. In this context, the view of the Im□m is both realistic and optimistic. He propounds that when man is born, he possesses abundant potentialities for deriving excellences as well as instincts for his security and survival. In fact, since the time he sets foot on earth, man is in need of attributes that could keep him away from dangers.

In this aspect, he is not significantly different from the other animals. Self-love, the need for food and drink, and the need to ward off danger and to reproduce are all attributes common to human beings and other animals. But, man does not remain in that stage as he possesses the capability to go beyond it and attain spiritual perfections while the other animals are devoid of that potentiality and only revolve in the vicious cycle of their instincts.

In view of this, this monotheistic and perfection-seeking disposition is the demarcation line between human being and animal. Nonetheless, it does not necessarily mean that as he enjoys a truth-seeking disposition man is no longer in need of training and education, and that every human being actually possesses all excellences. Man is *de facto* no less than an animal. It is only through self-edification that he can elevate himself from that position, leave behind him the degrees of existential perfection, and

finally reach a station that is beyond imagination.

In short, from the viewpoint of Imām Khomeinī, man in the state of nature is a ruthless and self-centered creature possessing strong egoism, and in the words of the Imām, an adherent of the logic and "law of animal nature."[92]

However, his monotheistic and perfection-seeking disposition—provided that it constitutes the basis for growth and development—compels him to overcome his self and his animalistic logic, and to tread the path of perfection, and go beyond the stages of Divine Proximity, becoming the vicegerent of God and all-encompassing embodiment of His Attributes. But, this proximity to the Divine Presence is commensurate to the exit from the door of selfishness and self-worship as "the gnostic journey toward God and the spiritual migration does not take place without leaving the dark house of the self and the disappearance of its traces."[93]

Once we accept the previous principle, we can then deduce that the human being has a dual personality; this is part of the well-established Islamic anthropology. According to the Qur'an, God Almighty created man out of odorous black mud, which had been transformed into dry clay, and then He breathed His Spirit upon it; thus, emerged man. In other words, man is a muddy creature, which has the Spirit of God. The Glorious Qur'an describes the creation of man, thus:

"And* (*remember*) *when thy Lord said unto the angels: Lo! I am creating a mortal out of potter's clay of black mud altered. So, when I have made him and have breathed unto him of My spirit, do ye fall down, prostrating yourselves unto him."[94]

This fact is repeated in the different verses of the Qur'an. The reality must be emphasized that the human being has a twofold personality: heavenly and earthly. This creature has its origin in the earth and his hands are extended toward heaven. While glancing at this transitory world, his eyes are fixed on that everlasting world. This creature is the connecting link between animal and angel. It is this point that distinguishes him from the two, and raises the question—is he superior to the two, equal to, or inferior to them?

One of the companions of Imām as-Sādiq (*'a*) asked him as to who is superior, man or angel. The infallible Imām (*'a*) replied that the Commander of the Faithful Imām 'Alī (*'a*) had the following answer to the same query:

God created the angels from reason without carnal desire and He created human beings from the combination of these two. Therefore, whoever uses his reason above his desire is superior to the angels and whoever uses his desire above his reason is inferior to the four-footed ones.[95]

While pointing to this *had□th* Jal□l ad-D□n Muhammad Balkh□ [ar-R□m□], a great gnostic and expounder of the subtleties of human existence, recites thus:

درحدیث آمد که‌یزدان مجید　　خلق‌عالم را سه‌گونه آفرید

یک گُرُهرا جمله عقلو علم وخود　　آن‌فرشه است، او نداند جزسجود

نیست اندرعنصرش حرص وهوا　　نور مطلق، زنده از عشق‌خدا

یک گروه‌دیگر ازدانش تهی　　همچو حیوان‌از علف درفربهی

او نبیندجز که اصطبلو علف　　از شقاوت‌غافل‌است‌وازشرف

این‌سوم هست‌آدمیزاد وبشر　　نیم اوزافرشته ونیمش خر

It is related in the had□th that the Majestic God
Created the creatures of the world (*in*) *three kinds.*
One class (*He made*) *entirely reason and knowledge and munificence;*
That is the angel: he knoweth naught but prostration in worship.
In his original nature is no concupiscence and sensuality:
He is absolute light, (*he is*) *living through* (*his*) *love of God.*
Another class is devoid of knowledge,

Like the animals (*which lives*) *in fatness from* (*eating*) *fodder.*
It sees nothing but stable and fodder:
It is heedless of (*future*) *misery and glory* (*felicity*).
The third (*class*) *is Adam's descendant and Man:*
Half of him is of the angel and half of him is ass.[96]

This is the state of human existence. His worldly aspect directs him to the world while his celestial side spurs him to quest and growth.

جان‌گشاید سوی‌بالا، بالها درزده تن درزمین‌چنگالها

The spirit unfolds its wings (*to*) *fly*) *upwards;*
The body has stuck its claws in the earth.[97]

Of course, it is stated in the Prophetic narrations that God created man out of His own mold.

خلق مابر صورت خودکرد حق وصف ما ازوصف او گیردسبق

God created us in His image:
Our qualities are instructed by[98] (*are modeled upon*) *His qualities.*[99]

But this is only one side of the coin. It does not mean that man, as such, is superior to the angels and the representative of God. Rather, it points to the fact that man can, and should, make apparent and nurture his divine aspect, and make himself his Lord's worthy viceroy.

As such, man has a dual personality and each part of him drives him to its pertinent direction. As a result, an inner conflict arises in man, dichotomizing his being. There is a story about Majn□n, which illustrates well this state of humanity. One day Majn□n decided to pay a visit to Layl□ who used to live with her tribe in a distant place. So, he went after a she-camel that he possessed and mounted it. The she-camel had just given birth to an offspring and so was not willing to leave the place. However, it had no choice but to take Majn□n.

But whenever Majn□n used to fall asleep due to fatigue, the halter that was in his hand naturally used to slacken and the she-camel, realizing that its master had fallen asleep, would swiftly change its direction and head hurriedly toward its foal. After a short while, Majn□n would wake up and realize that the she-camel had changed course. So, he would correct his course and, gripping the halter tightly, lead the camel toward Layl□. But after some time, Majn□n would lapse into sleep once again and the camel, with its young mind, would change its direction, so on and so forth. After going to and fro like this many times,

Majnūn consequently realized that they have not even covered a half day's distance and that his actual problem was the rider heading toward his beloved and the animal ridden heading in another direction; he would not be able to reach Laylā so long as this situation was such and the two conflicting aims persisted. Mawlānā relates the story in the following words:

میل‌مجنون پیش‌آن لیلی‌روان　　میل ناقه‌پس، پی کرّه‌دوان

یگ‌دم ار مجنون‌ز خود غافل‌بُدی　　ناقه‌گردیدی وواپس آمدی

عشقو سودا، چون‌که پر بودش‌بدن　　می نبودش چاره‌از بیخودشدن

آنکه‌باشد اومراقب، عقل‌بود　　عقل راسودی لیلی‌در ربود

لیگ‌ناقه، بس مراقب بود و چُست　　چون بدیدی اومهار خویش‌سست

فهم‌کردی زو، که‌غافل گشت ودنگ　　رو سپس‌کردی به‌کرّه بی‌درنگ

چون‌به خودبازآمدی، دیدی ز جا　　کوسپس‌رفته‌ست‌بس‌فرسنگها

در سه‌روزه رَه، بدین‌احوالها　　مندمجنون درتردد سالها

Majnūn's desire is speeding to the presence of that (*beloved*) *Laylā;*
The she-camel's desire is running back after her foal.
If Majnūn forgot himself for one moment,

The she-camel would turn and go back.
Since his body was full of love and passion,
He had no recourse but to become beside himself.
That which is regardful was (*ever*) *reason:*
Passion for Layl carried (*his*) *reason away.*
But the she-camel was very regardful and alert:
Whenever she saw her toggle slack
She would at once perceive that he had become heedless and dazed,
And would turn her back to the foal without delay.
When he came to himself again, he would see on the spot[100]
That she had gone back many leagues.
In these conditions Majn n remained going to and fro
For years on a three days' journey.[101]

Yes, this is the condition of man, possessing existential dichotomy. As a result, man is always experiencing the greatest war he can ever imagine. All the great wars in history in reality are echoes of this same inner war. The wildest animals have never been observed to kill and tear up other animals except when they have to eat and cater for their subsistence needs.

No animal ever enjoys killing just for the sake of it or for amusement. However, man is not like this. Rather, at times he sinks so low that if he gets tired of slaying others, he teaches other human beings to rip up and butcher one another in front of him. There was a time in the Roman Empire when physically powerful slaves were given training in warfare.

Then, as gladiators they were brought to the middle of the imperial coliseum and were watched while fighting each other, and then the victorious slaves had to slay those who were overwhelmed. Such is the situation of man who constantly invents new methods for killing his fellow beings. It is enough to recall that during the World War II that lasted for six years, fifty million people lost their lives, though advanced electronically-controlled weapons and intercontinental ballistic missiles were not yet invented.

The root of all these crimes is that same animalistic instinct of man, by recognizing which the angels had beforehand protested to or questioned God about the selection of man for the vicegerency [*khil fah*]. However, this is not the whole truth. Throughout human history, we have been witnesses to the unprecedented endeavors of some people for the salvation of their fellow beings. Gandhi who was a law graduate, materially well-off, and belonging to the elitist Brahmin caste, had discarded his material comfort, and for the sake of freeing and saving the nation of India from the clutches of colonial rule, he gave up everything he possessed, and lost his life for the sake of equality among the Hindu castes and for guaranteeing the rights of the caste known as the 'untouchables'. Nelson Mandela, Albert Schweitzer,[102] Mother Teresa, and hundred others—all created immortal epics. In our own religious

culture, the movement and uprising of Imām Husayn (*'a*) notwithstanding the absence of the least hope for military victory, is a vivid manifestation of that divine quality that is moulded in the natural constitution of man. Imām Khomeinī, in his own characteristic style, portrays human nature as follows:

Let it be known that man is a marvel possessing two lives and two worlds within one existence. That is, apparent life or the outward world, which is this worldly existence, and is associated with his body, and the other is 'inner life', the inward world, associated with the hidden, invisible, higher other world, his soul in short, which belongs to the realms of the invisible and celestial world, and consists of several levels and grades... For each one of them is specified host of guardians.

The host related with the divine and intellectual powers attracts him toward the sublime, heavenly spheres, and summons him to the acts of virtue and goodness. The other host of guardians is the ignoble and satanic, which attracts man toward the baser realms of darkness and shame, and invites him to the acts of villainy and destruction. There is always a state of conflict and strife between these two forces, and human existence serves as the battleground of these two bands.[103]

The late Farīdūn Mashīrī [104] relates this status of man, thus:

گفت دانایی که: گرگی خیره سر هست پنهان در نهادِ هر بشر

لا جرم جاری است پیکاری سترگ روز و شب، مابین این انسان و گرگ

مردمان گر یکدیگر را مىدرند گرگهاشان رهنما و رهبرند

اینکه انسان هست این سان دردمند گرگها فرمانروایی مىکنند

و آن ستمکاران که با هم محرمند گرگهاشان آشنایان همند

گرگها همراه و انسانها غریب با گه باید گفت این حالِ عجیب؟

A wise man said: 'A stubborn wolf
Is hidden inside every man.
Inevitably, there is a great conflict and war
That takes place day and night between the man and the wolf.
Men are at logger head with each other
And these wolves lead and direct them.
For, this man is ill and ill-fated;
As such, the wolves rule over them.
Those tyrants are together;
Thus, their wolves are friends to one another.
The wolves are together while men are far from one another.
To whom should we share this amazing condition?[105]

From this principle, ample and valuable teachings can be derived, the most important of which are as follows:

1. Right to choose and select;
2. Necessity of self-cognition; and
3. Combat with the self as the major *jih□d* [struggle].

Right to choose and select

Once we acknowledge that mankind is indescribable (first principle), that man is a combination of the spirit of God and putrid clay (second principle), that the human being is an arena of conflict between these two instincts, then we can proceed to the principle that man is always in the process of choosing and selecting.

Man is not a neutral spectator of his inner war; rather, he is like a commander who, by the choice he makes, acts to the benefit of one of the sides in the war. Man does not only enjoy the right to choose, but is also obliged to choose. In other words, he is compelled to choose, and in the jargon of existentialists, he is condemned to be free. Every movement of us is a form of choosing.

Even if one day we decide not to choose anymore, we have, with this decision, actually undertaken the act of choosing. That is, we have chosen not to choose or, in other words we have decided not to choose. Never for a moment can we ever imagine that we have refrained from choosing. Of course, the scope of this choosing is our conscious and voluntary actions and behaviour; not our genetic and environmental attributes.

For instance, we have not chosen our father, mother, race, or colour beforehand. Nevertheless, in our social behaviour and relations we are always in the state of choosing and selecting. It is through these assorted choices and selections that we build, demolish and rebuild ourselves.

We examine ourselves. We acquire a new description and account of ourselves. We again reject this description and adopt another one. In doing so, we construct and 'recreate' ourselves. For, "If indeed existence takes precedence over essence, then humanity is responsible for its own existence."[106] So long as man is alive this choice exists. So long as man is in the terrestrial plane of existence, this successive self-building and self-demolition is inevitable:

صورتگر نقاشم، هر لحظه بتی سازم و آنگه همه بتها را در پیش تو بگدازم

صد نقش بانگیزم، با روح درآمیزم چون نقش تو را بینم، در آتشش اندازم

تو ساقیِ خماری، یا دشمن هشیاری یا آنکه کنی ویران هر خانه که می سازم

جان ریخته شد بر تو، آمیخته شد با تو چون بوی تو دارد جان، جان را، هله بنوازم

هر خون که ز من روید، با خاک تو مگوید: با مهر تو همرنگم، با عشق تو

هنبازم

در خانه آب و گل بی توست خراب این دل یا خانه درآ، جانا، یا خانه بپردازم

As a portraitist every moment I make a beautiful idol
But in the end I destroy all of them under your feet.
I make hundreds of pictures and portraits and mix them with soul
But as I see your picture and portrait, I will put all of them on fire.
You are an intoxicated cupbearer, or a wary enemy,
Or that you destroy every house I build.
My soul is filled and mixed with you;
As this soul has your fragrance, I revere and adore it.
Every blood that flows in me says to your dust:
'I'm synchronous and share with your love and affection.
Without you this heart in this house of water and flower[*107*] *is broken.*
O heart! Either go out of this physical house, or build it.[108]

This power to choose is embedded within us, and we are inevitably responsible for ourselves and our choices. In this connection, God, the Most Sublime, says: ***"Lo! We have created man from a drop of thickened fluid to test him; so We make him hearing, knowing. Lo! We have shown him the way whether he be grateful or disbelieving."***[109]

Elsewhere, while pointing out to the inattentiveness of man with respect to all the things endowed on him, God Almighty states: ***"Did We not assign unto him two eyes and a tongue and two lips, and guided him to the parting of the mountain ways?"***[110]

Accordingly, from the very beginning man is faced with a variety of choices at his disposal. But with respect to these choices, he is neither blind nor compelled to act blindly; rather, he has two eyes that see, two ears that hear, a cogent intellect, and remarkable power to enable him to choose. In this struggle and conflict, man is neither helpless nor unaided; in case he himself wants and chooses, he will be assisted by God. According to the Messenger of God (*s*), the heart of every human being possesses two chambers: one is the angel's domain while the other is under the sway of Satan. God renders help and support to the faithful through this angel.[111]

From here we proceed to the next point, which is a prerequisite of choice and indispensable for it; that is, freedom.

Man can only choose if he is free. To be free is latent in the meaning of choice. Once we have the right to choose to be free, we can pick and choose whatever we like. This freedom is not political, social or cultural; rather, it is above all these, and they all emanate from it. This freedom is the natural freedom. Here we do not wish to embark on an extensive and fruitless discussion of freedom, nor of compulsion, predestination and free-will. It is a debate that has engaged philosophers for centuries and millennia.

If we reflect on ourselves we easily observe this state of freedom in us, basically without which, there is no point in talking about education and ethics. The Glorious Qur'an also highlights this innate and intuitive state of ours and on the basis of which it conveys its commendation and praise, or rebuke and chastisement to us. If man were not free, there would have been no need for the sending of prophets and revelation of divine scriptures. Hence, man is free to embrace the faith or deny it.

Even so, there are some people who regard this freedom to be an impediment to deviation and perversion, and by accepting it, have to shoulder their responsibility. They are averse to this assumption of accountability. They try to cast doubt on this principle of freedom and consider themselves compelled, helpless and vulnerable.

When the Messenger of God (*s*) was appointed to shoulder the mission of messengership [*risālah*], a group of the polytheists who considered the acceptance of the faith as taking responsibility for, and exercising control over their own carnal desires, claimed: "If God did not want it, we and our forefathers would not have become polytheists and since we have become so, it implies that God has approved it and it is God's will." As a result, they became fatalists, and would say that they did not have the right to select and were, perforce, polytheists. In reality, they were juxtaposing the power and will of God vis-à-vis their own power. They would claim that if they were truly free, it implied that God was powerless, and since God had power over everything, it meant that their unbelief and denial of the faith also stemmed from the will of God in the midst of which they had no option. Anticipating this type of argument and reasoning, God told His messenger: ***"They who are idolaters will say: Had Allah willed, we had not ascribed*** (***unto Him***) ***partners neither had our fathers."***[112]

God presents this attitude as an excuse for not responding to the prophet's call and for disavowing them. In another place, He considers the same reasoning as the rationale for their freedom. Knowing that His messenger (*s*) was painstakingly trying and endeavoring to make the idolaters finally submissive and subservient to Islam, God Almighty restrained him from these endeavors and said to him: *"If Allah willed, He could have brought them all together to the guidance."*[113] Therefore, the crux of the matter is not whether God has power or not; the point is that God wants to test human beings. For this reason, He says: ***"Had Allah willed He could have made you one community. But that He may try you by that which He hath given you*** (***He hath made you as ye are***)***."***[114]

As such, God desires everybody to embrace the faith. But He wants this acceptance of the faith to be done freely and without any compulsion. Otherwise, it would not have been difficult for Him to have created all with identical mental and emotional makeup so that they would be Muslims and faithful *en*

masse.

Renunciation of freedom, then, is in fact the result of mere sophistry and caprice, not attention to esoteric and exoteric realities. The reason is that anyone who is keen on doing something feels a sort of freedom in relation to doing it, whereas if he is not inclined to do something, it gives him a feeling of fatalism. Most of us witness this circumstance in our daily lives. Anybody who is engaged in economic ventures and activities feels himself free and believes in the right to choose, while he or she who is only confined within the four corners of the house experiences a sense of determinism and believes that:

ما آبروی فقر و قناعت نمی بریم با پادشه بگو که روزی مقدر است

We talk not of poverty and contentment;
Tell to the king that fortune is predetermined.

The fact is that for our sustenance to be predetermined does not mean abandoning economic activities. Mawl□n□ describes this propensity and morale as follows:

درهر آن کای که‌میل استت‌بدان قدرت‌خود را همی‌بینی عیان

و ندر آن‌کاری که‌میلت نیست وخواست خویش راجبری کنی، کین ازخداست

In every act for which you have inclination,
You are clearly conscious of your power (*to perform it*)*,*
But in every act for which you have no inclination and desire,
In regard to that (*act*) *you have become a necessitarian, saying,*
'This is from God.' [115]

An illustrating story of these fatalists is that of a man who entered a certain garden without permission, approached a tree, and began picking its fruits. When the owner of the garden reproached him for doing so, he claimed predetermination and said that he was an involuntary servant of God, i.e. without control

over anything, and he was picking the fruits of a tree belonging to God. The owner of the garden tied him with a rope and beat him on his back and sides with a piece of wood, and when the man objected to him for doing so, he answered:

گفت: از چوب خدااین بنده‌اش می‌زند بر پشت‌دیگر بنده‌خوش

چوب حق، و پشت و پهلوآنِ او من غلام وآلتِ فرمانِ او"

گفت: "توبه‌کردم از جبرای عیار اختیاراست، اختیاراست، اختیار"

He answered, 'With God's cudgel this servant of His
Is soundly beating the back of another servant.
'Tis God's cudgel, and the back and sides belong to Him:
I am (*only*) *the slave and instrument of His command.*
He (*the thief*) *said, 'O cunning knave, I make a recantation of Necessitarianism:*
There is free-will, there is free-will, (*there is*) *free-will!'* [116]

Necessity of self-cognition

As the state within man is in reality an arena of conflict between irreconcilably competing forces, everyone should be well acquainted with this battleground, opposing camps, and the types of weapons used in this conflict. Perhaps one could lead a prosperous life even without a knowledge of mathematics. Maybe one could be felicitous in life even without being familiar with the natural history of the world and geology.

Possibly one could enjoy a blissful life even without familiarity with the history of one's forebears or geography of the time. But no one could take a step toward perfection and bliss without knowing one's self.

Therefore, this is the knowledge from which no one could consider himself not to need. More than two thousand years ago, it was written on the door of the Delphi temple in Athens: "Know thyself." It seems

that this saying will never fade and in no way relinquish its virtue and significance. All the efforts of Socrates were made to apply this maxim in his own case. As such, everybody throughout history has acknowledged his philosophy. Whether man regards himself as the center of the universe—as those in the past did believed—or as a speck of atom in the Milky Way—as people believe nowadays—he cannot escape from self-cognition. In no way can one ignore this cognizance. If man succeeds in drawing everything under his command but is ignorant of himself and unaware of the agitation within him, then he is still subjugated by his self and a prisoner of the forces within him.

Real freedom is not attained through dominance over nature but through recognition of one's self. But alas! Man drifts away from the path, and as he obtained knowledge of nature as well as mastery over it, he imagines it as the very path to happiness. While the enemy is inside the house, he goes to fight the windmills and so deceive himself in the manner of Don Quixote.[117]

The intention is not to show the knowledge of nature to be unimportant; rather, the point is that if this nature which has been subjugated is placed at the disposal of man who does not yet know himself, not only does it not guarantee his felicity but even provides powerful means for the destruction and massacre of human beings as it has been hitherto. As technology advances, moral decadence and degeneration have also increased. Anyone who is not cognizant of himself but is after the understanding of nature loses the essence of his life's period, and falling to the level of creatures subjugated by their instincts. This kind of person, according to Mawl□n□, is:

صدهزاران فصل‌داند ازعلوم　　جان خود رامی‌نداند آن‌ظلوم

داندلو خاصیت هرجوهری　　در بیان جوهرخود چون خری

که: "همی دانم‌یجوز ولایجوز"　　خود ندانی‌تو یجوزی یاعجوز!

این‌روا و آن‌ناروا، دانی و لیک　　توروا یاناروایی؟ بین تو نیک

قیمت‌هر کاله‌می‌دانکه‌چیست　　قیمت خودرا نادانی‌احمقی است

سعدهاو نحسهادانسه‌ای ننگری سعدی‌تو یاناشُسته‌ای

جان‌جمله علمهااین است این که بدانی‌من کی‌ام در یوم دی

آن اصول دین بدانستی تو، لیک بنگر اندر اصلخود، گر هست نیک

He knows a hundred thousand superfluous matters[118] *connected with*
The (*various*) *sciences,* (*but*) *that unjust man does not know his own soul.*
He knows the special properties of every substance,
(*But*) *in elucidating his own substance*(*essence*) *he is*(*as ignorant*) *as anass,*
Saying, 'I know (*what is*) *permissible and impermissible'*[119] *Thou knowest not*
Whether thou thyself art permissible or (*unpermissible as*) *an old woman.*[120]
Thou knowest this licit (*thing*) *and that illicit* (*thing*),
But art thou licit or illicit? Consider well!
Thou knowest what is the value of every article of merchandise;
(*If*) *thou knowest what is the value of thyself, 'tis folly.*
Thou hast become acquainted with the fortunate and inauspicious stars;
Thou dost not look to see whether thou art fortunate or unwasted
(*spiritually foul and ill-favoured*).
This, this, is the soul of all the sciences—
That thou shouldst know who thou shall be on the Day of Judgment.
Thou art acquainted with the fundamentals [us□l] *of the Religion,*
But look upon thine own fundamental [asl] *and see whether it is good.* [121]

Well, the true essence of wisdom and foundation of true knowledge is self-cognition. This view on man and the true station of self-cognition in the West starts with Socrates and reaches its zenith in the philosophy of existentialism.[122] Søren Kierkegaard,[123] a Christian orator and thinker of Denmark, is regarded as the father and precursor of existentialism.

Although this idea is traced from the thoughts of such personalities as Socrates, Marcus Aurelius, Apectitus, St. Augustine, and Pascal, it is through Kierkegaard that it has been presented systematically. In his short but productive life he produced valuable works, which proved very useful to those that came after him. Even though his contemporaries had not given much importance to his sayings, his thought is being increasingly recognized nowadays. The core of his thought, revolving around the human being, can be mentioned in the following five statements:

1. *Be yourself*. That is, behave in such a manner that your outer and inner self is in unison, and eschew any sort of pretension.

2. *Mind yourself*. That is, mind only your own business. Of course, it does not mean that one should be indifferent toward the affairs of others. Rather, the point is that everyone should be concerned first and foremost about himself. If everybody does so, naturally the society could have a brighter future.

3. *Know yourself*. That is, strive to have a correct picture of yourself which should be identical with reality as much as possible.

4. *Know your ideal condition*. That is, after acquiring an actual image of yourself, strive to identify the ideal image of yourself.

5. *Always move from your present to your ideal condition*. That is, after recognizing your real self and obtaining the correct picture of your ideal condition, set out on a perpetual journey and move toward your ideal station.[124] In the language of Mawlnn,

همچو مستسقی کز آبش سیر نیست بر هر آنچه یافتی با؟ میست

By God, do not tarry in anything (*any spiritual position*) *that thou hast gained,*
(*But crave more*) *like one suffering from dropsy who is never sated with water.*[125]

Therefore, the core of existentialism, which is one of the most influential contemporary schools of philosophy, is nothing but self-cognition. In this case, "if the fundamental principle of existentialism, in short, is the primacy of knowledge of the soul over knowledge of the world, it appears that it can be said by implication that the proponent of this school, aside from not being an infidel, is [actually] concerned with the spirit of all knowledge and learning."[126]

Such a judgment is natural since all religions have invited man to self-cognition and "the slogan of primacy of knowledge of the soul over knowledge of the world is a slogan, which stems from the heart of the teachings of Abrahamic faiths, and has abundant manifestations particularly in Islam."[127]

The truth is that in our religious thought, self-cognition has been recognized as the spirit of all knowledge and learning (i.e., the most profitable of all kinds of knowledge). Imm 'Al (*'a*) says: "Knowledge of the self is the most beneficial of all knowledge."[128] Viewing self-cognition as the objective and apogee of knowledge, he (*'a*) also says: "The highest degree of knowledge is that man would know his own self."[129] Elsewhere he (*'a*) says: "Whosoever has attained self-cognition has

achieved greater victory."[130]

All these emphases point to the significance and necessity of self-cognition in the discipline of Islamic anthropology. If knowledge of the self is equivalent to knowledge of God,[131] it follows that oblivion of the self means oblivion of God. So, if there is someone who does not know himself and claims to have knowledge of God, then according to Imām ʻAlī (*ʻa*), there is room for distrust and amazement.[132]

It is only through self-cognition that man is able to understand the purpose of creation, know his place in this system, and realize that the aim of imparting to us all these graces and endowments is something else, superior to and higher than what is visible. This world is a stage of action and its aim is a higher and more sublime sphere of existence. This lower and animal existence is not an end in itself.[133]

If man does not know himself and has no knowledge of the subtleties of his soul, he will then be afflicted with a multitude of destructive moral maladies such as hypocrisy, selfishness, pride, and polytheism. The first step in moral conduct [*sulūk-e akhlāq*] is self-cognition. The aim of reckoning [*muhāsibah*], heeding [*murāqibah*] and other ethical precepts is this self-cognition and nothing else. To cite an example, whoever does not know himself and is unaware of the real subtleties of his own self, experiences narrow-mindedness, and this in turn, provides the ground for pride to develop in him and "being a person with a narrow mentality, as soon as he beholds any merit in himself he imagines that he has position and status. He thinks he has acquired a high station."[134]

It can thus be deduced that it is not pride unless it is based on ignorance and feeble-mindedness. Those whose ignorance is more and whose rational faculties are more defective, are more proud of themselves; and those whose knowledge is greater, whose souls are more capacious, and whose breasts are spacious—they are humbler and more modest.[135]

It is through this approach that Imām Khomeinī, may his soul be sanctified, gives preference to reforming the self over reforming others and reckons the interior as more important than the exterior. In this perspective, the essence is the interior and not the external conditions. If man be free from all external entanglements but has a feeling of inner bondage, he is then not truly free. If man possesses the whole world but internally feels indigence, he is still destitute.

گفت چشم تنگ دنیا دوست را یا قناعت پر کند یا خاک گور

He said that the covetous eye of the worldly man is either satisfied
Through contentment, or will be filled with the earth of the grave.[136]

Basically, everything originates internally. So, while quoting a *hadīth* which expresses, "The freeman is

free in all circumstances,"[137] the Imām says:

Let it be known to you that contentment comes from the heart and the absence of neediness is a spiritual state, unrelated to external matters that lie outside the human self. I have myself seen certain persons among rich and wealthy classes who say things which no honorable poor man would say.[138]

This point is not restricted to wealth alone. All other conditions are like that. For this reason, the Imām invites all, particularly the theology students, to begin with and reform themselves, saying that: The first thing that the learned in religious sciences and the seekers of this perilous road must take into consideration is self-reform during the period of studies, counting it as far as possible to be the foremost of their duties, for this is harder and more obligatory than all the duties and obligations dictated by *sharī'ah* and reason.[139]

Non-recognition of the self springs from blindness of the heart and inner loss of sight, which is considered as the origin of all adversities. Hence, "one must be very fearful of this inner blindness of vision which is the main source of all kinds of darkness and wretchedness. The blindness of the heart is the source of all misfortunes."[140]

Thus, self-cognition is the fountainhead of all human perfection while self-ignorance is the root of all deprivation and humiliation of man. So, knowledge of the self is superior to knowledge of the world, and appears to be even more important than many religious sciences. As such, this knowledge should be accorded its own separate place and be developed and expanded. One should not be unduly confined to collecting and amassing terms of little use; rather, one should think of understanding one's real self and the intricacies and subtleties of the soul.

Combat with the self as the major jihād {struggle}

The explication of the major *jihād* [struggle] and combat with the self can be traced from an event which has been narrated from the Messenger of God (*s*). The story runs as follows: The Messenger of God (*s*) dispatched a contingent of the army from among the Muslims to a battlefront.

Upon their successful return, he (*s*) said to them: "Blessed are those who have performed the minor *jihād* and have yet to perform the major *jihād*." They asked, "O Messenger of God, what is the major *jihād?*"He (*s*) replied: "The *jihād* of the self (combat with the self)."[141]

In this manner, combat with the self and the major *jihād* [struggle] entered our moral culture and attained an eminent status in our religious literature. But, what is meant by this 'combat with the self'?

We can only talk about combat with the self when the preceding principles have been well understood and accepted. Once we acknowledge that man has dual personalities and between which a constant

war is taking place, we can then have a proper understanding of combat with the self. What is meant by 'self' [*nafs*] here is not the philosophical sense of the term. Rather, it means the world of carnal instincts and desires. The totality of all existential needs, motives, and sexual impulses is called 'self' [*nafs*].

As such, what is meant by combat with the self is the struggle against these instincts; though this understanding is somewhat premature and fails to convey the exact import of the *had□th*. The objective of combat with the self, in a nutshell, is to place all carnal powers, desires and instincts under the dictates of reason and use them for serving God and perfecting the self.

It is from this aspect that Im□m Khomein□ describes it as follows: "Thus the *jih□d* of the self… implies overpowering one's own powers and faculties, and placing them under God's command, and purging the domain of our body of satanic elements and their forces."[142]

Combat with the self, in the Im□m's code of ethics has such an esteemed position that he commences his book, *Sharh-e Chehel Had□th* [Exposition of Forty *Had□th*s] with it and the first *had□th* he expounds is this very *had□th* of 'combat with the self', considering it loftier than attaining martyrdom in the way of God: "Thus, the *jih□d* of the self is the *jih□d* of greater importance. This *jih□d* is superior to being killed in the way of God…"[143]

The reason behind the importance of combat with the self in relation to the conventional *jih□d* is obvious.

If somebody abandons (conventional) *jih□d* he has then committed a grave sin and caused the defeat of others while if somebody pulls out of the combat with the self, he, in fact, is vanquished and has caused his own fall. Military combat is not constant. But combat with the self is an arduous and constant activity. In military combat there are others who can help the person. Yet in the combat with the self it is the very person himself who should render the final blow to the enemy and gain victory. In military combat victory is sometimes so apparent and conspicuous that it elicits the applause and eulogy of everybody and gives a boost to one's pride. However, in the combat with the self nobody is a witness as to what is taking place inside man and victory does not evoke praise and congratulations from anyone.

The story of a *muj□hid* [combatant] who had been fighting and gaining marvellous victories for years and then, in seclusion, engaged in combat with the self, and the reactions of the self, which Mawl□n□ has elaborately narrated, is the best example of such differences. In short, these distinctions and many others exemplify the primacy of combat with the self over combat against an adversary—(as combat with the self involves fighting with) an adversary whose killing is not easily possible and who is more powerful than any outer enemy:

ای‌شهان! کشتیما خصم برون　　ماندخصمی زو بتردر اندرون

کشتن‌این، کارعقل و هوش‌نیست شیر باطن ، سُخره‌خرگوش نیست

دوزخ‌است این نفس‌و دوزخ‌اژدهاست کو به‌دریاهانگردد کم وکاست

هفت‌دریا رادرآشامد، هنوز کم‌نگردد سوزش‌آن خَلق سوز

سنگهاو کافران‌سنگ دل اندرآیند اندراو زار و خجل

O kings, we have slain the outward enemy,
(*But*) *there remains within* (*us*) *a worse enemy than he.*
To slay this (*enemy*) *is not the work of reason and intelligence:*
The inward lion is not subdued by the hare.
This carnal self [nafs] *is Hell, and Hell is a dragon*
(*The fire of*) *which is not diminished by oceans* (*of water*).
It would drink up the Seven Seas, and still
The blazing of that consumer of all creatures would not become less.
Stones and stony-hearted infidels enter it,
Miserable and shame-faced.[144]

Of course, it should not be assumed that since combat with the self is superior to that against an adversary, one should abandon the latter and engage only the former. Unfortunately, this understanding had emerged among a group of people and they would replace this one with the other. They were negligent of the fact that combat against an adversary is the preliminary of combat with the self and it is only after triumphing over an outer foe and obtaining the necessary preparedness that one can engage in combat with the self.

Thus, it was only after a contingent of that army had defeated the enemies that the Messenger of God (*s*) apprised them of the combat with the self, and not prior to (the triumphant return of the contingent). This shows that it is only after the outer *jih*□*d* has been performed that one can talk about combat with the self.

Anyhow, the quintessence of Islamic morality is this combat with the self, which the Imām also emphasizes so much and reckons it as the touchstone of man's prosperity or adversity. He describes the arena of this conflict as follows:

The human soul inhabits another realm and another territory also, which is the world of the hidden and the sphere of the sublime world. In that world, the role of the sensual forces assumes graver dimensions. This is the place, where the struggle and conflict between the divine forces and the fiendish ones is more severe and also more significant. Everything that exists in the external or visible world drifts to this hidden world, and is manifested there. Whichever of the forces whether godly or devilish, is victorious here is essentially triumphant there also… it is possible that, God forbid, due to the defeat of heavenly forces, the self is left vacant for the unholy occupation of the vicious and unworthy satanic legions, and hence causing an eternal loss to the human being that cannot be retrieved.[145]

Nevertheless, this combat with the self sometimes brings about questions and ambiguities, which are the subject of the next discussion.

Regulation of Instincts

Really, what should be done with our wayward instincts and earthly aspect? Once we accept that man is a blend of the spirit of God and putrid clay, and that this existential contradiction is the cause of the rise and fall of man's spiritual life, how could and should this contradiction be resolved? Since time immemorial this existential contradiction of man has been known to many thinkers and philosophers. Some of the Greek thinkers used to liken man's soul or spirit to a bird, held within the cage of body and shackled to the physical dimension. For instance, in an ode [*ghazal*] they claimed to be that of Mawlānā,[146] it appears thus:

مرغ باغ ملکوتم نیم از عالم خاک چند روزی قفسی ساخته اند از بدنم

I'm a bird of the heavenly garden and not of this material world.
But for some moments they have made a cage out of my physical body.[147]

For that reason, they have considered the body and physical dimension of man as a prison and an impediment to perfection, and life in this physical world as the greatest veil in reaching God. Many a time Hāfiz Shīrāzī[148] expresses chagrin and remorse for this earthliness of man and reminds [man] that this [world] is not his [final] abode:

که ای بلند نظر، شاهباز سدره نشین نشین تو نه این کُنج محنت آبادست

ترا ز کنگره عرش میزنند صفیر ندانمت که در این دامگه چه افتادست

O ambitious and great who is in a sublime station!
Your abode is not this corner of suffering and affliction.
They call on you from heavens;
I know not what you are doing in this world of deception.[149]

Expression of distress for this bondage and adversity can be seen in numerous poems of Iranian poets. In the different religions of India, particularly Jainism,[150] this contradiction between soul and body is more evident. The most important tenets of this sect are anchored on the principle that the growth of the bodily instincts be impeded and the soul nourished as much as possible. This is the way of setting it (soul) free from the body.

So long as the body is strong and desirous of complying with the dictates of its instincts, the soul is feeble and a servant of the body. But once we burn and melt the body through contentment and refrain from obeying its whims and caprices, the soul, which is a 'divine breath', gains strength and becomes powerful and is able to gradually subdue the body.

For the generation of this power many ways have been proposed, the most important of which are as follows: celibacy, withdrawing from activity, seclusion, eating less and less often, and sleeping less and less often. For instance, they narrate that Mahavira,[151] the founder of Jainism, remained single all his life and would pass his days in begging. Other sects springing from Hinduism, such as Buddhism, as well as the system of Yoga more or less recommend the same.[152]

The interpretation of these people on the issue of bodily needs and their relation to spiritual ones are very simplistic. A human being wants whatever he sees; so it is better for him not to see and want anything. The following couplets that are attributed to B□b□ T□hir[153] point to this view:

ز دست دیده و دل هر دو فریاد که هرچه دیده بیند، دل کند یاد

ببسازم خنجری نیشش ز فولاد زنم بر دیده تا دل گردد آزاد

I complain of both my eyes and heart
For everything that the eyes see, the heart would yearn for.
I am going to make a dagger with a blade of steel
With which to stab my eyes so that my heart will be set free.

As such, the solution to this issue is that man should pay no heed to his bodily needs, withdraw from the society, be apathetic to the fate of others, close his eyes from viewing the beauties of nature, and deprive himself of all the natural endowments. Sa'd[154] thus narrates his dialogue with one of these kind of people as follows:

بزرگی‌دیدم اندرکوهساری قناعت‌کرده ازدنیا به‌غاری

چرا، گفتم به شهراندرنیایی؟ که باری‌بندی از دل‌برگشایی

بگفت‌آنجاپریرویان‌نغزند چو گل‌بسیار شد، پیلان‌بلغزند

A great man I saw in highlands
Who has contented himself in cave-dwelling?
'Why do you not come to the city'—to him I said—
'To relax and refresh your heart?'
He said that the city is full of glitters
Be it known that when dry clay increases, the elephants will make a slip.[155]

In this manner, asceticism and seclusion, in our culture, are considered synonymous, and *khāneqāh* [monastery, convent or house of dervishes] and school is juxtaposed with each other. The difference between the worshipper and ascetic on the one hand, and the scholar on the other hand, is that the former is only after his salvation while the latter is concerned with the salvation of others as well:

صاحبدلی‌به مدرسه‌آمد زخانقاه بشکست‌عهدِ صحبت اهل طریق

را

گفتم: میان عالِمو عابد چه‌فرق بود تا اختیارکردی از آن این فریق را؟

گفت: آن گلیم‌خویش بدرمی‌برد ز موج وین‌جهد می‌کندگه رهاندغریق را

A certain holy man having quitted the monastery,
And the society of religious men, became a member of a college.
I asked what was the difference between being a learned,
Or a religious man that could induce him to change his society?
He replied, "The devotee saves his own blanket out of the waves,
And the learned man endeavors to rescue others from drowning."[156]

Definitions such as 'self-denial', 'purging of instincts', and 'self-restraint' are based on this view, which arises mainly from Hindu culture and has found its way among some Muslims. Thus, in most cases when talking about combat with the self, some of them suppose it to be equal to self-denial and uprooting of instincts, and this very Hindu notion of self-denial is what is in their mind.

At times, a group of early Muslims had the same perception of combat with the self [*jihād an-nafs*]. One day one of the companions of the Messenger of God (*s*) named Uthmān ibn Maz'ūn asked his permission for seclusion and solitude. But the Holy Prophet (*s*) did not consent and said: "God, the Blessed and Exalted, has not ordained that we lead a monastic life. The monasticism of my *ummah* [community of believers] is the struggle in the way of God [*jihād fī sabīlillāh*]."[157] Likewise, in interpreting on the noble *āyah* [Qur'anic verse], ***"Do you want me to inform you of the most destructive of people? It is he whose endeavor is corruption of the worldly life,"*** the Holy Prophet (*s*) said: "It refers to the monks who have confined themselves to the four corners [of the monastery]."[158]

There was also a time when one of the companions of Imām 'Alī (*'a*) named 'Alā' ibn Ziyād Hārithī brought a complaint to the Commander of the Faithful (*'a*) that his brother, 'Āsim, has turned his back from the world (i.e., he has renounced the world) and put on a woollen garment.[159] Imām 'Alī (*'a*) summoned him. As he came, the Imām (*'a*) told him:

O’ enemy of yourself! Certainly, the evil (Satan) has misguided you. Do you feel no pity for your wife and your children? Do you believe that if you use those things which Allah has made lawful for you, He will dislike you? You are too unimportant for Allah to do so.[160]

Although our ethical and gnostic literature is replete with associating repudiation of the world with combat with the self and equating asceticism with Christian monasticism, the principal tenets of the Messenger of God (*s*) and the Infallibles in this regard are something else.

Combat with the self does not mean denying the reality of instincts or their suppression. Combat with the self commences with the presumption that all instincts of man are necessary and that, basically, without them spiritual perfection cannot be attained. Combat with the self is not meant to ignore, for instance, the sexual instinct, and to order its repression. Rather, it considers it vital, necessary and essential for growth, and tries to guide it.

Thus, Imām Khomeinī while expounding it (combat with the self) does not speak about suppression of instincts. It is true that in *jihād* we always aim for victory and that we earnestly aspire to crush our opponent. But we do not all the times yearn for the elimination of the adversary. Rather, it is likely that his existence could be useful to us! We only see to it that we are not overcome by the adversary in this arena, not that we annihilate the enemy, i.e. our self. So, the Imām adopts the term, ‘triumph’ and in no way talks about self-denial. Instead, he emphasizes that “the *jihād* of the self which is the *jihād* of greater importance implies overpowering one’s own powers and faculties, and placing them under God’s command.”[161]

Yes, it is about harnessing and regulating instincts through overpowering them; not through self-denial. Consequently, in the combat with the self, one cannot talk at all about the obliteration of instincts. Rather, the existence and indispensability of all instincts has been assumed. It is through this outlook on the issue of instincts and how to regulate them that we arrive at the following:

- Necessity of instincts for perfection;
- Insatiability of instincts; and
- Social involvement as a requisite of combat with the self.

Necessity of instincts for perfection

Curbing the instincts does not mean that their existence is not necessary. Instead, they must be endured. If it is so, there is no need then to preserve them, and the policy of eliminating them is the best

one. [Yet,] in the code of ethics of the Imām the existence of all instincts is deemed necessary, and all of them have advantages and uses. In essence, from this aspect, nothing in the universe has been created inordinately and every integral part of the universe has its own particular function. So, the existence of all things—even the apparently worst instincts—is beneficial and necessary. This reasoning has roots in the Qur'anic view of the universe. God Almighty says: ***"We created not the heaven and the earth and all that is between them in play."***[162]

As far as creation is concerned it is the act of the All-Wise God; it has been created wisely and nothing therein is futile and vain. In the same vein, since all beings are creatures of the One and Only God, they are in a state of harmony and concordance, and all parts are related to one another. If in a certain level of existence disorder is noticeable, through a deeper analysis we would realize its intrinsic order. To cite an example, a child who has seen the kitchen utensils in the cabinet every day and today he notices that all of them are apparently cluttered in different parts of the kitchen, he considers it as the result of his mother's carelessness and confusion.

But once he understands that they are supposed to entertain visitors that night at home, he realizes that this apparent disarray has meaning and order. Such is the creation. If at first glance the same impression is entertained in one's mind, this notion will dissipate after a second and profound scrutiny. That is why the Glorious Qur'an admonishes us, anytime we comprehend diversity and duality in the universe, to take a second and deeper look so as to discover our own misconception.[163]

The corollary of this precept is for us to reckon the universe as orderly and purposeful, and not to think of any phenomenon therein as useless. God Almighty considers it an attribute of the learned and sages that they hold the passing of nights and days and all the phenomena in the universe significance, and say: ***"Our Lord! Thou createdst not this in vain. Glory be to Thee!"***[164]

This all-embracing view on the universe also includes man's self and instincts. Since there is nothing useless in the universe, it follows that human instincts are also meaningful and purposeful. If we view instincts from this perspective, we cannot on any account, talk about eliminating and suppressing them. Instead, efforts should be made for them to act in accordance with their particular functions and not drift away from their own specific tasks; this is different from self-denial. This rule is applicable to all instincts.

The existence of even those instincts which have apparently negative functions is also essential and their absence would render man's existence imperfect and deficient. For instance, one of the 'negative' instincts is anger, which is mentioned in the *ahādīth* [Prophetic narrations] as the key to all kinds of destruction and mischief.

Nowadays, numerous books have been written about this affliction, its negative effects, and ways of curing it. There are hardly any who are immune to the side effects of this ominous phenomenon; all of us in different places drunk its hemlock and have poisoned our palates. Many psychologists consider anger as causing high blood pressure, cholesterol, and even untimely death, and say that anger deprives man

of the powers of sound reasoning and judgment, making him blind to the realities.

Once such anger and hatred arises in you, the most important part of your mind, which is the center of judgment between right and wrong, fails to function, rendering you incapable of judging the short- and long-term consequences of your conduct and behaviour. In this condition, our power of judgment completely fails to function and there is no chance of its working. This condition is exactly similar to that of a person when he becomes mad.[165]

We can thus continue to enumerate the destructive effects of anger and to cite the various opinions about it. The Imām himself has allotted a section in the *Sharh-e Chehel Hadīth* to this destructive instinct. He discusses it in detail, indicating the way of release from it and the method of regulating it.[166]

Well, now this question arises: Is not anger, with all these destructive effects arising from it, an example of the many instincts that must be uprooted? Is the existence of such an unpleasant instinct essential in man? Keeping in mind the Qur'anic precept that everything in the universe has a purpose and goal, the answer to the above question is positive. Yes, anger is also necessary and if it were not for this instinct, humankind would never have endured and would have become extinct. It is enough to imagine this instinct to disappear overnight from man's existence. In that case, no danger, no matter how serious, will induce him to move, and the necessary energy to face unpleasant situations will be not available to him. We should not forget that the greatest specific function of anger is preparing us to deal with emergency situations and providing us with the power to respond quickly. Most of the writings dealing with anger have also mentioned its specific positive function. Therefore, from this perspective anger is also a vital element for the continuity of man's life. Anger becomes bad only when it strays from its original function.

While conducting an analysis of anger, Imām Khomeinī also delves into all its dimensions and considers it in moderation to be necessary for individual and social life. Pertaining to its benefits, he says:
It should be known that the Power of Anger is one of the biggest favours of God conferred upon His creatures, which enables them to pursue activities constructive to their world and the Hereafter, assure the continuity of the species as well as the safety and survival of the individual and the family. It also plays a great role in the establishment and maintenance of social order and civic life. If this noble faculty were not ingrained in the animal's nature, it would not have been able to defend itself against natural adversities, and would have been subjected to destruction and extinction. And if it were absent in man, then besides these, he would have failed to achieve most of his progress and perfection.

Moreover, even its deficiency and insufficient presence below the moderate level is itself considered a moral weakness and flaw which gives rise to innumerable vices and defects like fear; timidity; weakness; laxity; laziness; greed; lack of restraint, patience and tolerance; lack of constancy and perseverance when needed; love of comfort; torpor; lethargy; submissiveness to oppression and tyranny; submitting to

insults and disgraces to which an individual or his family may be subjected; dastardliness; spiritlessness, etc. Describing the qualities of the believers God Almighty says:

﴿أَشِدَّاءُ عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ رُحَمَاءُ بَيْنَهُمْ.﴾

(**The believers**) **are hard against the unbelievers and merciful among themselves**.[*167*]

The fulfilment of the duty of *al-amr b'l-ma'rf wa'n-nahy 'an al-munkar* [to enjoin good conduct and forbid indecency], the implementation of *hudd* [punishment prescribed by the Islamic penal law], *ta'zrt* [punishments decreed by a judge], and the carrying out of other policies set forth by religion or guided by reason, would not have been possible without the existence of this noble Power of Anger.

On this basis, those who believe in eradicating the Power of Anger and consider its destruction as an accomplishment and mark of perfection are highly mistaken and in great error, ignorant as they are about the signs of perfection and the bounds of moderation. Poor fellows, they do not know that God Almighty has not created this noble faculty in vain in all the species belonging to the animal kingdom. To the children of Adam (*'a*) He bestowed this power as the source of securing a good life in this world and the Hereafter, and a vehicle for procuring various blessings and felicities.

The holy *jihd* with the enemies of the *Dn* [religion]; the struggle for the preservation of mankind's social order; the defense and protection of one's own life, property and honor, as well as the Divine values and laws; and above all the combat with one's inner self, which is the biggest enemy of man, none of these could be possible without the existence of this noble faculty.

It is under the banner of this noble faculty that aggression and encroachments upon rights are repelled, borders and frontiers are protected, and other social and individual offences, noxious practices, and harmful deeds are checked. It is for this very reason that the *hukam* [men of wisdom] have recommended various remedies for treating any deficiency in this Power, and prescribed numerous practical and theoretical remedies for the purpose of its regeneration, like participation in acts of heroism and going to battlefronts on the occasion of war with the enemies of God.[168]

As such, instincts are not only to be endured but also their existence is to be considered a grace for the spiritual and social growth and perfection of man from which benefits are to be sought for the growth and development of human talents. This principle is also true for all instincts. None of the instincts should be suppressed and uprooted; instead, efforts should be made for them to perform their specific functions and not go beyond their limits.

This nourishment and training should be coordinated and concordant; all the instincts and attributes of man should be so harmonious with each other as to constitute a coherent whole. For example, instead

of eliminating the sensual instinct it should be modestly moderated. Basically, moral virtues are understandable with the control of instincts, and without these instincts, they (moral virtues) would lose their meaning. Anyone who has no sexual instinct has no business talking about chastity.

How could one who does not possess at all the power of anger talk about meekness and forbearance? The understanding of Mawlānā on the Prophet's noble *hadīth*, "*Lā rahbāniyyah fī'l-Islām*" [There is no monasticism in Islam][169] succinctly illustrates the essence of this viewpoint:

چون عدو نبْوَد، جهاد آمد محال شهوتت نبود، نباشد امتثال

صبر نبود چون نباشد میل تو خصم چون نبود، چه حاجت خیل تو؟

هین! مکن خود را خصی، رُهبان مشو زانکه عفّت، هست شهوت را گرو

بهوا، نهی از هوا ممکن نبود غازیای بر مُردگان نتوان نمود

When there is no enemy, armed struggle is inconceivable;
(*If*) *thou hast no lust, there can be no obedience* (*to the divine command*).
There can be no self-restraint when thou hast no desire;
When there is no adversary, what need for thy strength?
Hark, do not castrate thyself, do not become a monk;
For chastity is in pawn to (*depends on the existence of*) *lust.*
Without (*the existence of*) *sensuality 'tis impossible to forbid sensuality:*
Heroism cannot be displayed against the dead.[170]

The most important distinction between Islamic ethics and those of Christianity and Buddhism is rooted in this issue. It is this approach that places Islamic ethics in the category of 'worldliness' and separates it from world-denunciation approaches. Yes, the existence of every instinct—however negative it may seem—serves as the basis for the appearance of positive and valuable attributes of man. It is in times of adversity and hardship that man's power of patience and constancy is put under test and man is able to recognize his essence well:

عِرْقِ مردی آن گهی پیدا شود که مسافر همرهِ اعدا شود

The root (*innate quality*) *of manhood* (*only*) *becomes apparent at the time*
When the traveler meets his enemies on the road.[171]

Furthermore, it is only in the presence of negative instincts that positive attributes basically find their meaning and that we can talk about nourishment and training. Thus, Mawlān used to admonish those who were bent on uprooting their sexual instinct, telling them not to do so, for in the absence of this instinct, chastity has no meaning and value. That is why they have said that the one who can never get angry at all is an imperfect man, but the one who does not want to get angry is a wise person. The first type (of person) is fundamentally lacking an instinct while the second has the instinct to get angry, but has controlled it.

It is possible that *wahm* [the power of imagination and invention], *ghadab* [the power of passion and anger], and *shahwah* [the power of lust or sensuality], also possess divine aspect, and may bring about felicity and good luck to man, if these powers are subjected to the dictates of reason and good sense and the teachings of prophets of God (*'a*).[172]

Insatiability of instincts

But the fact cannot be denied that once these instincts are released and set free, they would never stop anywhere, and, like hell give the cry of, *"Can there be more to come?"*[173]

That is, these instincts can never be satiated and no matter how man endeavors to satisfy them and to meet his instinctive needs, he becomes thirstier just as the one who drinks the salty water of the sea. This is the secret behind the tragic condition of humanity. Anyone who is a captive of the instinct of greed and avarice remains in a state of indigence and insatiability even if becomes a Qārūn.[174]
The cure for avarice and covetousness does not lie in acquiring all the things that we desire. For this 'all' is of an indefinite and unspecific level, and everyone has his or her own limitations. Up to now we have yet to see a rich man who is satisfied with his financial condition. [Instead,] he always experiences a sense of inner restlessness and is not satisfied with his own extant status: "Right below the layer of comfort a kind of mental uneasiness exists which leads to hopelessness, unnecessary encounters, the need for alcohol and drugs and, in the worst case, to the committing of suicide."[175]

The limits to the acquisition of wealth and the attempts to satisfy the instinct of avarice cannot be determined at all. Once man reaches whatever optimal point that had been anticipated, he considers

another optimal point for himself. So if man wants to obtain mental satisfaction through greed and covetousness, he is treading the wrong path which leads him nowhere, because one of the interesting features of greed is that no matter how much the covert motivation of greed to attempt attaining mental satisfaction is, the satirical point is that after you obtain the sought-after and desired thing, you will still remain unsatisfied.[176]

The true antidote of greed is not more greed; rather, it is satisfaction for what has been given, contentment and self-respect:

کوزه چشم حریصان پر نشد تا صدف قانع نشد، پر دُر نشد

The pitcher, the eye of the covetous, never becomes full:
The oyster-shell is not filled with pearls until it is contented.[177]

One day a man came to Im□m ‘Al□ (*‘a*) and said that whatever he sought and obtained did not satisfy him and that he yearned for more of it, adding that he was annoyed by this situation. He asked the Im□m (*‘a*) to teach him something that would be beneficial to him. The Im□m (*‘a*) said:

If that which suffices you makes you not in need (self-sufficient), the smallest of which is making you not in need, and if you look for more than that which suffices you, all the things in the world cannot make you self-sufficient.[178]

Yes, such is the nature of this instinct. The more its root is satisfied, the stronger it becomes, so much so that even if it has two valleys of gold and silver, it will crave for the third valley (of gold and silver). Nothing can please and satisfy the world-loving eyes of man except contentment or the soil of the grave.

This point is true not only for covetousness; such is also the case with the sexual instinct—which does not know what satisfaction is. Freud erroneously thought that through meeting the sexual needs this instinct can be soothed and calmed down. The point is that the more this instinct is quenched, the thirstier it becomes:

The power of sensuality and lust acts in man in such a way that if he is given one woman, he is attracted to other women. If he is given an empire, he will hanker after some other empire. Man always desires for what he does not possess. In spite of this vanity of imagination and futility of human desire, the kiln of sensuality is always hot and its heat ever increasing, and our desires are never cooled down.[179]

A glance at the lives of kings and sultans who kept thousands of women in their harems but still longed for other women bears witness to this fact and “anyone who has any doubt is advised to examine his own self and other human beings belonging to the classes of poor, rich and powerful; he will then agree with me.”[180]

This rule is applicable to all instincts and none of them can be excluded from it. No one can be found who can say, “I have fulfilled all my desires.” Even Hosang Vaz□r[181] who used to claim, “I engulfed the whole world and did everything,” was also looking for deliverance and respite until his death so as to conduct again all the affairs.” In no way are these instincts satiated, and herein lies the danger. For, the bounds of every instinct should be identified, its proper specific function obtained and employed within these limits. This does not imply elimination, while at the same time, this instinct should not be released altogether:

None of the prophets of God (*‘a*) ever tried to eradicate the powers of passion, sensuality or imagination completely. None of the messengers of God have ever demanded to completely kill sensuality and desire or to extinguish the fire of passion or anger and ignore the inventions of imagination. But they have rather advocated for controlling and bridling them and making them function under the command of reason and Divine Laws. For each one of these powers struggles to dominate others and win its goal, whatever mischief, chaos, and confusion may be stirred up.[182]

In this case, this question can once again be posed: Since these instincts are insatiable, is it not better for us to uproot them and thus free ourselves from their bonds? The answer to this question is negative. For, aside from all these benefits that derive from their existence, we should never forget the point that basically the humanness of man is the preservation of these instincts. The best medicine has also side effects and as of the moment no medicine without side effects has ever been known. Is there anyone who, due to the fact that these medicines have side effects, refrains from taking them in case of necessity?

Water which is the source of life can make a person sick if an excess of it enters the body. Fire, the discovery of which led to a quantum transformation in the life of man would burn us if we went very near it. The sun, with all its procreative and bountiful aspects, would destroy the earth if it comes a little nearer. As such, due to these issues, the essence of instincts cannot be uprooted; instead, they should be regulated. Now, another question arises and that is: Why have these instincts been created so as to be insatiable, and why is there no instinct with predetermined limit and threshold of satisfaction?

The answer is this: One of the innate qualities of man is that he is always aspiring for perfection and is not satisfied with anything. It is this relentless search that has transformed him from a cave-dwelling savage to an outer space-roving astronaut. If humankind were always to be content with its existing condition, no sort of change would ever occur in its life, and like that of honeybee, would not have been

different from what it was thousands of years ago. It is this *fitrah* [natural disposition of man] that urges him to discover the secrets of the universe and not to be content with all that he possesses:

It is obvious that man is always allured by something, which he does not own. This is the human nature as conceived by various great Islamic thinkers and holy men, especially one should refer to a great master of divinity, Mīrzā Muhammad ʻAlī Shāhābādī, may my soul be ransomed for him.[183]

So, finally, all these instincts are deeply embedded on man's essence of seeking and devotion to perfection which, in itself, is a blessing up to this point. The problem arises when it happens that we forget the rationality behind these instincts and their creation, and imagine that we have to comply totally with their dictates, spending day and night in the acquisition of wealth and beauty-worship. It is here that we go astray from the Path, forgetting the True Object of Worship and Absolute Perfection while imagining riches, power, or sensuality as our gods and devotionally eulogizing them.[184]

It is enough that we realize our mistakes, knowing that these are not our real masters. They are servants who, if properly trained and nourished, will always be our helpers. [On the other hand,] once they are abandoned and released for some time, they will claim divinity and make us their slaves. Accordingly, instincts should neither be killed nor released. Rather, they should be guided and regulated so that you could enjoy their benefits and remain secure from their menaces.

Social participation as a requisite of combat with the self

Just as some people would imagine that combat with the self implied self-denial and uprooting of instincts, some others have supposed that the requisites of combat with the self are withdrawing from the society, seclusion, and confinement in a corner. This tenet of running away from the people in order to attain security is indeed against the teachings of our religion and against values, and has gradually assumed an aspect of 'value' for itself, being reckoned as a manifestation of 'perfection'.

One of the most important books on mystics [*ʻirfān*] and Sufis ever written is the *Tadhkirat' ul-Awliyā'*[185] in which the author has given an account of the lives of more than ninety famous mystics. This book is replete with stories of the Sufis' isolation and retreat from society. In this book it has been reported that they [the people around him] said to Hasan al-Basrī[186]—one of the notable mystics: "There is a man who for a period of twenty years has not attended a congregational prayer, has no social intercourse with anyone, and has [always] been sitting in a corner."[187] Hasan approached him and asked him the reason for his conduct. On hearing the reply, he said to him: "Be as you are as you are better than me."[188]

Again, concerning the description of *tasawwuf* [Sufism] Sahl at-Tustarī (201-273 AH), a great Sufi, is

reported to have said: “Sufism is meager eating, having tranquility with God, the Sublime and Exalted, and keeping aloof from people.”[189] Again, in an account on the life of D□w□d at-T□’□[190] it is reported: “He was constantly disillusioned with the people,”[191] “keeping aloof from them [people],”[192] and would say: “Run away from the people just as they flee from the fierce lion.”[193]

In his *K□my□-ye Sa‘□dat* [The Alchemy of Happiness] Al-Ghazz□l□,[194] likewise, devotes a separate chapter to the etiquette of seclusion and says:

The school of thought [*madhhab*] of Sufy□n N□r□, Ibr□h□m Idham, D□w□d T□’□, Fad□l ‘Ayy□d, Sulaym□n Khaww□s, Y□suf Isb□t, Hadh□fah Mar‘ash□, Bashar H□f□, and many other God-fearing and great men (*r*)[195] is that seclusion and solitude is more virtuous than mingling with others.[196]

Then it quotes sayings from them such as follows: Rab□‘ ibn Khuthaym and Ibr□h□m Najaf□, may Allah be pleased with them, have said: “pursue knowledge and keep away from people.”[197] Fad□l said: “I would receive a great favour from one who did not mind me or greet me, and when I fell ill, would not visit me.”[198] In short, after discussing such quotations on the virtues of seclusion, Al-Ghazz□l□ has named six of its benefits, discussing each one of them in detail.

For example, the third benefit of seclusion in his view is this: “No city or town…is free of hostility and sedition and anyone who secluded would be free from sedition. Once he associates with the people, he would fall into sedition, destroy his religion and be in danger.”[199] The fourth benefit of seclusion in the view of Al-Ghazz□l□ is deliverance from the mischief of the people, while the fifth one is that the people will not pin their hopes on him. The sixth [and last] benefit is “being rid of meeting dear ones, the stupid, and those whom it is naturally abominable to meet.”[200]

In a nutshell, seclusion means turning away from responsibility, non-acceptance of the reality of life, and shirking any form of endeavor to change the status quo in favour of the desired condition. Seclusion from this perspective is nothing but the worthlessness of man in as much as one cannot hope for any good from him. Apparently, this kind of outlook has arisen at some stage in the mystical lives of many. After passing through different stages of mystic knowledge and gnosis, our mystics resorted to nothing other than seclusion. They considered the best way to live was to go into seclusion; that is, somewhat a premeditated kind of suicide and seemingly legitimate.[201]

This approach, regardless of the intention it is based, is squarely in opposition to the teachings of the Infallibles (*‘a*) and the rudimentary precepts of the Qur’an. We have read a lot that monasticism and seclusion have no place in Islam and those who practice these are considered the most destructive of people. In the parlance of religion, the best of men is he who is beneficial to others and has a stronger and more profound sense of responsibility with respect to those around him and the society at large. Enjoining what is good and forbidding what is wrong, which is one of the fundamental Islamic obligations, is only comprehensible with the acceptance of collectivity and living therein, as well as

accountability.[202]

Essentially, from the view of the Messenger of God (*s*), Muslim is he who is concerned with other Muslims and shares joys and sorrows. Hence, the Holy Prophet (*s*) said: "He who has passed the night without concern for the affairs of Muslims is not a Muslim."[203]

Being a Muslim is not only restricted to individual acts of worship and devotion; it transcends these and embraces all levels of social life. From this perspective, being a Muslim means acceptance of responsibility and having an active presence in society:

Well, the Prophet (*s*) has advised us to be diligent about the affairs of Muslims. Does diligence over the affairs of Muslims lie only in saying how many *rak'ah* [cycle] the prayer is; what the doubt between so-and-so is? Is this supposed to be showing concern for the affairs of Muslims? It is an issue that does not speak of the affairs of Muslims. Affairs of Muslims refer to their political affairs, their social affairs, and their predicaments. Whoever does not give concern to these is not a Muslim [*falaysa bi-muslim*], according to the [above-quoted] *had□th*.[204]

The distinction between human beings and animals is this sense of responsibility. Once we ignore it, we tend to promote seclusion and isolation [to prevail in the society]. It is enough to imagine that all the people want to enjoy the benefits of seclusion and to choose isolation and retreat. The endurance of such a society and to live therein is nearly impossible. The social order will soon be in shambles and everyone will retreat to the caves and jungles.

So, the point should be known that in our religious teachings seclusion has never met with approval. When one of the companions of the Messenger of God (*s*) asked for his approval for seclusion, the Holy Prophet (*s*) discouraged him from doing so and said: "Once you do not mingle with the people, how you will then perform the enjoinment of what is good and the forbiddance of what is wrong?"[205]

That is, social life and responsibility to others are a duty of all Muslims while seclusion means trampling upon this duty.
Even in our religious sources it has been narrated that the supplications of one who withdraws from social and economic activity and sits in a corner relying on God, will not be granted. One day Im□m as-S□diq (*'a*) enquired about one of his companions named 'Umar ibn Muslim. They said, "He has abandoned trade and has turned to [only] worship." He (*'a*) said: "Woe to him! Does he know not that the prayers of one who abandoned all endeavor will not be granted?" Then he narrates the story of those in the time of the Messenger of God (*s*) who, under the pretext of trust in and reliance on God [*tawakkul*], withdrew from active life and went into retreat. He (*'a*) says that the Holy Prophet (*s*) told them: "The supplication of whoever does so will not be granted. So, exert effort."[206]

Undoubtedly, the tenet of seclusion and asceticism is in contradiction to many of the religious teachings. In his discourses on ethics the Im□m has also put great emphasis on man as a social being, and does

not at all name seclusion as a value. Rather, he believes that combat with the self is only possible through a responsible presence and activity in the society; not through withdrawal and isolation. He believes that the only gift of sitting secluded in a corner is wretchedness and misery. Preservation and advancement of human values lies in sustained efforts; not seclusion:

If you want to be a human being, you have to strive hard. Preserving your human values requires effort. It is not possible for one's human values to be preserved while sitting at home. One who sits in seclusion at home will suffer setbacks. However, he does not realize that he is no longer a human being.[207]

From the Imām's perspective, isolation and withdrawal from responsibility is in no way concordant with Islam and its teachings. It is an alien phenomenon which has brought malaise to the Islamic society, so much so that this anti-value has found an esteemed place among Muslims, and if one lives in isolation—that is futility—he enjoys greater respect, esteem and worth:

Seclusion was not extant in Islam at all; it has never been so. This seclusion, I wonder what—retreat, withdrawal, and basically, aloofness—have all been present in non-Muslim religious groups and have been introduced among the Muslims; reaching the stage of saying that "Mr. so-and-so is a very good person; he does not care at all about what may happen (regarding something)!" Apathy itself became part of eulogy![208]

This inversion of values would, at times, lead to those who were alert and conscious pretending to be indifference and using others as their plaything: "Well, this causes even the one who distinguishes between each and everything would show himself as undiscerning."[209]

Only presence in society can polish his coarseness of personality and crudity, just as gravel is smoothened by rolling and tossing innumerable times in a river's course, a human being is moulded and refined only in the midst of society and in the context of the challenges of life, thus causing the essence of his self to manifest itself.

This World and the Hereafter

For many people, this world and the hereafter are cheese and chalk apart, and (to them) worldliness means turning away from the hereafter, while seeking the hereafter denotes hostility to the world.

Whenever the subject of the hereafter and that of keeping it in mind comes up, it seems that one should withdraw from the world, abandon and flee from it. Most of our Sufis and mystics have given currency to this dictum and claimed that the hereafter can be attained by trampling on this world, as this world is a world of matter while the hereafter is a world of meaning, and these two are irreconcilable.

All this vilification of the world, its vainness and the disgrace to which it has been subjected in our literature has its roots in this understanding of the world. Perhaps this world and the hereafter are inimical to one another and will never be reconciled. Someone with this notion of the world had vilified it and whose statement Imām ʻAlī (*ʻa*) heard. Contrary to his expectation, the Imām (*ʻa*) did not confirm his view. Rather, he (*ʻa*) said to him:

O' you who abuse the world, O' you who have been deceived by its deceit and cheated by its wrongs. Do you accuse it or it should accuse you? When did it bewilder you or deceive you? Certainly, this world is a house of truth for him who appreciates it; a place of safety for him who understands it; a house of riches for him who collects provision from it (for the next world); and a house of instructions for him who draws instruction from it. It is a place of worship for the lovers of Allah; the place of praying for the angels of Allah; the place where the revelation of Allah descends; and the marketing place for those devoted to Allah."[210]

From the viewpoint of Imām ʻAlī (*ʻa*) there is nothing wrong with the world and it is not blameworthy. By the way, what is meant by the 'world'? If we look upon the world as one of the levels of existence and one of God's creations, then it cannot be reproached. If by the world we mean that place of origin and nourishment of humankind, then again it cannot be blamed. If by the world we mean that ground and bastion of human development, in this case, too, it cannot be deemed futile.

From whatever perspective we view the world, it seems as though the world is far from being blameworthy, and reproaching it is tantamount to reproaching God. Notwithstanding this, the world has been referred to in a blameful and rebuking manner in many of the Qur'anic verses and narrations (of the Prophet). It cannot be denied that the basis of many among those who have been hostile to the world has been some Qur'anic verses and sayings of the Infallibles (*ʻa*) and our religious leaders.
For instance, concerning the world, God Almighty says: ***"Know that the life of this world is only play, and idle talk, and pageantry, and boasting among you, and rivalry in respect of wealth and children."***[211]

This assertion that the world is nothing but a plaything and futility has been repeated in numerous verses.[212]

Imām ʻAlī (*ʻa*), too, who used to express praise for the world, addressed the world thus: "O' world, O' world! Get away from me. Do you present yourself to me? Or are you eager for me? You may not get that opportunity to impress [and deceive] me."[213]

In the former statement the Imām (*ʻa*) was saying that the world is not a deceiver whereas in the latter he (*ʻa*) wants the world to deceive others [i.e., to deceive those who wanted to be deceived and not to deceive him]. Now, how could this ambiguity be resolved? This vagueness will be made clear through an examination of the following three points:

- This world as the place of cultivation for the hereafter
- Which is the blameworthy world?
- This world and the hereafter as complementary to one another

This world as the place of cultivation for the hereafter

From a philosophical and general viewpoint, this world and the hereafter are located in a single continuum—a continuum in whose one end is the world and in the other end is the hereafter. As far as existence is concerned it is not possible to put a gap between the two. The world is the lowest level of the universe and the descending stage of existence.

The world is that place in which all talents are not yet set in motion and in which every phenomenon can endlessly manifest its potentialities. The world is that abode in which thousands and thousands of unfulfilled possibilities could materialize. The world is that learning sanctuary wherein one can still pursue knowledge and improve oneself. It is this world that is considered as "the lowest level of existence and the abode of change, transition, and annihilation."[214]

In this sense, this world means there is still opportunity for everyone to polish the essence of his existence and to give it the appropriate form he likes. As such, the world has no blemish. Although it appears imperfect comparison to the hereafter, in term of its function and duty, which is providing the grounds for the advancement of everybody, it is absolutely without any defect:

Although worldly existence is a lower and defective realm of being, since it is a nursery for the training of lofty souls and a school for acquiring higher spiritual stations, it is a field for cultivating the Hereafter. In this sense it is the most sublime of the realms of being and the most profitable of worlds for the lovers of God and the wayfarers of the path of the Hereafter.[215]

Therefore, if there were no such realm for the manifestation of human ability and ingenuities, no one could have been able to tread the path of perfection and be freed from his own faults and deficiencies, and this itself is the greatest defect:

And were it not for this terrestrial realm of matter, the domain of physical and spiritual substantial transformation and change, … not a single imperfect soul would have attained its promised state of perfection nor would it have been able to reach the realm of permanence and stability, nor the embodiments of imperfection would have been able to enter the Kingdom of God.[216]

The statements uttered by Im□m ‘Al□ (*‘a*) to the blamer of the world is a testimony to this truth. Whenever referring to this aspect of the world the Glorious Qur’an also describes the world as the overture of the hereafter and its prelude, and avers it is in this world that man builds his own hereafter. Deliverance in this world leads to deliverance in that world while blindness in this abode is equivalent to blindness in that one: ***“Whoso blind here will be blind in the Hereafter, and yet further from the road.”***[217]

The statement, “The world is the farm of the hereafter,” which the Holy Prophet (*s*) is reported to have said, expresses this point. So, the world is not only irreproachable but also praiseworthy. The world provides the best opportunity for us to construct whatever we like from our existence and to achieve our perfection. The world not only has no place for complaint and grievance, but is also worthy of appreciation and laudation.

Besides this, not only is the world good, but also loving it is even ethical and acceptable. The essence of man takes form in this very water and soil, and the world is not only deemed as the cradle and bedrock of his advancement but also plays the role of his mother. Thus, anyone who expresses love to his mother is not reproachable. On the contrary, unkindness to one’s mother is unethical. It is for this reason that Im□m ‘Al□ (*‘a*) says: “People are the progeny of the world and no one can be blamed for loving the mother.”[218]

Yes, blameworthy is the one who does not love his mother—that too, the mother who endows his child with all the means of comfort and growth, and provides him with all the potentialities for perfection. So, loving this world is rooted in man’s innate constitution. “Let it be known that man is the child of this physical world, nature being his mother, and he the offspring of water and dust. The love for this world is implanted in his heart since the early time of his development and growth.”[219]Therefore, the world is not reproachable, and loving it is natural and even ethical.

Which is the blameworthy world?

The world is commendable and praiseworthy so long as it paves the way for the advancement of man and leads to his perfection. However, if it is supposed to prevent his advancement and obstruct his way to perfection, then it is no longer praiseworthy. In the same manner, love of the mother is acceptable so long as it causes the growth of the child. Yet, if this love is to arrest the independence of man and to make him always dependent on her, it can then no longer be considered a positive emotion. Instead, it is a malady.

If our outlook on the world is that of one who wants to go a long way and reach his destination, we can then take all the things we need from this house (world) and commence our journey fully equipped. But

once we take this world as our goal, we will then forget the journey, destination and movement, and will not be able to advance and attain perfection. Therefore, what makes the world valuable is the 'utilitarian outlook' on it, and what makes it worthy of rebuke is the 'destinational outlook'.

The difference between the one who seeks the world and that who seeks the hereafter is not that the worldly one acquires benefits from this world while the other avoids it. The fundamental distinction lies in the type of outlook of these two. The wise and clear-sighted one is he who sees the world as a good instrument to reach the hereafter while the stupid one is he who thinks of the world as his objective:

Certainly this world is the end of the sight of the (mentally) blind who see nothing beyond it. The sight of a looker (who looks with the eye of his mind) pierces through and realizes that the (real) house is beyond this world. The looker therefore wants to get out of it while the blind wants to get into it. The looker collects provision from it (for the next world) while the blind collects provision for this very world.[220]

Therefore, what is meant by the blameworthy world is not this physical planet with all its beauties and endowments, because, reproaching them is tantamount to reproaching the beautiful creations of God. Rather, what is meant by the blameworthy world is forgetting one's own goal, having absolute attachment to it, and evading one's own human and divine responsibilities:

Therefore, this world, being as it is the manifestation of and witness to His Beauty and Majesty, is not at all condemnable in this sense. That which is condemnable is the world of man himself in the sense of his absorption in the world of carnal nature and his attachment and love for it. That world is the source of all vices and all inward and outward sins.[221]

From this perspective, the cause of all these sins and offences is love of this world. Im□m as-S□diq is reported to have said: "Love of the world is the root of all sins."[222]

In as much as the love of this world causes total attachment to it and makes one forget his or her objective; it gradually immerses the person in various sins and offences. The first sin and offence arising from the love of the world is that man thinks of this ephemeral and temporal world as everlasting, but whenever the veil of his notion is torn, one becomes fearful and dreadful of death. As a result, it would even make him furious of God. The other sin that spawns from love of this world is the weakening of man's will. What makes man a man is his willpower and if, due to love of the world, this will is to weaken, then nothing would be left of his humanity. The third sin issuing from love of this world is that man is never satiated by it and in order to get more enjoyment from it he is prone to defile himself with any sort of sin and gradually drowns in all these sins.

Im□m Khomein□ describes some of the evils of loving this world in this manner:
Among the evil effects of the love of the world and attachment to it is that it makes man afraid of

death… Another great evil caused by the love of the world is that… it weakens his power of resolution and debilitates the will… Since he mistakenly believes the world and worldly fascinations to be the desired ultimate goal his greed grows day by day and his desire for them multiplies. His need for the world increases and poverty and deprivation becomes his fate.[223]
Consequently, he is like a thirsty person who drinks water from the sea and becomes thirstier.

This world and the hereafter as complementary to one another

Man has to go on a great journey—from the earth to the heavens. Initially, he emerges from a particle that cannot be seen with the naked eye; however, at the end of the voyage he steps into a world, annihilating the worlds within his being.

This odyssey, from creation [*khalq*] to Truth [*haqq*] is a spiritual one, the provisions of which are the aspiration and faith of man. If man knows the starting point of his journey and appreciates it to just that extent, he has then taken this world to be the preliminary step to the hereafter and the place of its cultivation. In such an event, if this preliminary step is lost sight of, the hereafter and the purpose of the journey would be meaningless. In the absence of this world, the hereafter will no longer be so. It is only with the admission of this contrariety that journey and movement acquire meaning. Nevertheless, the journey from this world to the hereafter is not a spatial journey. Rather, it is an inner, behavioural and spiritual one.

From the viewpoint of the Qur'an, the world is the external manifestation and outer layer of the hereafter while the hereafter is the esoteric form and inner layer of this world. Yet, most of the people do not realize this truth and ***"they know only some appearance of the life of the world, and are heedless of the Hereafter."***[224]

The reason for this negligence and complacency is that they have not yet realized the fact that the heaven and the earth and all the things therein have been created in truth and that every phenomenon has its own specific function. If only this corporeal man thinks deeply about the essence of the world and realizes its true condition, he will then benefit from it without taking it as his goal and being captivated by and attached to, it. Constructing the hereafter is bound to that in constructing this world. Anyone who did not invest in this world would be a loser in that world. Exertion of effort and endeavor in this world is valuable since it is the hereafter that guarantees [the well-being of] man. It is with this outlook that this maxim can be understood: "Whoever does not have sustenance has no hereafter, too."[225]

This view is a broad perspective on the world and the hereafter, which gives meaning to any type of economic venture and social participation without which he would be confined to the whirlpool of daily routine. That which has been reported that the Messenger of God (*s*) viewed the Christian and Jewish beliefs as having one eye (one dimensional) while describing Islam as having two eyes (two

dimensional) is a testimony to this truth. The Jewish creed drowns man to such an extent in the activities of this world as to keep him from thinking about the hereafter.

Christianity, too, instils such apprehension in its adherents with regard to the other world that they forget this one. But it is only the religion of Islam which reckons the provision of sustenance for the wife and child as a form of spiritual undertaking and struggle [*jihād*] in the way of God, and considers work as a form of worship.

From this perspective, not only is economic activity praiseworthy and laudable while, on the other hand, abandoning economic pursuits and withdrawal from, and non participation in, the different spheres of life is viewed as casting out of the ambit of religion. 'Worldliness' is only objectionable when it makes man forgetful of God and his destination, and not when it would be his companion and aid in this journey and for reaching the destination:

چیست دنیا؟ از خدا غافل بُدن　　نه قماش و نقده و میزان و زن

مال را کز بهر دین باشی حمول　　نعم مالٌ صالحٌ خواندش رسول

آب در کشتی، هلاک کشتی است　　آب اندر زیر کشتی پشتی است

What is this world? To be forgetful of God;
It is not merchandise and silver and weighing-scales and women.
As regards the wealth that you carry for religion's sake, as the Prophet recited,
"How good is righteous wealth (*for the righteous man*)*!"* **[226]**
Water in the boat is the ruin of the boat,
(*But*) *water underneath the boat is a support.*[227]

One of the issues engaging the mind of man since the distant past is the existence of suffering, which is

apparently pointless and futile. The presence of evil and suffering in our world is undeniable. Everyone has encountered and experienced them in their various forms in his life. Life without anguish or pain, and happiness without grief exist only in the imagination. But the reality is a mixture of the two (happiness and loneliness).

Concerning suffering there are mainly two fundamental questions. The first is, what is the origin of suffering and from where does it emerge? The other is whether agony and pain are concordant with the justice and mercy of God.

All the religious people of the world should answer these two questions. If God is the Lone Creator of the world and the Manifestation of goodness, then where have all these miseries come from? Can the God of Goodness be the agent of misery and just as He creates, can also destroy? Acknowledgment of the fact that the One God is the sole origin of all creations—even those events that are seemingly evil—was enigmatic for many. Thus, most of them would follow the path of polytheism and, like the Manuians,[228] believed in at least two deities. As narrated by Paulo Cuello, the great soothsayer who believed in various gods, when he heard the claim of Prophet Ily□s (*'a*) that God is One, he asked in mockery: "Do you want to say that according to your belief, the same God that sends the storm also makes the wheat grow even though these two things are poles apart?"[229]

The other point is that in the teachings of all religions, God has been described as the Absolute Power, Absolute Authority, Most Gracious, and Most Merciful. These attributes are apparently discordant with the existence of miseries.

Various philosophical and ethical answers to these queries have already been given. After much experience and meditation, [Siddhartha Gautama] Buddha arrived at the Four Noble Truths, the first of which is the existence of suffering in the world and its inevitability.[230] Then he, who did not believe in monotheism [*tawh□d*] in its Abrahamic sense, presented a most detailed analysis of the phenomenon of suffering and recommended certain ways on how to be completely released from it.[231]

But, though the first question seems more philosophical, it is the second question that has occupied the minds to a greater extent; and that is the ethical aspect of suffering. Are all these miseries in the world acceptable? Could not the existing world have been better than this? Are all these sufferings compatible with the justice, omniscience, and omnipotence of God? If there is a being other than God who could create another world, could he (the being other than God) have been able to cause a world better than this one to appear? Is the poet's following assertion valid?

گر بر فلکم دست بُدی چون یزدان　　برداشتمی من این فلک را ز میان

وز نو فلکی دیگر چنان ساختمی کآزاده به کام دل رسیدی آسان

If like the Creator I had only dominion over the heaven,
I would have taken away this heaven.
And then a new heaven would I make;
As you can easily have whatever your heart dictates.

One of the most ancient and famous writings about suffering is the Book of Job in the Old Testament. We have all heard about the story of Prophet Job [*Ayyūb*] (*'a*). The Glorious Qur'an briefly points to the story of his life and states that Job (*'a*) fell ill but chose patience, and tasted the pain of suffering until he attained a pleasant end. According to the Qur'an, Job (*'a*) experienced such suffering that he raised his hands in supplication and sought God's assistance. His prayer was granted and regained whatever he had lost. God mentions Job (*'a*) as a patient servant.[232]

The story of Job (*'a*) is narrated more elaborately in the Judeo-Christian sources. In the Book of Job in which the different dimensions have been discussed and explained, it is narrated that Job (*'a*) was an affluent and influential man, and the fame of his wealth and power was known everywhere:

Job (*'a*) had seven sons, three daughters, and possessing seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred cows, five hundred she-donkeys, and innumerable servants. He was being acknowledged as the richest man of the entire district.[233]

Job (*'a*) was an upright person and a philanthropist. He used to help the needy and cater to their needs. One day God extolled Job (*'a*) before an assembly of angels and said, "Nobody like him can be found on earth. He is an honest and God-fearing man and keeps away from sin."[234]

Satan who was present in that assembly said in protest, if fearing God was not of benefit to him, he would not have done so. Thou hast kept Job (*'a*), his family and possession safe from every predator. Thou hast multiplied his earnings and bestowed abundant wealth on him. Take away his possession from him; then Thou wilt behold that he openly blasphemes Thee.[235]

In this manner, the great trial for Job (*'a*) commenced and Satan was granted the permission to do whatever he liked to him except exercising domination over his body and mind. As a consequence, tribulations occurred one after another. All the possessions of Job (*'a*) were lost. His children died. He, himself, became afflicted with an ailment and suffered intense physical agony. He was expelled from his community. His friends forgot him and even his wife assailed him. Yet, he patiently endured all these adversities.

In spite of this, three of his friends approached him and rubbed salt into his wounds. They believed that these tribulations served as punishment for the sins of Job (*'a*) and he was now paying for his sinful past. They urged Job (*'a*) to repent for his sins so that God would forgive him. However, Job (*'a*) insisted that he had committed no sin and that these happenings and tribulations had no relation whatsoever to his alleged commission of sins.

This dialogue is one of the most elegant and profound conversations pertaining to human suffering. It presents the diverse views on evil and its origin. In short, those three could not convince Job (*'a*) that he was a sinner. God cured him; restored to him his lost properties, endowed him with other children in the place of his deceased ones, and inspired the three to apologize to Job (*'a*). In this way, Job (*'a*) recovered his lost social standing. Everybody realized that the ordeals are not the result of his sinfulness. Rather, these had been only a trial to prove the unflinching faith of Job (*'a*).

This notwithstanding, the question of the need for good men to suffer is still open to debate. This question and many other similar ones have been discussed for hundreds of years. Through an analysis of the nature and essence of mischief and evil [*sharr*] (as what Plato did) and its benefits (as what St. Augustine did), everyone has tried to address these questions that are just as debatable and can be pondered upon.[236]

The question at this juncture with which we have to deal is this: Is the existence of all these sufferings and evils in the world ethical and compatible with the sublime attributes of God or not? This question can be answered from two perspectives. One is from the perspective of faith and through the acceptance of the principles of religion [*us*□*l ad–d*□*n*] and submission to them. It is from this perspective that the believer says that the entire universe and all its components are creations of God, one of Whose Attributes is Wisdom. All the actions of the Wise are full of wisdom.

Thus, there is wisdom in suffering and evil in it as well. Although we are not able to comprehend the secret behind so many evils, this ignorance of ours does not mean that they lack wisdom. It only shows how ignorant we are, and that our knowledge is not so considerable in relation to the things unknown to us and that we have taken only a cup from the ocean of knowledge.[237]

But this answer does not convince all minds and, accordingly, for some it is a challenging one. Through reflection on the essence of the world, and the phenomenon of suffering and its function, they try to give a more elaborate answer to the question. In reality, they admit the wisdom behind the act of God but seek the hidden wisdom in suffering and its function. As a consequence, it is owing to this kind of view and reflection that the subject of divine justice has been one of the most sensational subjects of scholasticism and philosophy. It is the field for testing the capability of the human mind.

By relying on a tradition which tries to elucidate the issue of evil [*sharr*], Im□m Khomein□, in acknowledging the philosophical principles that consider the existence of evils as inevitable, attempts to show the ethical aspect of evil. His viewpoint will be made clear through a survey of the following

points:

- Evil as relative;
- Evil as constructive;
- The hereafter as the place for reward; and
- Suffering as commensurate to one's own understanding

Evil as relative

We human beings view the world from the standpoint of our own interests, evaluating and classifying everything on the basis of its benefit and detriment to us. We never view the world as bare, exactly as it is and separate from us. This point will be more vivid especially with regard to the phenomena that are interwoven with our fate. To cite an example, we identify some of the plants as 'weed'.

This classification does not convey anything about its nature; it only shows our judgment regarding it. Now, if one would ask us, what is weed, our answer would be that weed is a plant which has no benefit, or grows spontaneously in our garden and orchard. But these answers indicate only one thing and that is the fact that we have named this plant on the basis of its benefits and harm to us. Thus, if assuming that a virtue is discovered in some of these weeds, our classification is immediately changed.

That is why Emerson,[238] an American thinker and poet, asks: "What is 'weed'?" He himself answers: "It is a plant whose benefits have not yet been discovered." In this example we clearly see that the remarks are not about identity, and that it is not obvious what weed is. 'Weed' is a value-laden concept and belongs to the domain of the human mind. Professor Izutsu cites the same example and analyzes it in this manner:

To cite an example, consider the term, 'weed'. Dictionaries have usually defined this term in this way: 'It is a wild plant that grows everywhere.' In other words, it is unwanted and undesirable. However, in the exact real world, that is, in the natural world, nothing exists that is unwanted or undesirable; it only exists in the viewpoint of man who views the endless things of the complex nature, classify them, categorize them, and give them different values on the basis of their purposes.[239]

Thus, our view on the universe is not a neutral one; in most cases we identify and categorize things on the basis of our own interests. Of course, the point here is not individual interests but the interests of mankind as such. That is to say, man considers everything beneficial to him as good and detrimental as bad. Well, with this analysis in mind, let us proceed to the subject of evil [*sharr*] and examine, basically,

what evil [*sharr*] is. Whatever description of evil and suffering is presented pertains to man.

That is, it is only in relation to man that evil finds meaning. What we mean by evil—be it natural or ethical—is a phenomenon which, in both cases, bring suffering into our lives in one way or another, or endangers and frighten us. We regard destructive floods as evil since they can cut off our means of communications, ruin our harvests, destroy our houses, and finally, endanger our lives. But aside from the danger the flood brings to us and our interests, it can no longer be deemed 'evil'. Rather it will only be viewed merely as a natural phenomenon. This is also true with respect to dangerous animals.

We think about poisonous reptiles such as venomous snake as dangerous and evil since it is possible that they can kill us with their fangs; however, this same poisonous fang is the most important factor in the protection of the snake's life and the continuity of its species. So, this 'evil' is 'good' for the snake. Of course, it can be asked, "Basically, what is the benefit of this 'evil' to us?" "Its non-existence is better than its existence!"

Although an elaborate reply to this inquiry could be given and proved that they constitute a part of this very same order of nature, and that their presence is necessary, we can, here, give a brief and adequate answer which is that the question itself is rooted in man's self-centeredness. Man views all the creatures within the framework of his interests and then asks what good or necessity does the existence of venomous snakes have. It is enough that the universe be viewed from the perspective of the venomous snakes. Then, this question for the snakes arises: "What is the necessity or benefit for nature of the existence of this two-footed creature (man) who is always in the pursuit of killing snakes and whose existence is entirely evil?" Then, we would observe that our viewpoint in relation to nature is a one-sided and value-laden one.

Once we understand this point well, we will realize that in many cases the things we think 'evil' is only 'evil' as far as we are concerned, and once the outlook is changed we will discern it to be good. In addition to the fact that the outlook of mankind on nature is such, the outlook of each and every individual also has this peculiarity. We have heard the old story of two neighbours. One was a farmer while the other was a potter. The farmer exerted all his efforts for one whole year and cultivated much of the land. The potter also made a lot of earthenware.

Thereafter, the farmer would always pray and ask God for rain to pour down from the sky so that his produce would be abundant. On the other hand, afraid of the rain, the potter, raising his hands up to the sky, asked God for clear skies and bright sunlight. The sun for the former neighbour is 'evil', whereas for the latter, rain is always so. As a result these two have associated good and evil with their own interests and evaluated them with respect to themselves; duly naming them as 'good' or 'evil'.

This is what is meant by subjectiveness or relativeness of evil. If there is no human judgment, no phenomenon can be termed 'evil'. But as soon as human judgment intervenes—the judgment being based as it is on the benefits and interests of man—the issue of evil appears. Thus, nothing is absolutely

evil, that is, *per se* and in relation to itself. Instead, it is only when it is evaluated that it is called ‘evil’ by us. So, evil is that which is discordant with our interests. In this sense, evil will be subjective and relative. On the other hand, since our interests change with a change in circumstances it is possible that what was evil yesterday is good today and vice-versa.

As a result, in this sense evil would also be relative. Let us assume that you have an appointment with one of your bosom friends. However, before you leave your house to visit him, an unexpected guest arrives and hinders this supposed visit. This guest is reckoned as something bad [*sharr*]. But, after making the appointment if something happened that discouraged you from meeting him and you were looking for an excuse to cancel the appointment the guest’s arrival, in such a case, would be good for you.

We have heard about the story of an ugly husband whose wife was not showing pleasant gesture to him. One midnight the wife heard the sound of a thief’s steps, and fear-stricken, clung to her husband. After realizing that the reason for this extraordinary and unusual love of his wife was nothing but the presence of the thief, he welcomed him saying, “You are welcome to take whatever you want.”

Thus, evil is relative in both senses. That is, it is evaluated and labeled from the human point of view, and also because of our interests’ being variable, it may happen that yesterday’s evil is today’s good, and yesterday’s good, today’s evil:

پس بد مطلق نباشد در جهان　　بد به نسبت باشد، این را هم بدان

در زمانه هیچ زهر و قند نیست　　که یکی را پا، دگر را بند نیست

مر یکی را پا، دگر را پایبند　　مر یکی را زهر و بر دیگر چو قند

زهرِ مار، آن مار را باشد حیات　　نسبتش با آدمی باشد ممات

خلق آبی را بود دریا چو باغ　　خلق خاکی را بود آن، مرگ و داغ

همچنین برمشمرای مرد کار! نسبت این، از یکی کسی تا هزار

زید اندر حقِ آن شیطان بود در حقِ شخص دگر سلطان بود

آن بگوید: زید صدّیق سنی است وین بگوید: زید گبرِ کُشتنی است

گر تو خواهی کو تو را باشد شکر پس ورا از چشمِ عُشّاقش نگر

Hence there is no absolute evil in the world:
Evil is relative. Know this (*truth*) *also.*
In (*the realm of*) *Time there is no poison or sugar*
That is not a foot (*support*) *to one and a fetter* (*injury*) *to another—*
To one a foot, to another a fetter;
To one a poison and to another (*sweet and wholesome*) *like sugar.*
Snake-poison is life to the snake,
(*But*) *it is death in relation to man.*
The sea is as a garden to the water-creatures;
To the creatures of earth it is death and a (*painful*) *brand.*
Reckon up likewise, O man of experience,
(*Instances of*) *this relativity from a single individual to a thousand.*
Zayd, in regard to that (*particular*) *one, may be a devil,*
(*But*) *in regard to another person he may be a* (*beneficent*) *sultan.*
That one will say that Zayd is an exalted siddīq (*saint*),
And this one will say that Zayd is an infidel who ought to be killed.
If you wish that to you he should be (*as*) *sugar,*
Then look on him with the eye of lovers.[240]

Nonetheless, relativeness of evil has a more profound philosophical meaning. We have read a lot that this planet earth is the locus of movement and change, which the Imām termed as “the abode of change, transition, and annihilation.”[241]

In this world, nothing is fixed and static; all things are in the process of transformation. Every

phenomenon in this world moves toward its own perfection. God created every phenomenon in such a way that it moves on the basis of its own creational [*takwīnī*] and essential [*sirishtī*] guidance.

Yesterday's seed is today's tree; yesterday's embryo is today's fetus and today's fetus is tomorrow's newborn baby—this cycle continues unabatedly. Yet, this process naturally engenders contradiction and duality. A fetus which wants to become a newborn baby should abandon its fetal state whereupon its metamorphosis would become perfect. In order to become a tree the seed should break out of its peel. So as to have permanent and complete teeth, the child should lose his baby teeth. A youngster, who likes to be independent in his life, should reduce his dependence on his family and accept the responsibility that freedom entails. All these transformations are bound to suffering.

No fetus is born without suffering, and no seed transformed into a fruitful tree. A youth who wants to have a muscular and well-proportioned body should get used to the pain of doing workouts with cold iron bars, and bear the pain of lactic acid accumulation in his muscles. He should also endure extreme muscle fatigue for some time. A butterfly should live inside its cocoon for a period of time to let its beautiful wings grow and prepare it for a new plane. In this sense, no movement and contact is possible without suffering and release from the existing condition. This famous saying of Mullā Sadrā testifies to this truth: "If there were no contradiction, the grace of the Merciful Fountainhead would not be obtained."[242]

No one can deny this reality. A pupil of yesterday who wants to be a university student of today should accept the pain of being far away and separated from high school friends so as to establish contact with new friends and a new environment. Therefore, not only is every phenomenon involved with its own past in its path to perfection, but also it sometimes encounters other phenomena that hinder its perfection. It is here that an all-out conflict ensues—an inevitable and blessed battle in which neither adversary is totally defeated. The Imām examines evil from this perspective and says:

> [All] the evils, catastrophes, death, disease and destructive events and troublesome creatures and other such things which are in this world of nature and this narrow pit of darkness arise from the interferences and conflicts between existents, not from the aspects pertaining to Being but on account of the deficiency of their ambiance and the narrowness of their abode.[243]

As such, evil in this sense is also relative (subjective). That is, every happening that takes place is evil for some while good for others. A person falling down and breaking his leg is an 'evil' event for him. Yet, this same unpleasant happening is good for the bonesetters and orthopaedists since their occupations are connected to these kinds of 'evil'. However, the Imām goes beyond this point and believes that evil is not only relative but also a non-existing issue. That is, in a more technical description, all the evils [basically] arise from the interferences and conflicts between existents, not from the aspects pertaining to Being but on account of the deficiency of their ambiance and the narrowness of their abode. And these derive from limitations and deficiencies which are totally outside the ambit of the light of creation and are in reality below making [*ja'l*]. The true reality is the Light which is quit of all evil, defect and

deficiency. However, these defects and evils and harmful and troublesome things, in respect of their defectiveness and harmfulness, are not essential objects of creation, but they are accidental objects of creation.[244]

The idea that evil is a non-existing affair is among the ancient ideas of philosophy, the exact comprehension of which necessitates an extensive technical preliminary preparation propounding which is not possible in this concise volume. But the core of the issue is that evil is not an exact, existing and specified reality which can be identified. Evil is a relative issue; it means that in relation to us it is considered evil. Evil is dependent on our judgment and since our judgment is interwoven with our variable interests, evil is variable as well and not fixed. Take a look at this earthly world. Perfection requires abandonment of the present condition and acceptance of some failures and frustrations which themselves bring about suffering and evil. As a result, evil is inevitable in the corporeal world. Yet, this evil is relative, not absolute and a requisite for perfection:

این جهان جنگ است چون کل بنگری ذره با ذره، چو دین با کافری

آن یکی ذره همی پرّد به چپ و آن دگر سو یمین اندر طلب

ذره ای بالا و آن دیگر نگون جنگِ فعلشان ببین اندر رُکون...

جنگِ طبعی، جنگ فعلی، جنگِ قول در میان جزوها، حربی است هول

این جهان زین جنگ قایم می بُوَد در عناصر در نگر تا حل شود

When you consider, this world is all at strife,
Mote with mote, as religion (*is in conflict*) *with infidelity.*
One mote is flying to the left,

And another to the right in search.
One mote (*flies*) *up and another down:*
In their inclination (*movement*) *behold actual strife.*
The actual strife is the result of the hidden strife:
Know that that discord springs from this discord.
This world is maintained by means of this war:
Consider the elements, in order that it (*the difficulty*) *may be solved.*[245]

Evil as constructive

The foregoing discussion was more a philosophical outlook on the place of evil in the system of the universe where we tried to illuminate the point that basically evil is relative and subjective, not a reality independent from man's perception. But here the discussion is on its function.

The question is: What is the benefit of evil—be it relative or exact and absolute reality—for man? The thrust of the famous Book of Job is this one. Why a pious and upright man such as Job (*'a*) should be afflicted with all these adversities and undergo diverse miseries and agonies?

Many have attempted to answer this question. Yet, most of these answers embody one point and that is the constructive role of evil for man. Many of the mystics [*'irfan*] and teachers of ethics emphasize this principle that the presence of some of the evils is needed for the nourishment of man's soul and formation of his personality. Man grows and attains perfection only in a conducive environment and with the provision of necessary conditions.

But this favourable environment does not only mean comfort, convenience and unconsciousness; it also means the existence of some unpleasantness and tribulations. A driver who drives along a highway having no acclivity or declivity will easily feel sleepy and it is even possible for him to be exposed to the danger at an accident. However, the one who is driving along an extremely winding highway, and every moment, considers the probability of an unexpected occurrence, is always careful and does not allow himself to fall sleep.

Thus, the philosophy behind some evils is to keep man always alert and ready to overcome all odds. One of the contemporary Christian preachers names this theory as the divine justice theory of soul nourishment since this theory is indicative of the great scheme of God of assisting human beings in attaining moral and spiritual maturity. According to this theory, to live in a particular environment is necessary for nourishment of the soul. An environment can cause the moral and spiritual maturity of man in which real challenges are real opportunities for the emergence of moral virtues, and real facilities for the appearance of faith in God should be present.[246]

For instance, in the training courses for soldiers, training programs are designed to be rigid and severe so as to put the maximum physical and emotional pressure on them. The aim of such programs is not to annoy or torment others. Rather, it is meant to prepare individuals to confront actual situations and serious challenges. Well, if we encounter such cases which are termed evils, our outlook on them in general will be changed. The goal of a coach who encourages the athletes under his supervision to undergo difficult and rigid practice is the enhancement of their physical ability. The purpose of a professor who gives complicated assignments to his students is to increase their knowledge. The problem that nature poses for us is with the same aim of augmenting our ability.

The same is the view of the Imm on the issue of evil. He devotes one of the *had*th*s* in his forty selected *had*th*s* on this matter. After narrating a *had*th with this purport, he embarks on its exposition: Imm as-Sdiq (*'a*) narrates from the Book of Imm 'Al (*'a*) in which he says:

Of all mankind the prophets undergo the severest of trials, and after them the *awsiy'* [executors of will], and after them the elect to the extent of their nobility. Indeed, the believer undergoes trial in proportion to his good deeds. So, one whose faith is sound and whose deeds are good, his trials are also more severe. That is indeed because God Almighty did not make this world a place for rewarding the believer and punishing the unbeliever. And one, whose faith is feeble and whose (good) deeds are few, faces fewer tribulations. Verily, tribulations hasten toward the believer with greater speed than rainwater toward the earth's depths.[247]

We should not forget that in Islamic belief, this world is the place for trial. Trial takes place not only through difficulties and tribulations but also through happiness and joys. In the Glorious Qur'an the word, *b*/ [calamity and affliction] and its derivatives are used in the sense of testing through happiness as well as testing through suffering and tribulation.

Sometimes, in a bid to distinguish the two forms of *b*/, terms such as 'good' and 'evil' are used. For example, in this noble *yah* we read: "And We try you with evil and with good, for ordeal."[248] Likewise, the terms *hasant* [good things] and *sayyi't* [bad things] are used. For instance, in this *yah* it is stated: "And We have tried them with good things and evil things that haply they might return."[249] Hence, the description of *b*/ in the language of the Qur'an is far more general and broader than its prevalent meaning in the Persian language.[250] As a result, some of the trials take place in the form of evil and prepare to face real situations. In this sense, evil is not only not bad, but also prepares the ground for the growth and cognition of man. Thus, they have said:

اندر بلای سخت پدید آید فضل و بزرگی و سالاری

From severe affliction will come out
Virtue, greatness and merit

Such evils are broad in scope—extending from a simple fever to the death of spouse or child. A simple ailment such as fever not only activates the entire immune system of the body but also warns us to prepare ourselves to face it, and to make ourselves prepared for the eradication of the purulence from our body.

Hence, this evil is needed for our existence and survival. If we carefully analyze all afflictions and tribulations, we will realize this feature of them. Even the severest bodily pains also have this function, and if one day the alarm system of the body is removed for whatever reason, then calamity, tragedy and mishap will commence. In this context Dr. Paul Brandt embarked on a detailed study and shed light on the vital role of pain.

The outcome of the research has been published in the book entitled, *Pain: The Gift that Nobody Accepts*. After studying patients afflicted with leprosy, who gradually gave up their body members, he arrived at the conclusion that the disease itself does not cause the death of the body tissues. Rather, it is the effect of malfunctioning of the sense [of touch] that the leper ceases to protect his senses and [unconsciously] commits acts harmful to himself. According to Dr. Brandt such patients "are lacking a system that gives alert to the damages done to the tissue."[251]

The consequence of the lack of system (sense) of pain is that sometimes, such patients run and walk with their skins full of wounds—even open ones—to the extent that the bones are also visible, thus causing constantly increasing deterioration of the tissues … In some cases, those afflicted with leprosy put their hands on fire, for example to pick something there but do not feel any pain.[252]

Thus, apart from being not bad, pain is rather considered an agent protecting our body and it is the same unpleasant sense that guarantees our life, and in general, compels the human organism to react. This view is also true for other 'evils'. For example, suppose we fail in the university entrance examination; in this case this 'evil' is, in fact, a warning to us that shows us as not being intelligent enough and urges us to strive more. It is the same analysis that explains why all the prophets (*'a*) have suffered.

One who wants to lead a nation or community [*ummah*] should have such an extraordinary capacity, that no amount of difficulty could shake his will. God makes His chosen prophets (*'a*) suffer, He tests and trains them, causes them to develop, and so prepares them to shoulder the responsibilities of prophethood. As such, suffering cannot be a useless and worthless affair. Instead, the blessings therein should be seen with clear vision and it should be comprehended that in this world "each of its pains and hardships carries within itself some goodness and bounty."[253]

Apart from this fundamental function of suffering and evil, there are many other functions and utilities some of which have been pointed out by Imām Khomeinī. One of the functions of suffering is that it makes man attentive to, and concerned with, the hereafter and makes him understand that this world is not his everlasting abode:

Thus, if a man faces adversities, pain and torments in this world and is overtaken therein by waves of calamities and tribulations, he will inevitably come to resent it. His attachment to it will diminish and he will come to distrust it. If he believed in another world, a vast world free of every kind of pain and grief, he will inevitably want to migrate to it, and if he were unable to make the journey physically, he will send his heart out to it.[254]

Hence, most of the tribulations and afflictions are a sign for the believers and a notice about their unpleasant condition and also a reminder of the goal that they should have. Apart from this, some of the tribulations and afflictions make man remember the Fountainhead of the universe and make him harmonious with the remembrance of the Sole Creator:
And another point relating to the severity of the tribulations of the elect among God's servants is that they are made to remember God on account of these adversities and tribulations and to pray and lament in front of His Sacred Essence. This makes them accustomed to remember Him and keep their thoughts busy with Him.[255]

Moreover, some of spiritual excellences and stations for man will be attained only through patiently tasting and experiencing tribulations and afflictions. Hence, the Imām indicates this point in this manner:

Another point related to the severity of the believer's tribulations that has been mentioned in traditions is that there are certain stations for the believers which they cannot attain without undergoing suffering, pain and affliction.[256]

Therefore, keeping in view the diverse functions and utilities of tribulation and suffering, it can be deduced that the more the blessings God bestows on His servant, the more is he afflicted with them and it is this conclusion that the Imām describes in this way:
Whenever God Almighty has a greater consideration and love for someone, and when someone is the object of the mercy of His Sacred Essence to a greater extent, He restrains him from this world and its charms with the waves of calamity and tribulation... And if there weren't any other reason except this one for endurance of severe calamities it would have been sufficient.[257]

At this juncture, two points must be stated. One is the issue of natural sufferings and the other, self-made ones.
Whatever has been stated about suffering and its station is related to natural sufferings and tribulations, which man experiences naturally. God Almighty views these tribulations as a kind of test, attributes them

to Himself and points to Himself as the cause. That is why He says, *"We test them."*

Nevertheless, some of the tribulations and sufferings exist as a result of the unscrupulous actions of we human beings and arise from our moral vices. If our social system is designed in such a way as to cause rivalry, and if such rivalry entails suffering, one cannot consider the social system to be constructive. If in the society wealth accumulation and the desire for more is such that it deprives all of tranquillity, it can no longer be considered an opportunity for rectification of the soul and attachment of spiritual perfections. All of these are a result of love of this world, which in turn, is the source of all sins. Most of the sufferings and tribulations are a product of the wrong actions of man and arise from vices such as jealousy, selfishness, and pride.

These tribulations can never be ascribed to God; basically attributing them to God arises from man's irresponsibility. In relation to such tribulations, God Almighty disavows responsibility and holds them to be the result of man's action: *"Whatever of good befalleth thee* (*O man*) *it is from Allah, and whatever of ill befalleth thee it is from thyself."*[258] In essence, God is the Absolute Source of goodness and His Essence is all-blessing and all-good and from this Essence there is nothing but goodness. Hence, every evil is the consequence of man's erroneous actions and selfishness. Therefore, God considers the occurrence of corruption, tribulations and mischief as the product of human beings' conduct, and says: ***"Corruption doth appear on land and sea because of*** (***the evil***) ***which men's hands have done."***[259] So, the most important point is that we should distinguish natural sufferings from self-made ones.

The second point is that although suffering has a constructive role in the life of human beings, one cannot 'create' suffering by using this as an excuse, and use it for one's growth. It is true that tribulation is an element in man's growth. Yet, the ground for the occurrence of tribulation should not be prepared in advance. For instance, taking an examination and failing in it can be the ground for our growth. But it does not mean that we refrain from any form of preparation and only take the examination.

The outcome of taking various examinations without preparing for them is failure after failure. These failures cannot be considered as a prelude to success; they also pave the ground for further failures. That is why psychologists point to the destructive effects of such failures in this manner: "If a person repetitively experiences failure, he will reach a stage where he can no longer endure experiencing more failures and thus, behavioural derangements appear in him."[260]

The point is that in case some adversity occurs, we welcome it warmly and consider it as an opportunity for our growth; not that we chase after misery before it strikes us. As such, our various *had□th*s have discouraged us from hoping for tribulations and from laying the grounds for it. We have been taught to always pray to God for health and well-being, and to refrain from looking for trouble and tribulation. For example, it has been narrated from Im□m ar-Rid□[261] (*'a*) that Prophet Joseph [*Y□suf*] (*'a*) complained to God:

'Why did I deserve to be imprisoned?' God revealed to him: 'It is you who chose it when you said: 'O my

Lord, the prison is dearer to me than that unto which they invite me.'[262] Why did you not say, 'Prosperity is dearer to me than that unto which they invite me'?[263]

Therefore, the fundamental teaching of the Infallibles (*'a*) in this context is that we should be always seeking welfare and prosperity. However, when we face tribulations, we should not be afraid, take it as a good omen and utilize it as an opportunity for our perfection.

The hereafter as the place for reward

If the prophets (*'a*) and saints [*awliy*] faced abundant tribulations as was stated, the tribulations cannot be reckoned as compensation for one's sins in this world. As was indicated in the aforecited *had*[illegible]*th*, God has assigned the world neither as the reward of the believer nor compensation for the disbeliever.

Hence, there is no connection between the sins of man and worldly tribulations. It is narrated in the Book of Job that [his] sympathizers persistently attempted to prove to Job (*'a*) that his tribulations and sufferings were the result of his past sins. But he would strongly reject this notion, viewing no connection between the two, and deeming himself sinless. "Job (*'a*) knew that the world is more complex than the simplified theory that [his] sympathizers portray."[264]

This theory that misery is the consequence of man's sins and punishment for his deeds, though very prevalent, has numerous shortcomings and is not compatible with the indisputable principles of religious belief. Though it is often said, "If you vex the people, circumstances will also vex you; circumstances makes no mistake in punishing the people," this sort of understanding elicits abundant unanswerable questions, which is the subject of books on divine justice.

If we accept that the world is the testing place and that as long as man is alive he has the chance to look back on his past deeds, and at any moment, is able to turn away from the path he has taken, the issue of this world as the place for retribution for sins can no longer be put forward. Let us assume that a teacher wants to give an examination to his pupils and he gives 90 minutes for them to write their answers. Now, every student has the right to make use of the total 90 minutes.

It is even possible for one to give wrong answers to all the questions; but in the last minutes, once he realizes his mistakes, he could change them. If the teacher also found out that somebody has given wrong answers to all the questions, so long as his test paper has not been submitted, the teacher cannot deprive him of the chance of changing his answers and give him a grade then and there. It is the definite right of the students to make use of this chance in whatever way they like, and interference on the part of the teacher is counted as a violation of this right. Likewise, the world is exactly the place of examination of man.

The lifespan of everyone is the period in which one should come out of life's examination with dignity and pride. Hence, throughout life everyone has this opportunity and right to give his answers to the questions of life. In the description of Imām Khomeinī, "This world, due to its defective, feeble and weak nature, is neither the abode of the reward of God Almighty nor the place of chastisement and punishment."[265]

It is such since this world is the world of duty and not of reward. "This world is the abode of duty and the farm of the Hereafter. It is a place of trade and earning whereas the Hereafter is the abode of reward and punishment, of bounty and damnation."[266]

In the language of the Master of the Pious [Imām 'Alī] (*'a*), "Today is the day of preparation (training the horses) while tomorrow is the day of race."[267]

Divine justice necessitates that one can make use of all his opportunities and it is only after that is his account examined. Hence, neither can those that have met with misfortunes be regarded as sinful, nor the prosperous as sinless. In essence, the cause and effect relationship between these two is not in this world. In the same manner, it is not so that anyone who commits a sin will immediately suffer for it. Such an expectation is contrary to reality and repugnant to divine justice. Thus, those who expect that God Almighty would immediately get hold of one who commits some sin or indecency in this world or perpetrates some injustice or aggression against someone, and cut his hand off and expunge him from the realm of existence, are unaware that their expectation is contrary to this world's order and opposed to God's wont and *sunnah*.

Here is the place of trial and the zone of the separation of the wretched from the felicitous and the sinful from the obedient. Here is the realm of the manifestation of deeds, not the abode of the emergence of the results of personal deeds and qualities.[268]

Therefore, tribulation in this world is not retribution for the deeds of human beings, and no connection should be established between the two. Nonetheless, at times Divine Grace warrants that by motivating the sinner, he can be prevented from indulging in sins; and God does so. However, this matter has no link to retribution for sins. Let us assume that in the previous example, after the teacher found out that one of the students had given wrong answers to most of the questions, she passes snide remarks or looks at the student sternly, making him immediately realize and correct all his mistakes. In this case, the teacher has not punished him but actually done him a great favour.

Some of the punishments of God are like this and anyone subjected to them should be grateful to God for being kind to him. So, "If occasionally God Almighty troubles an oppressor, it may be said that it is because of the Almighty's mercy for that oppressor (for it stops him from sinning further)."[269]
As such, from the viewpoint of Imām Khomeinī evil is a relative and non-existing phenomenon, not a real and exact affair. In addition to this, it is necessary for man's perfection and an indication of God's grace to His servant, and there is no connection between sinfulness and tribulation in this world. So, evil

is also a disguised grace of God for His servants and is among the necessary grounds for man's spiritual perfection. In his poetical lines Mawlān likens the soul of believer to an animal named *ushghur*, a kind of porcupine, which becomes stronger and its resolve firmer with increasing tribulation and suffering:

هست حیوانی که نامش اُشغُراست او به زخم چوب زفت و لَمتُر است

تا که چوبش مىزنى، به مىشود او ز زخم چوب، فربه مىشود

نفس مؤمن اشغرى آمد یقین کو به زخم رنج زفت است و سمین

زین سبب بر انبیا رنج و شکست از همه خلق جهان افزون تر است

تا ز جانها جانشان شد زفت تر که ندیدند آن بلا قوم دگر

There is an animal whose name is ushghur (*porcupine*)*:*
It is (*made*) *stout and big by blows of the stick.*[270]
The more you cudgel it, the more it thrives:
It grows fat on blows of the stick.
Assuredly the true believer's soul is porcupine,
For it is (*made*) *stout and fat by the blows of tribulation.*
For this reason the tribulation and abasement (*laid*) *upon the prophets*
Is greater than (*that laid upon*) *all the* (*other*) *creatures in the world,*
So that their souls became stouter than (*all other*) *souls;*
For no other class of people suffered that affliction.[271]

Thereafter, he likens man to an untanned hide that the tanners treat and make useful by the use of bitter and acrid agents. Then, he urges us to accept such sufferings which are meant for our own perfection:

پوست از دارو بلاکش مىشود چون ادیم طایفى خوش مىشود

ورنه تلخ و تیز مالیدی در او　　گنده گشتی، ناخوش و ناپاک بو

آدمی را پوستِ نامدبوغ دان　　از رطوبتها شده زشت و گران

تلخ و تیز و مالِشِ بسیار ده　　تا شود پاك و لطیف و با فِرِه

ور نمی تانی، رضا ده ای عیار　　گر خدا رنجت دهد بباختیار

که بلای دوست تطهیر شماست　　علم او بالای تدبیر شماست

The hide is afflicted by the medicine (*tan-liquor*),
(*But*) *it becomes sweet like T*[illegible]*'if leather;*
And if he (*the tanner*) *did not rub the bitter and acrid* (*liquor*) *into it,*
It would become fetid, unpleasant, and foul-smelling.
Know that Man is an untanned hide,
Made noisome and gross by humors.
Give (*him*)[272] *bitter and acrid* (*discipline*) *and much rubbing* (*tribulation*),
That he may become pure and lovely and exceedingly strong;
But if you cannot (*mortify yourself*), *be content, O cunning one,*
If God give you tribulation without choice (*on your part*).
For affliction (*sent*) *by the Friend is* (*the means of*) *your being purified:*
His knowledge is above your contrivance. [273]

Suffering as commensurate to one's own understanding

The fact cannot be denied that the more our awareness of ourselves and the things around us increases, the more we discern the gloomy aspects of life. This matter pains us. In a research study on prosperity, which a number of American and European universities had conducted, the conclusion was reached that there is a direct relationship between suffering and awareness, and if man's awareness

exceeds a specific level, it can even prevent his happiness in life. Mawlūn describes this truth in this fashion:

هر که او بیدارتر، پردردتر هر که او آگاهتر، رخ زردتر

The more wakeful anyone is, the more full of suffering he is;
The more aware (*of God*) *he is, the paler he is in countenance.*[274]

But, this suffering does not belong to the daily suffering and that which, at times, ensues from foolishness making man's soul dejected and sad. This suffering neither arises from moral vices nor selfishness and pride. Some of the sufferings are files of the soul and obstruct man's soul from soaring to greater heights—like the pain of having no material luxuries and means of comfort; like the pain experienced when our neighbor or friend is financially well-off while we are not. Such sufferings and the illusion arising there from trample on the soul of man:

جان همه روز از لگدکوب خیال وز زیان و سود و از خوف زوال

نی صفا می ماندش نی لطف و فر نی به سوی آسمان راه سفر

All day long, from the buffets of phantasy
And from (*thoughts of*) *loss and gain and from fear of decline,*
There remains to it (*the soul*)
Neither joy nor grace and glory nor way of journeying to Heaven.[275]

No, such pains have no relation to man's intellect and discernment; in fact, it is a sign of a lack of intelligence. However, there are sufferings born of sagacity and an indication of man's wisdom. If we search through the whole of history we will realize this truth and see that the sages and people's leaders always used to suffer. Their suffering was expressive of their extraordinary innate capacity.

They possessed such a greatness of soul that they held the suffering of all as their own and were concerned not only with their own affairs. In a speech, Imām ʻAlī (*ʻa*) refers to the attack of Muʻāwiyah's army,[276] and says: "They used to attack the women of the *Ahl adh-Dhimmah*[277] and confiscate

their ornaments, and these women had nothing to do but to plead for mercy." Then he (*'a*) reckoned this tragedy to be so serious that if a person dies on hearing this news, it is not only regarded by him (*'a*) as natural but even praiseworthy. "If any Muslim dies of grief after all this he is not to be blamed but rather there is justification for him before me."[278] Yes, such suffering is an indication of man's lofty soul. Thus, John Stuart Mill,[279] a philosopher who was a proponent of the ethical school of utilitarianism[280] and, at times, whose ideas were poorly interpreted, unambiguously posits that human sufferings are superior to animal joys, and says: "To be an unhappy human being is better than to be a cheerful pig. It is better for me to be a despondent Socrates than a joyful stupid."[281]

Sometimes, the Most Noble Messenger (*s*) would also suffer because of the condition of his *ummah* [community] and would strive for its welfare so much so that he would be on the verge of danger. His noble soul could not accept that those people live in ignorance and corruption. Owing to this, he was acting beyond his duty. So, God Almighty discouraged him from exerting excessive pressure on himself, and said: ***"We have not revealed unto thee*** (***Muhammad***) ***this Qur'an that thou shouldst be distressed."***[282]

Likewise, He dissuaded him from arduous effort for the salvation of disbelievers, and said: ***"So let not thy soul expire in sighings for them."***[283]

Then, God also thus describes His Most Noble Messenger (*s*) and while addressing the people He says: ***"There hath come unto you a messenger,*** (***one***) ***of yourselves, unto whom aught that ye are overburdened is grievous."***[284]

In spite of all these, he (*s*) had suffered so much that he said: "No prophet was persecuted as I was."[285] This suffering is rooted in man's altruism and endeavor for the deliverance of others, and it is only in name that it has commonality with self-made and superficial sufferings. Hence, it has been emphasized in the noble *had□th* that whoever is narrow-minded and of poor intellect, his hardship and suffering then will also be less. It is due to the fact that such a person only suffers with regard to water, bread and shelter and if these three are provided, it will make no difference for him what the fate of others may be and will view himself as an isolated and solitary island.

Therefore, suffering is a symbol of altruism and a profound sense of humaneness, having direct relationship with the intellect and wisdom. Im□m Khomein□ analyzes this kind of suffering in this manner:

The persons of weak intellects and feeble sensibility are secure from spiritual tribulations and intellectual suffering in proportion to their intellectual weakness and the feebleness of their sensibility. On the contrary, those with more complete intellects and acuter sensibility have to undergo spiritual tribulations more intensely in proportion to the perfectness and acuteness of their intellect and sensibility… for whoever perceives the greatness and glory of the Lord to a greater extent and knows the sacred station of God Almighty more than others, he suffers more and is tormented to a greater extent by the sins of the creatures and their offences against the Lord's sanctity. Also, one who has a greater love and

compassion for the creatures of God is tormented to a greater extent by their crooked and wretched condition and ways.[286]

It should not remain unsaid that this type of suffering does not mean grief and sorrow. Man is aware of the truths of the universe to such an extent that he views God as Beautiful and His creations as manifestations of beauty and splendor.

He regards this system as excellent and believes, “Every thing is good in its own place.” As such, everything is joy, happiness and rejoicing. On the other hand, since other human beings have not recognized their reality, take no step in the matter, and search for the way from the misled ones on the verge of ‘drowning’, they suffer and become sorrow-stricken. Hence, on the one hand there is joy and happiness, and grief and sorrow on the other. These two levels should not be erroneously interchanged. Owing to this, it is stated in the *had□th*s that the believer always has a smile on his face, and hides his sorrow beneath his bosom.[287]

Therefore, what is meant by sagacious suffering is profound discernment of the tragic condition of some people, and not personal despondence and daily sorrows.[288]

In Book Two of the noble *Mathnaw□*, Jal□l ad-D□n Muhammad Mawlaw□ [Balkh□ ar-R□m□] has a short and elegant story. An ignorant desert Arab has a sack full of grain and he wants it to load on top of his camel. But instead of dividing it into two, he takes another sack full of sand so as to balance the weight of the sack full of grain and load the two on both sides of the camel. Along the way, a sage man becomes his co-traveler and talks with him. As he finds out that one half of the load is sand and it only causes trouble, he suggests to the Arab to empty the sack full of sand and to fill in its stead half of the grain so that the purpose [of having a balanced load over the camel] is also met and at the same time the camel’s load would become lighter.

Being glad of the wise solution and after executing the suggestion, the Arab asked the sage about his wealth and riches as he assumes that having this cogent mind he is supposed to possess everything. However, the sage sorrowfully answers that he possesses nothing in this world:

گفت: "وا□ نیست یا وجهالعرب　　در همه مُلکم وجوه و قوت شب

پا برهنه تن برهنه مىدوم　　هر که نانی مىدهد، آنجا روم

مر مرا زین حکمت و فضل و هنر نیست حاصل جز خیال و دردسر"

“By God,” he replied, “O chief of the Arabs, in my whole property
There is not the means of (*buying*) *food for the night.*
I run about with bare feet and naked body.
If any one will give me a loaf of bread—thither I go.
From this wisdom and learning and excellence (*of mind*)
I have nothing but phantasy and headache.”[289]

Astonished and disappointed by the futility of such knowledge, the Arab prefers his form of ignorance to such ominous wisdom and he asks the sage to part ways with him so that his misfortune would not descend upon him:

دور بَر آن حکمت شومت ز من نطق تو شوم است بر اهل زَمَن

یا تو آن سو رو، من این سو مندوم ور تو راه پیش، من واپس روم

یک جوالم گندم و دیگر ز ریگ به بود زین حیله های مرده ریگ

احمقیم بس مبارک احمقاست که دلم با برگ و جانم متقی است

Take far away from me that unlucky wisdom of yours:
Your speech is unlucky for (*all*) *the people of the time.*
Either you go in that direction, or I will run in this direction;
Or if your way be forwards, I will go back.
One sack of wheat and the other of sand
Is better for me than these vain contrivings.
My foolishness is a very blessed foolishness, for my heart is well-furnished
(*With spiritual graces*) *and my soul is devout.*[290]

Then out of this story Mawlānā arrives at this conclusion:

فکر، آن باشد که بگشاید رهی راه، آن باشد که پیش آید شَهی

The right thought is that which opens a way:
The (*right*) *way is that on which a* (*spiritual*) *king advances*.[291]

From the viewpoint of Mawlānā, it is not the discussion on the root of knowledge and the necessity of knowing; neither does he mean bestowing superiority to ignorance over wisdom. Instead, his point is that man should benefit from his knowledge and this knowledge should transform his life.

Such knowledge stands on top in self-cognition; not knowledge of the horizontal and outer phenomena. Anyone who, without paying attention to this truth, is in pursuit of profusely acquiring knowledge and lets diverse and secondary information fill his memory to the brim is, in fact, overburdening himself and placing insurmountable hurdles in his way. Those who are like him know so many things about everything. But, this knowledge has no influence on their fate and if all this learning can be taken away from them, they will still pursue their past life. Concerning such type of people, Mawlānā says:

صدهزاران فصل‌داند ازعلوم جان خود رامی‌نداند آن‌ظلوم

داند اوخاصیت هرجوهری در بیان جوهرخود چون خری

He knows a hundred thousand superfluous matters[292] *connected with*
The (*various*) *sciences,* (*but*) *that unjust man does not know his own soul.*
He knows the special properties of every substance, (*but*) *in elucidating*
His own substance (*essence*) *he is* (*as ignorant*) *as an ass.*[293]

The approach to the issue of knowledge of one of the two prominent branches of Western contemporary philosophy, i.e. existentialism, is the same. Kierkegaard, the precursor of existentialism, divides truth into exoteric and esoteric, or exact and imaginary. Exoteric truths are those accomplishments of science while esoteric truths are rooted in the soul of man. These esoteric truths, that he has named as ‘existential truths,’ are interwoven with the destiny of man and determine the trend of his life.

Every kind of knowledge should be exploited and utilized while keeping in view its role in determining and nurturing man's existential truths. As such, according to Kierkegaard, all kinds of knowledge are not equal in rank and worth. Rather, they are classified according to their functions with respect to man. The kinds of knowledge are considered more valuable that give answers to the 'whys' questions instead of the 'whats'.[294]

In conclusion, knowledge for the sake of knowledge is not that important. Rather, it is due to its guiding role that it is praiseworthy. Now, we will deal with Imām Khomeinī's views on issues concerning knowledge by examining them under the following headings:

- The place of knowledge;
- The instrumental role of knowledge;
- The branches of knowledge and realms of human existence; and
- Ignorance as a pretext in neglecting knowledge.

The place of knowledge

Having roots in our religious tradition in which seeking knowledge is deemed equal to military campaign and the ink of the scholars is even viewed as holier than the blood of the martyrs, Imām Khomeinī (*r*) thinks within this framework. According to him,

- Knowledge makes a man;
- The universe itself is a large university;
- Knowledge is a requisite for prosperity;
- Knowledge and expertise is a criterion of superiority;
- Knowledge means continuous learning.

1. Knowledge makes a man

Concerning the caliphate (his appointment as God's vicegerent on earth) of Adam (*'a*) we read that God taught him the names of things. Then He tested the angels with respect to these names (in which they failed to give answer). Thus, He proved to them that the reason behind Adam's (*'a*) superiority is these

very names.[295]

When man was also separated from other animals and brought them under his dominance, he utilized the weapon of knowledge and established an enduring civilization. If we efface knowledge from the life of man we will confront our peer creatures as well as other levels (species) of creatures, and not more than that. “It is the pen, knowledge and speech that can build man, and not machine guns and other destructive powers. Machine guns as well as other implements of war came into existence under the aegis of knowledge.”[296]

2. The universe itself is a large university

If we accept that the tradition of tests and trials are prevalent everywhere, and that man has no respite for even a moment from not being tested, and if we accept that every test entails lessons and teaching, we will then accept the conclusion that the whole world is, for us, essentially the place of learning and accumulation of knowledge. As such, *madrasah*s [schools] and *maktab*s [old–fashioned primary schools] are not the only specific places with particular lessons. Rather, all places are schools and everything is a lesson.

The teacher and student are not surrounded by teachers of the universities and high schools or the rest of places, and the student too is not surrounded by those who go to the university. The universe is a university while the prophets, *awliyʾ* and those trained by them are the teachers and the rest of mankind are students, and they ought to be students.[297]

3. Knowledge as a requisite for prosperity

Knowing the way from the well depends on vision (being able to see) and seeing, in turn, is the result of knowledge. So, knowledge is regarded as the light of man in guaranteeing his prosperity and the ground for his advancement and excellence. “It is through knowledge that man can secure his prosperity in this world and the next. It is through teaching that man can train and educate the youth in such a way that they are able to safeguard their own interests in this world and the hereafter.”[298]

4. Knowledge and expertise as a criterion of superiority

By raising an amazing question which, at the same time, contains its own answer, the Glorious Qur'an, shows us the criterion of superiority and prominence: ***"Are those who know equal with those who know not?"***[299]

Hence, apart from considering knowledge as particularly valuable, Islam also regards it as the standard of superiority. "Islam strives to that extent for the experts and specialists. In both common laws and religious laws it has given preference to the (one who is) more expert; it has given preference to the more expert opinion."[300]

5. Knowledge as continuous learning

Knowledge will acquire its fundamental function when it is pursued throughout one's life; not like medicine which is used only in times of sickness. Knowledge is like food that is always needed by the living organism. Therefore it should be planned in such a way as to be present throughout man's existence.

Up to the last moment of his life man is in need of knowledge, learning and training. No man could be independent from (not in need of) knowledge or be independent from learning and training. What some individuals imagine that our time for learning lessons has already passed is not correct. Learning a lesson has no specific time. As what has been stated in the *had□th* that [seeking] knowledge is from cradle up to the grave, if a man in the agony of death can learn a single word, it is better for him than to die as ignorant of it.[301]

The instrumental role of knowledge

Notwithstanding all these emphases of ours on knowledge and seeking knowledge, the principle that knowledge itself is not the aim should not be forgotten. Rather, it has [merely] an instrumental role and it is valuable and desirable to the extent that it performs its role. If one day this role is forgotten and knowledge itself became the goal, then the fall of man will commence. Knowledge is valuable to the extent that, just like a vehicle or animal for riding, it can transport us to our destination. Now, if these mount or means of transportation malfunctions— however ostensibly ornamented it may be —it cannot

be of use to us.

The Imām's approach in this context is an existential one. It is from this aspect that knowledge ought to be an instrument for man's dominance and prosperity, and not that it becomes a goal itself and a hindrance for the realization of other goals. This existential approach to knowledge is regarded as an integral part of his moral thought. From his perspective, all sciences should lead to a certain destination and deliver man from this narrow pass of the world.

Otherwise, learning them is not only worthless but they themselves also veil the way and are a hindrance to perfection. If ignorance is a dark veil, knowledge can also be a luminous one the removal of which is more difficult, because like a wall seen through its glass cladding which hardly anybody can detect as being a covering and so it misguides [the people] constantly. Hence, he describes this point in this manner:

If the doctrinal sciences and doctrinal truths are studied for their own sake and if all the related concepts, terms, high-sounding expressions, and embellished juxtapositions of terms be learned for the sake of showing off to feeble minds and for the sake of obtaining worldly status, then they cannot be called *āyāt al-muhkamāt*; rather they must be named obscuring veils and hollow fantasies. That is because if one's purpose in learning the sciences should not be to reach God, the Exalted, and to realize the Names and Attributes and to mould one's self in accordance with the Divine character [*takhalluq beh akhlāq Allah*], each of such acquisitions of his is a dungeon of hell and a black veil that darkens his heart and blinds his insight.[302]

This issue is not particular to this-worldly or that-worldly sciences. Rather, every knowledge that does not lead to the True Beloved is a [mere] mental burden. Sometimes, even gnosticism [*'irfān*] and knowledge of monotheism [*tawhīd*], instead of being a guide and leader, can also be the impediment in the way to perfection and bring about eternal destruction and perdition. So, it causes pride and superiority complex in a gnostic [*'ārif*] as a result of which, he remains a captive of terminologies, explanations and descriptions.

The story of the scholar which the Glorious Qur'an indicates points to this truth. That scholar—who has been mentioned in the Islamic sources as Bal'am al-Bā'ūr—instead of benefiting from the divine sciences at his disposal and converting them into a springboard to heaven, made use of them as a rope in going down the bottomless pit of adversity. Consequently, he was cursed by God and became like a dog.[303]

The Imām points to the destiny of those who were corrupted by knowledge—even divine knowledge—in this manner:

With this short life and limited knowledge, I have seen certain people among these so-called mystics and other scholars who, I swear by *'irfan* and knowledge that these terms have not made any mark on

their hearts; nay, they have rather left on them an opposite effect...

O amateurish student of concepts who has gone astray of the realities! Deliberate over the matter for a while, and think as to what knowledge you possess of God. What impact has the knowledge of God and His Attributes made on your self? Perhaps the study of music and musical rhythms may be more exact and precise than your knowledge. Astronomy, mechanics, other physical sciences, and mathematics can match your learning as to the precision of their terminology. Yet, in the same way as they are not concerned with the knowledge of God, your knowledge also is a thick curtain consisting of the veils of words, terms, and concepts. They can neither make one ecstatic nor send anyone into a trance.

Rather, in the eyes of the *Shar*ʿ*ah*, the physical sciences and mathematics are better than your knowledge, since they produce some result, whereas your knowledge not only gives no good results, but gives opposite ones. An engineer draws results from his calculations, and a goldsmith is benefited from his craftsmanship; but your knowledge, apart from not gaining any material benefits, has failed to fulfill any transcendental ends as well... knowledge, which darkens the heart and increases it in its blindness, is not knowledge.[304]

In short, knowledge with all the values that it possesses is desirable and ideal so long as it can pave the way for man and lead him toward his True Object of Worship, or at least, His Proximity.

The branches of knowledge and realms of human existence

With his practical and existential approach to sciences the Imam attempts to evaluate and categorize these on the basis of their functions. According to him the practical merit of knowledge determines its own station.

Thus, he makes this criterion the basis of categorization and assessment of sciences, on the basis of which he endeavors to explain the *hadith* that views sciences as having three branches. It is narrated in the said *hadith* that the Messenger of God (*s*) once entered the mosque where there was a group of people surrounding a man. Instead of "Who is that?" "What is that?" inquired the Prophet (*s*) as a sign of contempt of the person and his deeds. He was told, "He is an *ʿallamah,* (i.e. a very learned man) and is the most learned of men regarding Arab genealogies, past episodes, the days of the *jahiliyyah* [Ignorance] and Arabic poetry." The Prophet (*s*) said, "That is a knowledge whose ignorance does not harm one nor is its possession of any benefit to one." Then the Prophet (*s*) declared, "Verily, knowledge consists of these three: the firm sign [*ayah muhkamah*], the just duty [*fardah ʿadilah*] and the established *sunnah* [*sunnah qaʾimah*]. All else is superfluous."[305]

The Im□m makes this *had□th* the basis of his categorization of sciences and in the first degree he divides all sciences into three branches: those that are beneficial, those that are detrimental, and those that are worthless.

Thus, all the sciences are divisible into three kinds: first, those sciences, which are beneficial to man in view of the other stages of existence, success wherein is the ultimate purpose of creation… The second kind consists of those which are harmful for man and lead him to neglect his essential duties. This kind consists of the blameworthy sciences and one must refrain from their pursuit… Thirdly, there are those which are neither harmful nor beneficial.[306]

Thence, the Im□m again divides into three those sciences that are beneficial: One is the rational and doctrinal sciences; the other is the science of ethics, and the third, the religious sciences.

You should know that the expression 'firm sign' [□*yah muhkamah*] implies the rational sciences and the true doctrines and divine teachings. 'Just duty' [*far□dah '□dilah*] implies the science of ethics and self-purification. 'Established *sunnah*' [*sunnah q□'imah*] refers to the science of the exoteric aspect and the bodily conduct (i.e. involving some kind of physical activity).[307]

Here the Im□m is actually doing an exegesis. Then, in order to prove it he deals with a gnostical point. It is narrated from the *had□th* of the Messenger of God (*s*) that knowledge consists of the 'firm sign' [□*yah muhkamah*], the 'just duty' [*far□dah '□dilah*] and the 'established *sunnah*' [*sunnah q□'imah*].

The Imam propounds that what is meant by 'firm sign' [□*yah muhkamah*] are the rational sciences and divine teachings by which issues on the origin, resurrection and prophethood are clarified. What is referred to as 'just duty' [*far□dah '□dilah*] is the knowledge that causes the moderation of temperament and disposition. 'Established *sunnah*' [*sunnah q□'imah*] is a body of sciences that organizes the individual and social relations of man, the highest form of which is illustriously manifested in devotional precepts.

In a bid to elucidate this exegesis and comparison, the Im□m points out existential realms [*s□hat-h□-ye wuj□d□*] of man. According to him man has three existential realms, and in his words, three worlds [*nash'ah*]: One is the external and sensory world or realm, and in the mystical sense, the domain of *mulk* [corporeality] and *hud□r* [presence]. The other is the *barzakh*i [limbo] and middle world which is known as the domain of *khiy□l* [imagination] and *mith□l* [allegory]. The third is the world of reason and the spiritual, celestial and unseen domain.

You should know that… man, to put it briefly, is confronted with three worlds, stations and phases of life: first, the world of the Hereafter, which is the hidden world [*'□lam-e ghayb*]of spirituality and the intellect; second, the phase of *barzakh*, which is the world of *khiy□l* lying between the other two worlds; third, the phase of this world, the domain of *mulk* [corporeality] and the world of appearance [*'□lam-e*

shah□dat].[308]

Each of these existential realms is in need of training, nourishment and exaltation. Training of every realm is also in need of knowledge of its own kind. Then, for the training of the realm of reason we are in need of sciences of reasoning and knowledge of certainty. For the training of the realm of allegory of man we are in need of moral and spiritual training. For the training of corporeal and external realm we are in need of social training, which in turn, is attainable through religious sciences.

In this manner, in order for each of this set of knowledge to become significant and desirable, it should be supplemented and complemented by one of these realms. If in the midst of this we come across knowledge that does not train any of our realms of existence and does not fill any of our existential 'gaps', we should abandon the same knowledge and go in pursuit of other knowledge. All this emphasis on the beneficial knowledge in the *had□th*s is indicative of this truth. The Messenger of God (*s*) would seek refuge in God from futile knowledge. Describing the attributes of the pious, the Commander of the Faithful (*'a*) says that they have lent their ears only to beneficial sciences.[309] All of these emphasize a single truth, and that is, knowledge should set light up the ultra–light of man's way.
The additional point is that although the Im□m lays stress on the useful sciences, he does not view them as confined to particular ones. He believes that attempts should be made as much as possible to categorize each kind of knowledge under any one of the three headings. Therefore, everybody with the understanding that he has about himself and his 'vacuums', should know which knowledge is more useful to him, take utmost advantage of the opportunities, and avoid wasting his time.

That is because when a sensible person knows that he cannot acquire all the sciences and achieve all the excellences due to shortness of life, scarcity of time and abundance of obstacles and accidents, he would reflect about the sciences and devote himself to the acquisition of those which are more beneficial for him.[310]

Therefore, the wayfarer [*s□lik*] in the pursuit of morality should always yearn for knowledge for his perfection and, on no account long for it for himself. He should always be conscious that this knowledge—though the knowledge of monotheism—does not tie his hands and feet and makes him a captive of terminologies; disentanglement from this kind of knowledge is in itself a virtue and perfection, as it often happens that intense attention to terms and preoccupation with words and that which relates to them make one totally oblivious of the heart and its reform. [As a result] one may acquire complete mastery in expounding the meaning and essence of the heart and the terminology of the metaphysicians [*hukam□'*] and the mystics [*'uraf□*] while one's heart, we seek refuge in God from it [*na'□dhubill□h*], is one that is either inverted or sealed, like someone who knows well the beneficial and harmful properties of medicines and is able to describe them with expertise without himself refraining from poisonous medicines or making use of the beneficial ones. Such a person perishes despite all his knowledge of pharmacology, which is unable to rescue him.[311]

Ignorance as a pretext in neglecting knowledge

Although knowledge can sometimes induce man to boast, prevent him from continuing his way to perfection, and become his mental burden, this exceptional condition should never be taken as a pretext that ignorance, therefore, is better than knowledge. In fact, in the parlance of philosophy knowledge is from the category and kind of existence, and existence, from whatever class and rank it may be, is from the lack of what is better and superior.

Abandonment of knowledge under the pretext that it often becomes a veil of man is like avoidance of food with the justification that gluttony or malnutrition is a factor in the ailments of man. In the same manner that treating malnutrition or gluttony is not abstention from food or absolute fasting, but lies in proper eating, similarly, in order to avoid the dangers of knowledge, one should not turn one's back on knowledge. Instead, its blemishes should be identified and be avoided. Hence, those who assert that knowledge is the greatest of veils and, on this pretext, trample on the legacy of the prophets (*'a*) (that is, knowledge)[312] have adopted a false way.

In this corporeal world which is an arena of conflict of phenomena and every thing is in danger and challenged by other things, knowledge also has its curses that often become man's greatest veil. However, just as we deal with the blemishes of other phenomena, those of knowledge should be dealt with as well and the side effects trimmed off. Therefore, knowledge, to whatever extent it may be, is valuable and, to that same extent, facilitates man's way to perfection, and the sciences—whatever their level, whether they pertain to the *ma'rif* or something else—are a path for reaching the Garden appropriate to each of them, and the wayfarer of each of the paths of knowledge is a traveler on one of the paths of Paradise.[313]

As such, albeit the Imam strongly emphasizes knowledge that is profitable and discourages loading the memory with unnecessary terminologies, he still stresses the instrumental role of knowledge in this manner:

I, too, do not put much of a store by mere knowledge, and a learning that does not bring faith with it is the greatest of veils. However, one has to approach a veil in order to tear it into shreds. The sciences are seeds of (spiritual) experience.[314]

Therefore, anyone who has essentially entered the greatest veil can go out of it. One cannot bypass this channel. Instead, one should enter through one door and exit through another. Not entering and also stopping inside are both incorrect. As a result, through a practical approach to knowledge and insistence on the fact that all "the sciences are absolutely practical and even the transcendental sciences have, in a

way, a practical aspect in them,"[315] the Imām urges us initially to deal with the profitable and ennobling kinds of knowledge consciously, selectively and with consideration to the limited opportunity and facilities that we have.

Then, after benefiting from this profitable instrument and reaching the highest heaven by means of this ladder, we should abandon it and continue on our way. We should not become the captives of the luminous and hidden veils that are born of an attachment to knowledge. We ought not to imagine this instrument as the goal, because pursuing knowledge as the objective itself gives one a blackened heart and makes one remain on the way. Thus, the wayfarer on the path to perfection ought not to desire for anything except God, and not preoccupy himself with any attainment and be deceived by it. He should always bear in mind this ultimate objective, and should not quench his thirst except through meeting the Friend.

همچو مستسقی کز آبش سیر نست بر هر آنچه یافتی، بامایست

By God, do not tarry in anything (*any spiritual position*) *that thou hast gained,*
(*But crave more*) *like one suffering from dropsy who is never sated with water.*[316]

The aforementioned principles which were elaborately discussed are deemed existential truths in the language of the existentialists. That is, they are not merely facts about the external affairs. Rather, they are profoundly concerned with, and transform, the life and fate of man. In the view of Imām Khomeinī, in essence all "the sciences are absolutely practical"[317] and their epistemological aspect, or in the parlance of Islamic philosophy, their 'disclosure' [*kashfiyyah*] is the prelude to action and no knowledge is absolutely irrelevant to action.

But the principles of ethics go beyond this stage. It is because the essence of ethics is nothing but the process of its continuous creation and recreation. If we remove this aspect, nothing will remain in its stead. Here the objective of the scholar of ethics is not dissemination and presentation of facts and information. Instead he is in pursuit of nurturing individuals and acquainting them with the path to felicity. Hence, in his emphasis on this knowledge, the Imām said:
The science of the states of the heart and that which relates to their health and sickness, reform and

corruption, is something which is purely a preliminary step to action and the way of its reform and remedy. Its mere knowledge and understanding is not considered a human perfection. Hence one's main attention and goal should be the reform and refinement of the heart so that one may attain to ultimate spiritual felicity and to the higher transcendent stations.[318]

Consequently, the difference between ethics and mathematics in this respect is very great. Knowing the mathematical formulas is itself valuable and an indication of perfection. But in the realm of ethics it is not so. Merely knowing the aforesaid principles has no value in itself. These principles become valuable only when they flow in the veins of man as does the blood and penetrate deep into the depths of his existence.

Thus, the principle that "man is indescribable" should not be seen as a philosophical principle and be placed alongside other philosophical principles. Instead, one should elevate it from the stage of 'knowledge' to the level of 'belief' and live with it. It is then that this principle would transform the life of man. In a bid to state the difference between knowledge and belief, what is usually cited is an old example whose veracity has not yet been invalidated by time. All of us know that a dead person has no power to move and the corpse that has fallen in a corner can do no harm.

Yet, few people are ready to spend the night alone beside a lifeless body or pay a visit to the cemetery at midnight. Similarly, we have heard a lot of adventurers who would bet on going to the cemetery at night but, in doing so, what emotional disturbances did they not experience?! Well, the difference regarding this issue is between 'knowledge' and 'belief'. We *know* that the dead can do no harm but we do not *believe* in it. Since we do not truly and firmly believe in the lifelessness of the dead, we do have doubts about it and suggest to ourselves, "Don't say he's going to get up!"

Now if we really believe that the dead has no power to move, we will no longer fear to be with *it*. Gravediggers and those who wash the dead are among those who really believe that the dead are lifeless; thus, they do not fear whether they are beside the dead or spend the night in the cemetery. Im□m Khomein□, in a whole chapter, endeavors to clarify this difference and shows that "knowledge is different from faith."[319]

While emphasizing that faith is an affair of the heart, he distinguishes it from knowledge and cites the same example of the dead corpse and concludes thus:
You know through your reason that a dead person cannot do any harm and that all the dead in the world do not possess any power of action, even as much power as is possessed by a fly… but since your heart has not accepted it and has not approved of the judgment of the mind, you cannot spend a dark night with a dead body. But if your heart yields to your mind and approves of its judgment, this job will no more be difficult for you. After some effort the heart resigns to the dictates of reason, then no dread of the dead remains in the heart.[320]

The outcome of this distinction is that acceptance of the ethical principles is a form of challenge. Here we are not dealing with the complex principles of philosophy. On the contrary, these principles [of faith] are very simple and straightforward. The difficulty lies in having faith in them, and in the words of the Im□m, passing these principles from the stage of reason to the stage of the heart.

It is here that the issue of commitment is raised. It is possible that a mathematician has no faith in any of his mathematical achievements while at the same time he knows and teaches them well. It is possible that a person is a professor of Greek philosophy but he does not believe in any of its schools, and after teaching them, behaves as if he is not acquainted with this philosophy at all. However, this point is not true about ethics. Ethics is a way of living and a way of viewing oneself and others. A scholar of ethics cannot, as with a pair of spectacles, remove or change it anytime he likes.

In the words of Max Weber,[321] "Moralities are not chariots that can be stopped any time we want for getting in or getting off."[322] Ethics makes man committed to himself and urges him to assess and construct himself according to these principles. It is here that the issues of reminding [*tadhakkur*], purification [*tazkiyyah*], and watchfulness [*mur□qibah*] come up. Moral maladies, the form of moral reasoning and expression are peculiar to themselves, and cannot be gauged by the theoretical sciences.

It is due to this that the Im□m does not express these principles 'systematically' and 'orderly'. Instead he mainly regards them as assumed and expresses their outcomes. The goal in teaching ethics does not lie in learning some principles and appending them to an individual's body of knowledge. The goal is to let man take a look at himself again, reconstruct his existential palace, and evaluate it.

If our outlook on ethics is of this type, we will no longer be in pursuit of increasing the volume of our information on ethics. Instead, we will strive to increase the volume of challenge and action, and in the parlance of ethics, self-purification. Treading the path of ethics does not require extensive and vast information. It needs high ambition, firm resolution and formidable will:
Dear friend! Try to be a man of strong will power and resolution, so that you may not go from this world as a person without resolution, and hence rise on the Day of Resurrection as a brainless-being, not in the form of human being.[323]

Hence, the topic is not about teaching; it pertains to training, the manner of upbringing and living.
Now let us see what type of person is the one who has come to believe in the principles of ethics and lets them flow in his veins. If we want to present the image of a moral man while taking into account these principles, perhaps we can portray his as follows:

1) Moral man is he who profoundly believes that man is indescribable and so long as he lives in this corporeal world cannot be absolutely regarded as misguided or guided. Consequently, he does not stop even for a moment in 'creation' and 'recreation' of himself. He is always in pursuit of nurturing and training himself and in transcending himself. He meticulously assesses himself but refrains from judging others. He believes that he should not forget himself and be the judge with respect to the conduct and

behaviour of others. Instead, he believes that he is responsible for himself and every individual is responsible. So, he has taken this statement as the epigraph of his life: “Take account of yourself for your own sake because the account of others will be taken by one other than you.”[324]

He knows that he has only a brief opportunity at his disposal to offer whatever he has in the bag. Hence, he neither wastes his time anymore nor spends it in vain in judging other’s conduct and behaviour. He is totally concerned with himself.

2) To be totally concerned with oneself, in his view, does not mean irresponsibility with respect to others. On the contrary, he knows that the diamond of his existence is cut in social activity and in living with others. So, he views being with others as an opportunity for building himself, and acquires benefit from it. Although he is amidst the people, spiritually he is not with them and moves in a higher plane.

He shows others the way (guidance) and the well (misguidance) but never forgets himself. He deems as his prime concern his own salvation for which he is responsible. He is with the people, yet his soul travels. As such, he is often silent. But once he talks, his speech is of another kind and a cure for the pain of his listeners. He sees the faults of others but covers them. It is because he is aware of the nature of mankind and also knows his duty in this context. It does not mean that he does not see the evil in his eyes, but he sees the good in the eyes of others. He closes his eyes to the shortcomings of others and is concerned with his own defects.

3) This kind of person knows that man is a blend of the spirit of God and the putrid clay, and he takes it as a good augury. He never entertains the idea of denying his physical dimension and of overlooking his instincts. Rather, he has a realistic view of the human dimensions of himself and others. He neither talks about uprooting his instincts nor intends to retreat into solitude and seclusion. Instead, he believes that the same instincts are powerful instruments for his advancement and growth, and considers presence in society as a means for the emergence of his creativity.

Thus, his life in this respect is similar to that of the people. He eats, drinks, mingles with others, and he sees the world not as a calamity and plague but as a vast ground of God, and benefits by it with his needs. He equally knows that satisfaction of instincts, material possessions and benefiting from the world are not his ultimate goal; rather, they are prologue to his perfection and meeting with God [*liqā’ All□h*]. So, he enjoys everything moderately and to a sufficient extent. He does not deprive himself of any blessing, but does not also suffocate himself with any of the favours.

4) This kind of person sees evenly the possibility of progress and growth in all, and recognizes all men as creatures of the One God. Therefore, he regards no one as essentially superior to others. Even if he deems himself blessed and favoured by God for having endowed him with the power of discernment and self-building, he never allows this grace to cause him to become proud and boastful, and reckon himself as superior to others.

Arrogance and pride are absent in him and he knows well the satanic temptation in this regard. Such a

person does not keep aloof from others on the excuse of knowledge and strength, and never regards himself as being special. He does not cast his attributes in others' teeth through his clothes, language or some of his silent gestures, and knows how strong the temptations of Satan are and in what manner he attempts to make man proud and arrogant but "be certain that all these are guiles of the Devil and wiles of the self."[325]

For, the Messenger of God (*s*), with all his spiritual loftiness, was never enticed by such pretences and was always the confidante and companion of the most indigent strata of the society. The great men of religion have been so, too. For instance, Shaykh 'Abdul-Karīm Hā'irī, the founder of the Islamic theological center in Qum, in spite of his being of high social standing, and an undisputed Shī'ah Religious Reference Authority, " used to sit on the floor and tell strange jokes to the most junior of students.[326] Such a person never humiliates others because of his being a man of morality; neither does he consider himself as being superior. Instead, he mingles with all and clamors in the midst of social life. Moral attributes only make him humble; not arrogant.

5) Such a person is fond of knowledge and seeking knowledge, and believes that his knowledge in relation to the things unknown to him is as a cup to the ocean. So, he ceases not even for a moment in learning, and he knows that the time he spends in learning is actually an investment that he has made and that he will reap much benefit from it.

He believes that the angels of heaven have stretched their wings above the seekers of knowledge and knows that knowledge is the legacy of the prophets (*'a*). As such, he is always a seeker of the way of knowledge and a wayfarer in the path of learning. Yet, he equally knows well that knowledge is not the goal and that the goal of man should not be the accumulation of terminologies and filling up of his mind with facts. The purpose of knowledge is psychological and spiritual nurture and training. Hence, knowledge that possesses these attributes is valuable and worth searching for. It should abduct man from himself and in his stead construct another creature.

So, he is not in pursuit of virtueless knowledge; rather, he is in quest of existential truths—truths that outline his fate and raise him from being a creature equal to the animals to the status of the angels and from there to a loftier plane, to being a godly man. Yes, in his opinion such knowledge is becoming of him, and he considers the fact that "they lend their ears to that knowledge which is beneficial to them"[327] to be the mark of the upright people. For this reason, he is fascinated by profitable knowledge and between the different kinds of knowledge; he distinguishes the seeds from the straws and selects the beneficial ones.

6) He keeps a long[328] distance away from vices such as greed and jealousy. He knows that once he gives free rein to his instincts, in no way will they be satiated and 'the cup of greedy eyes' [*kāzeh-ye cheshmeh harīsān*] filled. He, likewise, believes that jealousy toward others is an indication of lack of faith in God, and can only be to his detriment; not to his good. So, these two traits that poison man's life and pour venom into the cup of his life, are absent in him.

He perceives his beginning and end as good, and as such, he does not entertain greed. He knows that the sustenance of everyone is that which he eats, drinks, wears, and in which he sits. Moreover, it is no longer the sustenance of the individual; rather, it is the sustenance of those who remain. So, why should he trouble himself for the others and provide them with the comforts of life that will cause him hardship and misery?

He has also removed the root of jealousy from himself; he knows that his jealousy will not lead to the disappearance of others' fortunes. Furthermore, as he believes in the wisdom and justice of God, he sees no reason to be jealous. Rather, he is of the opinion that the possessions of others are the result of being wise, and his lack of fortune is not the grounds of his abjectness.

7) His view on the world is both optimistic and realistic. If we take the world away from man, with what investment and provisions will he proceed to the hereafter? Thus, he never says anything bad about the world; he regards it as the arena for self-building, prosperity and providing for himself. Even if he sees that some Qur'anic *āyah*s and *had*ī*th*s have reproached the world, he knows that it refers to worldliness and negligence of the final goal and destination; not negation of the reality of the world and its essence.

8) He believes in the rule of action and reaction. He knows that every input has its corresponding output; nothing in the world is futile and vain. So, his actions are measured and he is the observer of his own conduct. But he also knows that one's wrong conduct should not necessarily lead to penalization in this world and that the wrongdoer should definitely be duly punished. From his viewpoint the world is not the place for recompense and retribution; rather, it is a 'test bed'. The other world is the place for reward. Even if a person is punished in this world it is actually a favour God has done on him which has prevented him from persisting in his deviations.

9) Since he thinks of God as just and wise, and has an optimistic outlook on the world, he reckons tribulations and adversities as constructive and derives benefit from them for his growth. So, he never complains against the universe and firmaments of tribulations [*falaq-e kajmadā*r]. Rather, he believes that behind all these sufferings is a great disguised wisdom in favour of his growth.

10) Finally, such a person is always in the process of self-assessment and, like a strict accountant, takes stock of himself. He systematically opens his record and impartially evaluates himself. He gives positive grades for his good deeds and negative grades for his bad ones. He promises to himself never to repeat such unscrupulous acts. He not only meticulously controls his behaviour, but also supervises his thinking and imagination. He does not permit the butterfly of his imagination to fly wherever it likes and around every flower. Instead, his entire existence is under his command and at the end of the year he rebuilds himself, goes beyond himself, and enters a loftier plane:

عارفان هر دمی دو عید کنند　　عنکبوتان مگس قدید کنند

Every moment the mystics make two celebrations;
But the spider-like men let dry the fly to prey on it.

Politics has two faces—a smiling face that gives glad tidings of prosperity, power and authority, and a furious one that calls to mind power struggle, power worship, and injustice. It is owing to this that politics is likened to Janus,[329] the first mythological king of Latium.[330]

The gods had bestowed the king with such powers of clairvoyance that he would see the past and the future in unison. It is for this reason that they used to depict him as having two faces, portraying him as terrifying. In reality, politics has also two facets and faces: On the one hand, it is after securing the objectives and demands of the citizens and is a powerful tool for the establishment of public order and welfare—this is the favourable face of politics.

On the other hand, it is the means of rivalry, challenge, power struggle, dealing a blow to the enemy, and outstripping and outsmarting him—this gives a dreadful image of politics.

In our culture the latter face of politics is better known. Usually politics has been equated and associated with fraud, deception, and in slang, 'chicanery' [*pedar sūkhteh bāzī*].

A deeper analysis of this aspect of politics exists in Arabic and has taken the form of a proverb. It states, "To rule is mule-like (sterile)"[331] [*al-mulk 'aqīm*]. It means that it show no mercy to anybody and recognizes no kinship and kinsmen.

History is replete with this attitude to politics. Nādirshāh[332] killed his own son merely because of a misunderstanding, and Shīraveyeh[333] murdered his own father Khusrūparvīz (Khosroe Parvez) in order to gain power.[334] Ferdowsī elegantly depicts the gloomy end of this unlucky king. After Shīraveyeh, who was himself a prisoner of his father, is released from the prison through the help of the soldiers, he dethrones his father, puts him behind bars, and goes in search of a person who would kill his father. But he has nobody to help to murder the king as such a deed would be inauspicious. However, he finally finds the person who accepts to shoulder the heavy responsibility.

یکی خنجری تیز دادش چو آب　　بامد کُشنده سبک پرشتاب

چون آن بدکنش رفت نزدیک شاه ورا دید پابند در پیشگاه

بلرزید خسرو چو او را بدید سرشکش ز مژگان به رخ برچکید...

چو آن جامه‌ها را بپوشید شاه به زمزم همی توبه کرد از گناه

یکی چادر نو به سر درکشید بدان تا رخ جانستان را ندید

بشد مهر هرمزد، خنجر به دست در خانه پادشا را ببست

سبک رفت و جامه از او درکشید جگرگاه شاه جهان بردرید

He gave him a sharp dagger that shines like water,
And he was hastily directed to kill.
When the wicked person approached the king,
He saw him devoted to God.
When Khosrow saw him, tears flew on his cheek;
When the king wore those garments and repented from his sins.
A new chador he covered himself with
So as not to see his murderous face.
Mehr Hormozd took hold of a dagger
And closed the door of the king's house.
He promptly approached the king and took away the chador from his head
And opened the king's belly.[335]

This patricide does not end here. As a precautionary measure, fifteen other sons of Khusr who are imprisoned are also butchered.

چو آگاهی آمد به بازار و راه | که خسرو بران‌گونه برشد تباه

همه بدگمانان به زندان شدند | به ایوان آن مستمندان شدند

گرامی ده وپنج فرزند بود | به ایوان شاه آنک در بند بود

به زندان بکشتندشان بیگناه | بدانگه که برگشته شد، بخت شاه

When the people of the street and market understood
How Khosrow became corrupted,
All the wicked were imprisoned
While the indigent were in the veranda.
All the fifteen noble sons (*of Khosrow*)
Were imprisoned in the castle.
They were innocently murdered in prison
As the king's fortune returned.[336]

Shīraveyeh, too, did not remain unpunished for this patricide [and fratricide] for he was also murdered by others.

Well, the story of politics from this perspective is a tragic one and replete with patricides, fratricides and filicides. If politics is such, what will its relation to ethics be? Is it possible to build a bridge between the two? This question has occupied and challenged the minds of thinkers for the past two thousand years. Some believe that politics is a mixture of fraudulence and violence, and, as such, it cannot be rid of its abominations. This is while others do assert that politics can be ethical. But we are after finding out the place of politics in the ideological system of Imām Khomeinī and what connection it could have with ethics. In a bid to answer this question, we have no alternative but to discuss first the fundamental views on the subject under consideration. Then, we will examine the viewpoint of the Imām in this context. Concerning the relationship between ethics and politics, there are four main views and they are as follow:

● View on the separation of ethics and politics;

- View on the subservience of ethics to politics;
- View on the duality of ethics and politics; and
- View on the oneness of ethics and politics.

The principal claim of this view is that one should believe in the difference between ethical rules and political exigencies, and that one should take political measures on the basis of reality and by keeping in mind the interests and benefits. Anchored to this approach, which is also called political realism, is the consideration of ethics in politics ending in failure in this sphere.

It is because the pivot of ethics is truth and right while the motive of politics is interests and benefits. Ethics demands that we tell the truth even though it is against us, not to do injustice, not to take people as our instruments, to be advocates of justice all the time, not to lie, to abstain from deception, not to conceal the truths, etc. This is while politics necessitates the abandonment of some principles of ethics. Basically any step in politics begins with hostility against ethics and trampling upon moralities. Any political activity is impossible without 'the dirty hands'.

Politics is nothing but an arena for the obtainment, expansion and preservation of power, which cannot be realized without sacrificing the principles of ethics. After every political step, the abundance of crushed moral virtues is conspicuous. Therefore, one must choose either ethics or politics, purity or defilement while discarding the other since combining the two is absurd. As a result, "All the interests of man who wants his soul to remain pure through piety lie in not doing anything."[337]

According to a political realist adhering to ethics in the political sphere is not only unbeneficial but also means total loss since he knows that in this world, "In spite of the moral tales which are for children, virtue remains unrewarding. The real sovereign is power… and moral temptations are signs of weakness of designs."[338]

Apparently, the first thinker who dwelt on this issue and elucidated it was Thucydides,[339] a Greek political thinker and historian. He precisely sketched out this viewpoint two thousand and four hundred years ago and decided to delineate the exact boundary between ethics and politics and to separate these two realms from one another. In the belief that politics is tied to interests while ethics is to truth, he narrates the dialogue between the representatives of Athens, which was then in a position of strength, and the representatives of the city of Melos, a former ally of Athens that was in a position of weakness. The dialogue strikingly shows the essence of this view.[340]

After the city of Melos fell under siege, the representatives of Athens went there to conduct a dialogue and talked with the elders of the city. An excerpt of the dialogue is as follows:

“What we want is to make it clear to you that we have come here for the expansion of our empire and are conducting this dialogue so as to maintain the safety of your city. To prevail over you is not difficult for us, but at the same time, we want your safety since this affair is beneficial to both of us.” [341]
The representatives of Melos replied, “How could it be just as good for us to be the slaves as for you to be the masters?”[342]
Representatives of Athens: “You, by giving in, would save yourselves from disaster; we by not destroying you, would be able to profit from you.”[343]

Representatives of Melos: “Hence, according to the people of your city, just behaviour lies in not differentiating between the cities that have nothing to do with you (neutral) and those that are either your puppets or have revolted against you, and you have gained control over them?”[344]

Representatives of Athens: “From the viewpoint of right and wrong, our people do not make any difference between them and they believe that the cities are still independent as they are strong, and the reason why we do not attack them is that we are afraid of them. So, by conquering you we shall increase not only the size but the security of our empire as well. We have mastery over the seas and you are a small and weak island. As such, it is only natural that you should surrender to us.”[345]

Therefore, since the people of Athens are more powerful than the people of the island of Melos, the power itself gives them the right to occupy the island and make its inhabitants their slaves. The view of the separation of ethics from politics is more explicitly associated with Machiavelli, the Italian thinker. He not only insists on this dichotomy but also recommends, in his concise and famous thesis named, *The Prince*, to the ruler or prince to trample upon every ethical consideration so as to fortify his power.

Although Machiavelli thinks of ethics as essential for the life of the individual and indispensable for the continuity of society and social life, he regards attachment to it as dangerous for the prince and he cautions him (the prince or monarch) against the danger of piety and says:

Anyone who wants in all conditions to be virtuous, in the midst of all this wickedness, has no destiny except disappointment. Thus, a prince who would not like to relinquish his crown should learn wicked methods and utilize them wherever needed.[346]

Even though in the view of Machiavelli the possession of virtues is good for the prince, it is so as long as it does not amount to the collapse of his rule.

Thus, since we think optimistically, we see it as an attribute which is regarded as a virtue. But its implementation will lead to annihilation [of the government]. This is while there is also another attribute which is viewed as callousness although it engenders security and success.[347]

Though the popularity of the prince is desirable, in case he cannot avoid either the people adoring or fearing him. It is then better if they fear him because in this way they could be controlled and guided better.[348]

No matter how desirable the faithfulness and fidelity of the prince are, it is regrettable that circumstances are not always compatible with the observance of *pacta sunt servanda*.[349]

Life experiences have taught us that the monarchs who have performed onerous tasks are those that have not given any consideration to doing good deeds and have manipulated the people through trickery. Finally, they have prevailed over those who have observed righteousness.[350]

Thus, one must always move in tune with reality, know the value of power and authority, and bear in mind that even among the prophets, those armed had been victorious and "all the prophets who were fighters triumphed and those who were armless remained unsuccessful."[351]

There are two ways to gain victory: law and force. Law is peculiar to the human being. Force belongs to the animals, and since the first alternative is not always responsive, the monarch should also learn the second option. It is in this sense that the monarch ought to know how he could acquire the two temperaments as he will not remain faithful to one of them. So, if the monarch is supposed to learn the style of the wild beast and apply it, he ought to learn also the style (cunning) of the fox as well as that (brawn) of the lion as the lion cannot escape from traps (deception) and the fox from the clutches of the wolf (power)…

Therefore, the shrewd ruler is not supposed to be faithful to his promise when it is to his disadvantage and detriment, and there is no more reason to commit to it… From these circumstances, there are numerous instances that can be brought out and be shown that so many promises and commitments which have been violated through the infidelity of the princes as well as for without any basis. Those who have imitated the fox have come out more successful than the rest. But it should be known how to embellish the outward appearance and to cunningly perform deception and trickery. The people are so naïve and credulous such that a deceiver can always find those who are willing to be deceived."[352]

The book is replete with such recommendations. Considering the psychological makeup of the masses, he regards them as inherently filthy and wicked, and believes that "anyone who leans on the people [actually] leans on water."[353] His main proposal is that "the people should either be flattered or knocked down."[354]

There is no middle way; it is either the stick or carrot. Reliance on Machiavelli and quotation of his statements are due to his importance in the history of political thought. There have been innumerable discussions on Machiavelli and his thesis which he dedicated to Lorenzo de Medici (1449–92), the ruler

of Florence (in Italy). A group believes that Machiavelli expressed his beliefs in that book and that he believed in whatever he said; thus, he deserves curse and damnation.

But keeping in view his other book entitled, *Discourses*, another group believes that Machiavelli was actually describing the rulers of his time and not prescribing a particular method. At any rate, this discussion is still alive and the first view prevails over the second. Similarly, 'Machiavellian' is an attribute that signifies jugglery and cheating in the sphere of politics. In spite of this, he has been described as "the first modern political philosopher"[355] and nobody doubts the influence of his thinking and ideas.

So, it is fitting to claim that in the sphere of political thought, Machiavelli can be accepted; he can be denied as well. But, he cannot be overlooked. Machiavelli's 'crime' was that he would expose whatever the princes were doing, and made clear the essence and consequences of such thinking. From then onward, this approach not only remained undiminished in matters of politics but also the rulers who were Machiavellian supporters commenced their rule by vilifying Machiavelli while observing all his recommendations. Even those who opposed Machiavelli's thought would tread the same path once they obtained power, applying the same recommendations to such an extent that Frederick, the Great, the King of Prussia, at a young age while still a crown prince and enjoying the companionship of the French philosopher, Voltaire, wrote a book on the latter's encouragement entitled, *Anti-Machiavelli*.

In it he criticized one by one the ideas of Machiavelli as being contrary to moral laws. But no sooner than succeeding to the throne that he found himself besieged by his rivals who, from all quarters, had cast covetous eyes on his country. Whereupon he followed to the letter the political principles enunciated by Machiavelli, particularly in *The Prince*. It is notable that there has been no political figure who observed so precisely and strictly the law of *raison d'éstat*[356] as he did. Finally, in his political will and testament, he acknowledged that Machiavelli was right; adding that among all those with boundless ambitions, anyone observing ethics would not survive.[357]

The perfect epitome of a person possessing such a mental frame, who instinctively applied all the above recommendations, was Mu'□wiyah ibn Ab□ Sufy□n. In a bid to obtain the caliphate and preserve it, he did many unofficial things and trampled on all moral virtues. After concluding a peace treaty with Im□m Hasan al-Mujtab□ (*'a*), he trampled on the conditions that were not to his satisfaction.[358] He officially announced that his objective in waging war and concluding the peace treaty was nothing but obtainment of power and dominance over others, and that there being no further impediment in his way, he saw no reason to fulfill his promises and commitments. He performed congregational prayer in Nukhaylah and in his sermon he declared to the signatories:

By God, I did not wage war against you in order to let you say your prayers, observe fasting, perform *hajj*, or give *zak□t* [alms-tax], [It makes no difference for me] whether you perform these acts or not. I fought against you only for the sake of making myself your ruler and God granted my wish even though it is unpleasant for you.[359]

Prior to the birth of Machiavelli, Mu‘wiyah applied his prescriptions on the temperamental duality of the prince and the lion–fox nature of the ruler. In his letter to Ziyd ibn Ubayyah, the then governor of Basrah and Kfah, he wrote:

It is not fitting for you and me to guide the people uniformly through a policy of leniency as to make them experience inebriation, or to exert extreme pressure on them as to put them in a quandary. Instead, you have to adopt a policy of violence and rudeness while I will employ a policy of clemency and compassion.[360]

The adventurousness of Mu‘wiyah, the war he imposed on Imm ‘Al (*‘a*), the elected caliph of the people, and his Machiavellian ways are well–known to all and sundry. Some of the people at that time were so influenced by such an approach as to accuse Imm ‘Al (*‘a*) of lack of political acumen, with which we will deal later. Relying on political realism, this group of people believed that Mu‘wiyah should be dealt with in a Mu‘wiyah–like fashion—something which Imm ‘Al (‘a) was not at all prepared to do.

Consequently, Mu‘wiyah emerged triumphant. As such, their view, as they thought it, was proved that the path of politics is separate from that of ethics. The main critique of Imm ‘Al’s (*‘a*) critics who have always believed in the great value of his ethical personality, pertains to the Imm’s (*‘a*) moral approach in politics. One of them is Shafq Jibr, an Egyptian contemporary, who regards the Imm’s (*‘a*) ethical approach as the reason behind his failure in the Battle of Siffn.[361] He says:

The Imm (*‘a*) did not know that the main apprehension of the people concerned the vanities of the world. It was difficult for him to believe that the people were in pursuit of their own interests and benefits. So, he did not behave with them as a professional politician would; rather, he dealt with them as a professional man of ethics.[362]

Sayyid Qutb, himself a Sunn thinker, does not approve this assessment. He believes that the Imm (*‘a*) was familiar with the way to victories and defeats, and the methods thereof. But he was not willing to make use of any method at any cost. Instead, he was strictly committed to ethics. This is while

Mu‘wiyah and his alter ego ‘Amr [ibn al–‘s], owing to being more acquainted with the psychological motivations of individuals as well as with useful attitudes in suitable conditions, turned victorious against ‘Al. Nay, they became victorious since they regarded themselves free to employ any weapon; whereas he [Imm ‘Al (*‘a*)] abided by his ethical principles in employing war weapons. Besides, Mu‘wiyah and his alter ego used to resort to lies, deception, trickery, bribery, and buying commitments and loyalty. Therefore, it is not surprising that the two would triumph and he be defeated; a defeat that was nobler than any triumph.[363]

Such an approach to politics has led many religious individuals to turn their backs on it; the reason being that the notion that politics, in essence, necessitates separation from ethics has taken root. Expressions such as 'to rule is mule-like' [*al-mulk 'aq□m*], 'politics has no father and mother' 'politics is chicanery' [*siy□sat pedar s□khteh-b□z□*], and the like, are the products of such a notion. Even one of the contemporary jurists [*fuqah□*] who used to assail politics pessimistically and dissuade the Muslims from engaging in it, would say, "Politics is on one side while religion is on the other."

In the words of Im□m Khomein□, the matter went to such an extent that most of the scholars [*ahl-e 'ilm*] and holy men [*muqaddas□n*] had accepted the notion that "religion has its own boundary and so with politics"[364] and even if they wanted to backbite somebody, they would dub him as 'political or politicized' [*siy□s□*].[365] He himself narrates that P□krav□n, the then chief of the State Organization for Security and Information (SAVAK)[366] approached him and said, "Sir, politics consists of telling lies, cheating, trickery, jugglery and, in short, chicanery of the highest order [*pedar-s□khtehg□*]; leave all this to us." Since the occasion was not appropriate, I decided not to argue with him and said, "From the very beginning we have not been engaged in the kind of politics that you mention."[367]

In reality, this tenet has two premises. One is that ethics and politics belong to two distinct realms while the other is that political values are different from those of ethics. Proponents of this view propound that the realm of ethics is that of individual realm and his private affairs, while the realm of politics concerns the assurance of wholesome social life and regulation of social relations of individuals with one another, as well as with the government. In addition, moral value is a function of truth, whereas in politics the criterion of value judgment is interests and benefits.

A certain political act is good provided that it is beneficial and brings about a positive outcome, this not being so with ethics. Basically, ethics manifests itself when man is free of the shackles of his personal interests and considerations and moves beyond himself. This point indicates that the precept of separation of ethics from politics does not necessarily mean conflict between them. That is to say, it is not that political acts and movements of politicians are unquestionably repulsive to moral values.

Thus, this tenet is sometimes called the tenet of 'amorality of politics'. It means that in politics we are up against different kinds of values and standards of measurement, and that politics should not be assessed on the basis of moral values or be judged within the framework of ethics. So, politics in this sense is neutral; it is not against ethics. However, since in practice, this tenet is not bent on either ensuring or negating ethics, and is only in pursuit of obtaining benefits; it does not refrain from trampling on all the principles and rules of ethics whenever necessary. Hence, this theory throughout history has been tantamount to the negation of ethics and etiquettes.

Criticism of the view

The conclusion of the claimants of this is that the principles of ethics should not be allowed to interfere in politics. The story of the followers of this tenet is that of the person who was cutting the root while unwary of the fact that he was approaching death by his own hands. The problem is that if the people realize that their leaders are not behaving morally, they will also wash their hands of ethics, just as Sa‘d says:

اگر زباغ رعیتملک خوردسیبی برآوردندغلامان اودرخت از بیخ

If the monarch were to eat a single apple from the garden of a peasant,
The servants would pull up the tree by the roots.[368]

A government which permits itself to commit injustice and deceive the people cannot expect justice and truthfulness from them. A citizen, who realizes that his sovereign government tells a lie, prefers, for instance, to fill his tax declaration form with lies, too, and give wrong information. From the perspective, ‘The people are sovereign over the judgment’ [*An–nas ‘al dn mulkahum*], such a citizen considers himself licensed to perpetrate all sorts of fraud and answers a lie with another lie.

The point is also certain that no government is needless of ethics. The government regards it necessary for its own citizens as they cannot always be asked to obey through force and violence. Instead, the social and government laws should be internalized; with ethics assuming the responsibility for this task. So, any government or ruler is in need of ethics. Even Mu‘wiyah considered ethics as being necessary for the people and would feign to be a moral person abiding by ethical principles.

A government has hitherto not appeared in history which has permitted its citizens to behave immorally and claim that ethics is worthless. Even if there is a person who has, in practice, trampled on ethics, at least he has pretended to preserve it. Hitler, too, considered himself as a moral person, and Stalin, who set up those ceremonial and sham courts, did so as well and regarded for his people morals as being necessary.

Therefore, if ethics is needed for the people, it can only be kept when the people feel that the government is also faithful and committed to the principles of ethics. Otherwise, there will be no guarantee for the survival of ethics in society, and in turn, survival of the government.

That is why even Machiavelli stresses on the need for the government to behave morally. He views as

oppressive the application of whatever he explains in *The Prince*, saying, “Of course, all these instruments are oppressive and destructive to civil life.”[369] He also states, “Just as good law is needed for the preservation of good morality, good morality is also necessary for the observance of law.”

In a nutshell, no government, no matter how powerful and versatile it may be, can exact obedience from the people only through police methods and by strengthening its own security system. It has no alternative but to benefit from ethics and its promotion. Instead of intimidation, it should persuade them and even pretend itself to be committed to morality. The importance of pretending to be moral is so great that all governments—even the immoral ones—try to make use of this cover-up to achieve their objectives.

Given all the evidence that is sometimes put forth to support this tenet, the reality cannot be denied that if one day the people realize the untruthfulness and immorality of the government and government policy, they will no longer follow them and will retaliate. The truth of the matter is that the moral man is the very same social and political man.

The exact demarcation between the public and private domain of individuals cannot be specified, and ethics cannot be assigned exclusively to a certain realm and politics to another. In practice, the life of every individual has acquired social forms, and every social dimension has individual manifestations. On the other hand, the influence of the government over the private sphere of the individuals is increasing daily. Actually, governments are also gradually taking up the supervision of the private realm and are implementing policies for it.

Thus, it is naïve to think that politics can be regarded as separate from ethics, and accordingly, expect people to behave morally in their relations with others and with the government. In his book entitled, *Trust*, the Japanese-American thinker, Francis Fukuyama, points to the issue on the legitimacy crisis of the American system and regards it as caused by the negligence of the society’s leaders of the principles of ethics, and their fraudulent conduct in political affairs. Deceitful conduct, moral disgrace and scandals such as ‘Watergate’[370] have provided the grounds for the mistrust of the people as regards the moral conduct of the leaders. The people have steadily lost their confidence and now the American society is facing a legitimacy crisis caused by the decrease of confidence. According to Fukuyama,

The organizational potentiality of economic establishments relies not only on the institutions such as trade law, contract, etc. Instead, it necessitates the aggregate of unwritten moral laws and principles which establishes the foundation of social confidence.[371]

Fukuyama believes that apart from enhancement of economic assets, the government should always endeavor to enhance and increase social assets (such as confidence).[372] In his opinion, confidence and moral commitments are society’s engine of stimulation.[373]

For that reason, nowadays almost everybody outspokenly advocates this tenet and tries to mitigate its

extremism, modify it[374] and acknowledge, to some extent, politics as being ethical.

View on the subservience of ethics to politics

This tenet stems from the Marxist–Leninist theory on society, politics and ethics. According to the Marxist viewpoint, history is nothing but the arena of struggle among classes—classes that emerge out of the new mode of production, and after sometime, nurture their enemy (anti–thesis) in their midst and then wither away, relinquishing their position to the dominant class, which in turn nurtures its own anti–thesis. In this way, any class that moves in harmony with history is revolutionary while a class that stands in the way of progress of the forces of production is anti–revolutionary. Every class generates its own associations, which is the infrastructure of the society and manifestation of the condition of economic production. From this perspective, nothing is absolute and everything is class–based such as moral concepts, arts and even science.

The final stage of history is the period of capitalism in which the mode of production is collective while the ownership of the means of production is private. This contradiction leads to the emergence of a new class termed, 'proletariat' or working class, which is the agent of production but not owner of the means of production. So, through revolutionary means this class will take the reign of power and lead the society toward socialism—which is a passing stage—and finally, communism. At this juncture, class struggle comes to an end as the society is no more divided into two classes, and both the mode of production and ownership of the means of production are collective.

Marxism–Leninism considered struggle for the triumph of the proletariat as inevitable and revolution as certain, and reckoned any sort of reform movement to improve the living conditions of the workers as wrong. This viewpoint brought into being a particular sociology, which increased its 'scientific' attribute and claimed that it has proved three things:

(1) The absolute withering away of the present society is the only way of executing fundamental social reform;

(2) There is nothing needed or to be considered more than this violent action; so, any planning endeavor for the new society is impractical and unfeasible;

(3) In order to acquire the reign of power through a revolution, observance of any kind of conditions or limitations is uncalled for; so,

(a) Historically, this trend is certain and irreversible, and as such, beyond the control of man;
(b) Ethics, truth and the like are merely derived phenomena from the class interests, and thus, the only

scientific meaning of ethics, truth, justice, and others, is the advancement of some class interests, which science has proved to be at the threshold of ascension and dominance.
The violent act of revolution involves any sort of ethics, sincerity, genuineness, and justice on the oneness of established scientific meaning.[375]

On the basis of this tenet, ethics and other social manifestations are unconditionally and categorically subservient to politics and revolutionary action they derive their worth from them and are justified by them while revolutionary action and politics themselves do not need the justification of ethics.

When discussing ethics, Lenin himself says, “Our morality is acquired from the benefits of the class struggle of the proletariat;”[376] “For us, ethics that stems from outside the society does not exist and such ethics is nothing else but pretence;”[377] and “when the people ask us about ethics, we say that for a communist, the totality of ethics finds meaning in relation to the iron order and discipline as well as in the conscious resistance against imperialism.”[378]

The tenet of the separation of ethics and politics regarded both ethics and politics as true and authentic, and reckoned both as acceptable and necessary for the society. But it emphasized that these two branches belong to two distinct and independent realms and the criteria of this branch should not be adapted to that realm, or that branch to this realm.

Thus, Machiavelli, who used to maintain so vehemently that brutal methods and fox-like cunning were essential for the ruler, would nonetheless lay stress on the necessity of adhering to ethics and believed that the ruler, as far as possible, should not trample upon ethical principles unless forced to do so. But this tenet basically reckons ethics, politics and the whole of culture as the superstructure of the society. It espouses that no clout of authenticity should be given to ethics and that the ‘moralness’ of behaviour of a certain class depends on its historical circumstances.

So, a practice can be an ethical one from the viewpoint of a certain class while the same is unethical and antirevolutionary according to another class. To cite an example, the crackdown on the peaceful demonstration rally of the Russian people perpetrated by Czar Nicholas II in 1905 was an antirevolutionary act. But the crackdown on the strikers and workers of factories perpetrated by Lenin, after the establishment of socialism, was considered a revolutionary act.

Hence, an act is ethical when it is revolutionary and progressive with historical trends determining the criteria of progress, and the Communist Party recognizes them. Therefore, this tenet does not regard any antirevolutionary act as contrary to ethics; it rather propounds that whatever the Communist Party, which is the representative of the proletariat, does is basically that which is morality and virtue. And it means fighting against morality and flaying ethics. Lenin himself announced the form of rule of the Communist Party in this manner:

‘Dictatorship of the proletariat’ is a scientific expression—denoting the class under discussion and the

peculiar form of government authority that is deemed ‘dictatorship’—that connotes an authority which is not founded on law or election, but directly on the armed forces of a section of the masses.[379]

Criticism of the view

Based on this finding, the dictatorial government of the proletariat replaced the Czarist government of Russia, and under the name of revolution and interests of the masses, it committed crimes that surpassed those of the Mongols and the Czarists. The acme of these atrocities took place during the period of the bloody purges. Aimed at eliminating his rivals and anyone who possessed some intelligence, Stalin conducted a wide liquidation campaign from 1936 to 1938, setup numerous ceremonial courts, and obtained false ‘confessions’ from his opponents that they were agents of imperialism, foreign spies, reactionaries, and anti-people, and that they had no thought other than overthrowing the socialist system.

All these immoralities were reckoned as moral, because the interests of the [Communist] Party demanded so and these lies were considered true from the political standpoint. From this perspective, the difference between the atrocities committed by Stalin and Hitler was that since the conduct of Stalin was aimed at vouchsafing the interests of the emerging class of the proletariat, it was good and ethical. But since what Hitler does was aimed at serving the interests of the bourgeoisie, it was bad and immoral. Micklaus James, one of the Hungarian intellectuals, who found out the process of the reversal of this truth and lost his head in the bargain, states:

Slowly, slowly, at least at the greater and dominant part of its conception, we arrived at the conclusion that there are two kinds of truth. The truth of the party could be different from the truth of the people and can even be more important than the exact truth. Truth, in fact, is that very political expediency. This thought is awful. But one should openly confront its meaning. If there really exists a truth loftier than the exact truth and if political expediency is the barometer in gauging the truth, then even a lie can be true. For, even a lie can possibly be with what is expedient temporarily.

Even a sham political trial, in this sense, can have ‘truth’. For, even in such a trial, crucial political advantages can be obtained. In this manner, we arrive at a viewpoint that not only defiled individuals to design the sham political trials but also, in most cases, it even was effective among the victims. It is a viewpoint that poisoned our entire thinking, blackened our view, dilapidated our critical power, and finally, took from us the intuition to discern the truth as well as the potential to understand it.

The situation was like this. To deny it is pointless.[380] According to one of the political analysts, “Perhaps, the corruption and self-centeredness prevalent in the Czarist courts could not match the one thousandth of what we witnessed during the succeeding periods of communist governments”.[381]

Such a tenet gained an unprecedented historical opportunity to test and prove itself lacking legitimacy and truthfulness in a vast geographical expanse, that is, Eastern Europe, for a long period of time, that is, two generations. The application of such a tenet led to the cracking of its own pillars and foundations, and the malady of immorality rotted its roots.

The social systems of the East disintegrated one by one over a short period of time and the people, in fascination, turned toward the West against which they fought for more than seven decades. This collapse could no longer be attributed to the foreigners and imperialists. Economic depression was also not the root of the problems. No, the correct reply should be found.

These systems had everything for ruling—ideology, military power, ruling party, strong allies, military pact, tribunal court, powerful defense system, complex security and intelligence apparatus, etc. Yet, they were lacking in one thing: legitimacy. These systems gradually lost their moral legitimacy, and the people, who realized that the ruling party was telling lies to, and deceiving, them, paid no allegiance anymore to the ruling authority and released themselves from the state of being under the yoke of the government, which made ethics as its plaything.

In an article, "What transpired in Eastern Europe in 1989," Daniel Shiro gives a detailed report, interesting and shocking, on the disintegration of socialist systems. He regards the root of the collapse to lie in "the total moral and spiritual decay"[382] of these governments and concludes that what can cause revolutions and instabilities nowadays is the ethical–spiritual factor, and that this element should be seriously taken into account.[383]

In short, any system that renders ethics at the service of, and subservient to, politics will face a legitimacy crisis in the long run due to its anti–ethics approach, and the people severely condemn these lies of such a system. No matter how powerful this system may be, it is only for a short period of time that it can beguile the people and not all the time.

The only justification these systems had was that sometimes it is expedient to accept a bit of evil in order to obtain abundant good and for which they would cite the example of a gangrenous foot, claiming that at times the physician has no option in preserving the life of the patient but to cut his decaying and impaired foot, which is considered a danger for the entire organism. Accordingly, the same act can, and should, be done at the societal level, and in order to ensure the public welfare and justice, cruelty should to be done to some individuals.

In other words, the objective is so 'sacred' that it justifies and sanctifies such abominable acts. Yet, in practice, such means became the aim. They did not even achieve any noble aims and the little justice that the previous regimes provided was obliterated from the scene under the pretext of justice for all. "Under the name of justice, the communist regimes of Russia and China have slaughtered people. But

up to now its outcome is more killing and less justice."[384]

View on the duality of ethics and politics

This tenet, which is also called dualist or doubly-inclined ethics, endeavors to preserve moral values and some of the principles of ethics in politics. On the basis of this tenet, ethics must be studied on two planes: individual and social. Although these two levels have some commonalities, whatever is moral on the individual plane cannot necessarily be deemed as moral, too, on the social one. For instance, self-sacrifice of an individual is viewed as an ideal and moral act. This is while self-sacrifice of a state to the advantage of another state is not that moral since it is contrary to the national interests. An individual can endow his possession to others but the state cannot bestow its national income to another state.

From this perspective, individual morality can be gauged on the basis of absolute moral criteria while social morality is subservient to the national welfare and interests. In emphasizing this tenet, they have said that the scope of individual morality is morality of love and affection, but the scope of social morality is the objective- and result-oriented morality.

The consequence of such an understanding is the acknowledgment of two distinct moral systems. As an individual, man is subjected to a certain system of morality whereas society has another ethical system. The principles of these levels of morality can also be contradictory to one another. For example, Plato does not consider telling lies as permissible for an individual, and regards a liar as one worthy of punishment, while believing that the ruler of the society has the right to tell lies. He says,

If telling a lie for someone is permissible, it is only for the rulers of the city, because whenever the good of the city warrants he can deceive the people, whether enemy or city-dweller. Yet, this conduct is not permissible for anybody else, and if an individual from among the city dwellers tells a lie to the governors, his crime is equal to or even severer than the crime of a patient who deceives his own doctor.[385]

Bertrand Russell[386] also believes in such a duality in ethics, regarding the religious beliefs as the source of individual or private ethics and politics as the origin of other categories of ethics. He states,

Without civil ethics the society is incapable of sustaining its life; without the individual ethics, his survival is of no value. Therefore, in order for the world to be good and desirable, the existence of both the civil and individual ethics is necessary.[387]

Of course, what Russell is referring to as 'social ethics' and the existence of which is deemed

indispensable for the survival of the society, is more indicative of the rules and regulations, which are mostly enacted for the proper administration of the society and not ethics in the sense of the totality of behavioural rules based on values. He has considered Martin Luther (founder of Protestantism), Paul Tilikh, Reinhold Niebuhr,[388] Max Weber, and Hans Morgenthau as advocates of this tenet.

Max Weber, the 20th century German sociologist and thinker and one of those having a far-reaching influence on contemporary thought, attempts in the course of a famous lecture entitled, "Politics as a Profession,"[389] to expound the nature of the political profession and endeavors to clarify the relationship between ethics and politics.

Initially, he poses the question, "Are the moralities that are valid for every action also valid for political interactions or not?"[390] In answering this question, firstly Weber acknowledges the need for politics to be moral and points out that politics cannot perform anything outside the domain of ethics: "Is it not so that the Bolshevik and Spartacus theoreticians, because of their having resorted to violence, reached the very same conclusion as every other military dictator had?"[391] "Moralities are not a carriage that, according to your wish and depending on the circumstances, can be stopped for mounting and dismounting."

So, politics must, in a way, be ethical; but it is here that Weber establishes the difference between public morality and political morality and makes the two separate from one another. In his opinion, we are faced with two classes of ethics: One is ideological ethics while the other is responsibility ethics. Ideological ethics derives from absolutist moral teachings, Christianity in particular.

Such a morality urges us to perform whatever is decreed by ethics without paying heed to the consequence of our conduct and with the least attention to the outer conditions.

For instance, Immanuel Kant[392] urges us not to tell a lie at all whether to friends or foes. He similarly stresses that if a killer is in pursuit of an innocent person in order to kill him unjustly, and the innocent one hides in a certain place which is known to us, and the killer asks us whether we know where a certain person has hidden, we are duty-bound to tell him the truth and to refrain from lying. That which would possibly happen to the innocent person is not important. That the killer is in pursuit of realizing his wicked aim is not important.

What is important is that we have done our duty and abided by the decree of truthfulness, absolutely and unconditionally. Kant explicitly states, "Truthfulness in statements that cannot be evaded is an apparent duty of man toward everybody, no matter what dire consequences it would entail for him or for others."[393]

He passionately stresses the principle of absoluteness of honesty and truthfulness, saying: "Every human being has not only the right, but is strongly obliged to be honest and truthful in the statements that he cannot evade, whether these statements are to his detriment or to that of others."[394] Another example of the moral teachings of Christianity is abstention from violence such that, according to the

Book of Matthew, the Holy Messiah (*'a*) recommends to his disciples, thus:

You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.' But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if someone wants to sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. If someone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles.[395]

Weber labels this kind of ethics as 'ideological ethics', that is, ethics that urges us to perform our duty and not to mind its consequences. Well, imagine that a politician wants, for example, to implement these two tenets in the political arena; if he does so, catastrophe will begin, because at the time of negotiation with other governments, sometimes with the hostile ones, he has no option but to answer honestly whatever question, however evil and internal in nature it is, and to reveal his secrets.

Similarly, violence should not be answered with violence, and if an enemy attacks his country, he should not show a negative reaction; rather, it is better to relinquish another part of the country to the enemy. So, ideological ethics cannot, and should not, be employed in politics. Weber talks about the other ethics, which according to him, is 'responsible ethics'. That is, it is here a tenet that is heedful of the particular results. The politician responsibly performs whatever is proper and fitting on the basis of circumstances and expediencies, always acts in pursuit of his country and society's welfare, and never applies any absolutist tenet.

Weber thus concludes, "Conciliation between ideological ethics and responsible ethics is impossible."[396] It is because "political activities necessarily resort to violent means and seek assistance from the principle of responsible ethics."[397]

Therefore, he recommends that in the political arena absolute ideals of ethics should be abandoned while the appropriate ethics of politics should be applied realistically and responsibly. Hence, ethics is valuable and worthy. Yet, not every kind of ethics is appropriate for politics. These two should be studied on two planes and each of them put in its proper place.

If someone is totally committed to the ideological ethics, it is better for him to withdraw from politics and not to put his spiritual salvation in jeopardy, because politics involves defilement. However, it should not be concluded from this topic that politics means to behave immorally and to apply the dry logic of cost and benefit. "It is true that they engage in politics by means of the brain (reason and intellect); however, it is also correct that it is not only with the brain. In this case, right is totally on the side of the ideological ethics."[398]

Criticism of the view

If the ideological ethics really compels us to blindly comply with its dictates without paying heed to the negative repercussions that they may possibly entail, then Weber is right and it is better to abandon the ideological ethics in the political arena and apply the 'responsible ethics'. But do the ideological ethics really mean this and do the absolutist moral systems not pay any attention to the outcomes of the behaviour of the individual?

This claim cannot easily be accepted. Of course, morality emerges at the time when we are freed from the daily and petty shackles of cost and benefit and widen the horizon of our view. Morality urges us not to be self-centered human beings and to move beyond our self. In this sense, ethics is different from the law of give and take, or the belief, "Die for someone so that 'he would have fever for you'."

Morality enjoins us to give preference to truth over our interests. It encourages self-sacrifice and devotion. It views bravery, and in times of need, embracing death as a value and considers egotism and self-love as an anti-value. But none of these mean inattention to our aims and the consequences of our actions. No moral system allows its principles to be applied in such a way as to destroy its foundation. Even Kant himself who so passionately defended absolute honesty and truthfulness would not think 'Kantianly'. In one of his classroom lectures he had said:

If a robber holds me up and, putting me under pressure, says, "Where is your money?" I can lie to him; for, he wants to take advantage of truth. This kind of lying cannot be deemed treachery and trickery as the robber knows that I will conceal from him what I am thinking, and he, on his part, has no right to expect me to tell him the absolute truth.[399]

The assertion of Kant is based on a principle that is open to debate and has been debated many times by his contemporaries as well as by present-day thinkers. Basically, the inclination of Kant to defend absolute truthfulness and honesty is not to let even a small leak to be made in this structure and even a single exception to be brought up that would weaken the essence of the rule.

So, by virtue of a general and absolute rule, which is among the most ancient of moral tenets and is known as the golden rule, it offers us this absolute rule and bids us to make it the general guide of our conduct. "Act in such a way that the rule of your conduct and your will become one of the general laws of nature."[400]

The meaning of this statement is that whenever I tell a lie, I have, in effect, accepted that in similar circumstances, they tell me lies as well; however, as I do not like a lie to be told to me, I myself must refrain from lying. So, for it to become a moral rule, it must be general and beyond transient circumstances. At any rate, we do not intend to criticize this Kantian view at this juncture. This task has

been dealt with in detail elsewhere.[401]

It is worth saying that even on the basis of Kantian sources responsible ethics can be acquired and this is the task that Christine Korsgaurd has dealt with in his famous book entitled, *Creating the Kingdom of Ends*. Thus, ideological ethics is also not totally free from responsibility and the consequences of behaviour.

Similarly, the statement that has been attributed to the Holy Messiah (*'a*) should be understood in its broad context. At the time when the laws and ordinances of the Torah were laying emphasis on retaliation and revenge, and summoning all to take an eye for an eye, Jesus (*'a*) propagated the tenet that washing blood with blood is absurd and whoever lives with the sword will die by the sword. The statements of Jesus (*'a*) are contrary to the logic that viewed vengeance, not forgiveness, as a value. The aim of Jesus (*'a*) was that instead of obscurantist legalism and externalism, the spirit of faith should sprout in the heart of men.

His utterance is that the Divine Will cannot be confined to the law of indemnity. The commands of God are much higher than what this law stipulates. God wants to give his servants whatever they want—and even more—from Him, even if their wishes are unjustified.[402]

Hence, the issue is basically not that of abandoning one's right, relinquishing power to the wicked, and heedlessness of the repercussions of one's actions. Similarly, it is not so that Jesus (*'a*) has decreed that we should absolutely desist from violence and to offer no resistance to aggressors; rather, he only wants to free us from superficiality.

We should not imagine that Jesus was saying that waging war is a sin. Essentially, he has no intention of presenting the criterion for all actions; he does not even (apparently) mean a specific thing. He stresses on the fact that God does not want mere observance of the law. Rather, He wants much more than this.[403]

Hence, as reported in the New Testament, we see the same Jesus (*'a*) saying, "Do not think that I have come to bring peace on earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword."[404] And when Jesus (*'a*) saw that the temple, that is, the House of God in Jerusalem, had been transformed into a place of trading and commerce, and this holy sanctuary desecrated, he dauntlessly entered it and threw out the goods and furniture of the merchants,

Jesus entered the temple area and drove out all who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money-changers and the benches of those selling doves. 'It is written,' he said to them, 'My house will be called a house of prayer' but you are making it a 'den of robbers'.[405]

So, the line of absolute demarcation between ideological ethics and responsible ethics cannot be drawn,

nor these two juxtaposed against one another. Even Weber clearly states that the religion of Islam has a specific law for self-defense and resistance against invaders, and in such cases he declares war as permissible, saying: "Religious wars have been the life-giving element of Islam from the very beginning."[406] And he again states, "All the religions have more or less successfully studied this issue."[407] In such a case, how can Weber prove his claim?

Granting that the demarcation line between ideological ethics and responsible ethics does not exist and we, in effect, have acknowledged that ideological ethics is also result-seeking concerned with the outcome and deals responsibly with issues, then one cannot talk about the necessity of a particular kind of ethics for politics. Or, it should be stated that in politics ethics is necessary or it should be negated; not that we claim that the duality of ethics exists and that individual ethics is the ideological one while political ethics is the 'responsible' one. This distinction has no scientific and historical precedence, and in effect, concerns the negation of ethics and stripping politics of it; that is, the same thing that Machiavelli was after and Mu'wiyah used to put into practice.

Concerning the example of sacrifice, which is good from the viewpoint of individual ethics but wrong in the political arena, the issue can also be viewed in a more profound manner and the conclusion reached that sacrifice in both cases is moral and correct. Assuming that the representatives of the people, with their justification, decide to allocate a percentage of the national income of their country to a certain famine-stricken country, it will certainly be a moral act and will not be viewed as being against the national interests.

Thus, sacrifice is ethical on the individual level as well as on the social and political one. Only in the case of the liberality of the state will it be contrary to interests, and as such, anti-ethical if done directly and without the people's coordination and consent. The reason is, the state is the representative of the people and cannot act without the opinion of its clients. Juliano Puntara cites the same example and advances this point,

'That realm of ethics which urges the individual to sacrifice his interests for others—in other words, all the things that are under the concept of magnanimity—has no functional capability in the political and social conduct.' That is, one has no right to risk the interests of the people.[408]

Then, he himself criticizes this issue and cites the crime of Bentham,[409] the real founder of the utilitarian ethics, who used to ask: "'Can a politician sacrifice the interests of his own people in favour of others?' And he himself [Bentham] had replied, 'Why not? It is only on the condition that the nation itself wants such actions and act of sacrifice.'"[410] This distinction, that individual conduct is based on the ethics of generosity and humanitarianism while political conduct is subjected to the national interests, is still debatable. Both the two features can openly be placed on both the two levels; there are so many instances wherein individual conduct is anchored to self-interest and welfare-oriented ethics while a political act is influenced by humanitarian motives. "As, such a contradiction, even in the sphere of

individual ethics, is understandable and inferable."[411]

Lastly, the citizen or subject cannot be urged to follow two different and distinct systems of ethics and be expected to profess honesty while accepting the dishonesty of the government and not mentioning it, and in the words of Plato, regard deception on the government's part to be permissible. Apart from these mentioned problems, this tenet as what Puntara says is ambiguous and its limits and boundaries are not specified.[412] It seems that finally it should be delivered to one of the aforementioned two tenets, it having no validity and soundness itself.[413]

View on the oneness of ethics and politics

On the basis of this tenet, ethics and politics are both in quest of ensuring the prosperity of human beings and they cannot be at cross-purposes with one another. Among the duties of politics are spiritual nourishment of the citizens, making them sociable, teaching them to love others and observance of the rights of others, all of these being nothing but moral rules. An individual in private life is the same as in his social life.

Although the principles that are dominant in the collectivity and rules of collective life can be mentioned, it is not that these principles are contrary to the principles that are dominant in the individual's life. To cite an example, a free person is always responsible of his conduct. This sense of responsibility also exists in the collective sense, though it could possibly be weaker, and no one can claim to have no responsibility in the collective state and not assume the consequences of his own conduct.

This tenet regards only one moral system as valid in the two spheres of individual and social life. It considers whatever is ethical on the individual level as ethical too on the social and political level as well as for the politicians; whatever is immoral for each of the citizens is also reckoned as immoral for the government. Therefore, it is bad for an individual to lie, it is so for the government as well, and if the citizens are supposed to observe honesty, so too is the government.

Thus, no government can view itself as authorized to perpetrate immoral acts and claim that such an act is a political necessity and has been part of the requisites of political moves. This rule knows no exception. From this perspective, ethics is considered as the rudiment of politics and its prelude whereas politics is the means for the realization and implementation of moral virtues. The view of Plato and Aristotle on the two realms of ethics and politics has been so, for they believed,

There is no difference between the government and the society, economics and politics, ethics and politics, religion and politics, or culture and politics. Human being means the citizen. Every activity of the society or the citizens of the society has a political implication. The citizen can only realize his

potentialities through the path of political activity, and it is only with the blessing of politics that he can achieve the stage of humanity.[414]

In our philosophical tradition, the same relationship between ethics and politics has been observed to such an extent that Khwājah Nasīruddīn at-Tūsī views politics as a technique that "has been undertaken for the realization of moral life."[415]
So, ethics is the foundation while politics is its instrument and method for the emergence and deepening of moral principles.

To defend this tenet in the theoretical sphere is very easy. It justifies itself, and contrary to the mentioned t enets, it cannot be criticized. Because, no sort of internal contradiction can be noticed in it and it is also safe from the legitimacy crisis caused by the previous tenets.

The only critique that can be put forth against this tenet is this: In practice, will the politics based on ethics also succeed? Or, will political realism make the omission of some ideals and the overlooking of some moral principles inevitable? It is this point that we will deal with.

The most famous and greatest proponent of this tenet, both in theory and practice as well as in words and deeds, was Imām ʻAlī (*ʻa*)[416] who did not neglect to explain it for a moment and lost his life for its sake. With the firm belief that politics ought to be ethical and that he should acquire his own legitimacy from the principles of ethics, Imām ʻAlī (*ʻa*) never encroached on the ambit of ethics and suffered an apparent defeat but he did not allow himself to be overcome from the viewpoint of ethics.

The entire life of dignity and manliness of this great man is more widely acclaimed than that in which we would like to show the identicalness of ethics and politics. Nevertheless, we will briefly mention some cases, which are all understandable and defensible only on the basis of the theory of oneness of ethics and politics and, from the perspective of duality of ethics and politics fragments from which can be gleaned and taken:
1. The Imām, after the demise of the Messenger of God (*s*), and contrary to the expectation of many, was removed as caliph and in the course of the event that is proverbial for all; another person became the ruler of the Muslims. Abū Sufyān, who was among the defenders of the immorality of politics, suggested to the Imām (*ʻa*) not to abandon fighting for the nascent caliphate and he himself committed to place the combatants at his (*ʻa*) disposal. But the Imām (*ʻa*) was not the kind of person who wanted to obtain power through immoral ways and the unwillingness of the people. So, he (*ʻa*) rejected his suggestion and invited the people to sobriety and amity.[417]

2. After the assassination of ʻUmar ibn al-Khattāb,[418] as the six-man council for selecting the next caliph suggested to the Imām (*ʻa*) to accept the caliphate on the condition that he (*ʻa*) follow the tradition of the two Shaykhs [*shaykhayn*] (Abūbakr and ʻUmar), he (*ʻa*) declined the offer as he was not willing to tell a circumstantial lie and obtain power in an unethical manner. On the contrary, he (*ʻa*) explicitly set the style and method of his policy in obtaining power on the basis of the Book of God and the Sunnah of

the Prophet (*s*), saying: “The Book of God and the Sunnah of His Prophet (*s*) do not need the addition of style and tradition of others.”[419]

3. In the course of the insurgency against ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān[420] and the siege of his house, it was expected of the Imām (*‘a*) to take full advantage of the emergent opportunity and take the reins of the caliphate. But, contrary to expectation, he (*‘a*) did not welcome the situation that had arisen and tried to intercede. He invited the people to sobriety and ‘Uthmān to adopt a correct policy. To this end, he (*‘a*) made such headway and so defended ‘Uthmān that he told ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās: “By Allah, I continued protecting him till I feared lest I become a sinner.”[421]

4. Since the people unanimously paid allegiance to him in assuming the office of the caliphate, the Imām (*‘a*) did not delay a single moment in removing the officials of the previous caliph whom he viewed as impious and unjust. He did not accept the recommendations of Ibn ‘Abbās and Mughayrah ibn Shu‘bah[422] on retaining them temporarily and then gradually removing them after consolidating his position (*‘a*).[423]

5. Again, when it was suggested to him (*‘a*) to let Talhā and Zubayr[424] share in power and win their support by allocating Kūfah and Basrah to them, he did not accede to this inappropriate demand.[425]

6. Since Talhā and Zubayr were among the first and pioneering Muslims in Islam, they took issue with him (*‘a*) as to why their share from the public treasury is equal to that of the others and not more, and they implicitly asked him for advantages and privileges for themselves. The Imām (*‘a*) said that equality was part of the Sunnah of the Messenger of God (*s*) and that they were not different from the others in this regard.[426]

7. As Talhā and Zubayr intended to fight the Imām (*‘a*) and prepare for war that later became known as the Battle of Jamal, they asked the Imām (*‘a*) for permission to leave Medina on the pretext of performing *‘umrah* [unseasonal optional pilgrimage]. The Imām (*‘a*), who was aware of their intention, did not take security measures nor did he bar their exit. Instead, he (*‘a*) granted them permission to go and said to them, “By Allah! I swear that you are not after *‘umrah*; rather, you are in pursuit of deception and are heading toward Basrah.”[427]

8. Since the Imām (*‘a*) triumphed over the insurgents in the Battle of Jamal, he forgave everybody. He (*‘a*) even excused Marwān ibn al-Hakam who was the root of all the seditions, the factor in the killing of ‘Uthmān, and one of the architects of the Battle of Jamal. When they told him (*‘a*) that Marwān was ready to pay allegiance anew, he (*‘a*) did not even accept his oath of allegiance and set him free;[428] although he (*‘a*) could have taken action against him, and by means of punishment and legal penalties, prevented his future activities.

9. When the Imām (*‘a*) saw his soldiers using foul language against those of Mu‘āwiyah in the Battle of Siffīn, he dissuaded them from such an unethical act—even though it was against an enemy and at the time of war—telling them: “Instead of abusing them you should say, ‘O’ Allah! Save our blood and their

blood, bring about reconciliation between us, and lead them, who have strayed, to the right path."[429]

10. When Mu'□wiyah shut off water to the Im□m (*'a*) [and his army], the Im□m (*'a*) regained control of the water. But he (*'a*) did not retaliate in kind; he (*'a*) did not hinder Mu'□wiyah's troops from using the water.

11. Under the pressure of the Kharijites [*khaw□rij*],[430] the Im□m (*'a*) submitted to arbitration, but when they found out the ruse of 'Amr ibn al-'□s, they demanded that the Im□m (*'a*) annul his pact with Mu'□wiyah and fight him [again]. But the Im□m (*'a*) did not agree to violate the pact, even though it was to his advantage, and summoned the Kharijites to accept it.[431]

12. In the face of the troublesome and vexing movements of the Kharijites in K□fah, the Im□m (*'a*) never resorted to any form of violence. He generally forgave them, their aspersions and abuse.[432] And, finally when he (*'a*), on the deathbed of his martyrdom, asked his relatives not to let his killing pave the way for a widespread bloodbath.

"O' sons of 'Abd al-Muttalib, certainly I do not wish to see you plunging harshly into the blood of Muslims, shouting *'Am□r al-Mu'min□n* [Commander of the Faithful] has been killed.' Beware, do not kill on account of me except my killer."[433]

Such cases are so many that enumerating them is beyond the scope of this book. Any political realist and believer in the tenet of the separation of ethics and politics, or political authoritarianism will subject the validity of the above mentioned decisions to criticism and will view them as being against the spirit of politics and interest-seeking.

This judgment also took place during the time of Im□m 'Al□ (*'a*) himself, and those who used to stress on the courage of the Im□m (*'a*) regarded him as being devoid of knowledge on warfare. Mu'□wiyah was deemed smarter and more knowledgeable on the principles of politics than the Im□m (*'a*). The Im□m had no option but to maintain his principles as well as to refute such imaginations. In his agonized and fault-finding remarks, he (*'s*) said, "The people of Quraysh to the extent say, 'The son of Ab□ T□lib is valiant but ignorant of the knowledge of warfare." In dealing with the notion that Mu'□wiyah was more cunning than him, he also said:

By Allah, Mu'□wiyah is not more cunning than I am, but he deceives and commits evil deeds. Had I not loathed deceit I would have been the most cunning of all men. But (the fact is that) every deceit is a sin and every sin is disobedience (of Allah), and every deceitful person will have a banner by which he will be recognized on the Day of Judgment."[434]

The difficulty of the Im□m's task was that he (*'a*) wanted to be ethical at all times and the political modus operandi to be based on ethics, and not acquisition of power at whatever cost. He too describes his

internal impediment, thus:

“O’ people! Surely fulfillment of pledge is the twin of truth. I do not know a better shield (against the assaults of sin) than it. One who realizes the reality of return (to the next world) never betrays. We are in a period when most of the people regard betrayal as wisdom. In these days the ignorant call it excellence of cunning. What is the matter with them? Allah may destroy them. One who has been through thick and thin of life finds the excuses to be preventing him from orders and prohibitions of Allah but he disregards them despite capability (to succumb to them and follows the commands of Allah), while one who has no restraints of religion seizes the opportunity (and accepts the excuses for not following the commands of Allah).”[435]

The Imām (*ʿa*) was so committed to ethics and observed its principles that he was not prepared to ignore them for the entire world, for even a minute, nor violate them on any occasion; he was not prepared to sacrifice truth for the sake of any expediency. He, therefore, states: “By God! If they give me the seven realms with whatever there is under the sky to make me disobey God or unfairly take the husk of barley from an ant, I would not do it.”

And so the government of the Imām (*ʿa*) that could have lasted for years had it been somewhat expediency-minded and lenient with regard to ethical principles, did not endure for more than five years, thereby substantiating the opinion of the political realists. Yet, this government sowed the seed of its moral thought in the people’s minds, with the result that in the course of history, hundreds of movements based on it have taken shape, and so it is considered up to the present times as the standard for measuring and assessing the moral principles of governments. In this lies the true victory of this tenet whose validity becomes more vivid with the passage of time.

Undoubtedly, the implementation of this tenet is difficult but not impossible. It is possible that nowadays some would think of such a moral understanding of politics as quixotic, idealist and unrealistic, and while having conviction in the principles of ethics, believe that ethics cannot be applied in politics claiming that the complexities of politics and the difficulties of the governments of today have closed the path to ethics. In reality, there are thinkers nowadays who are moving forward to realize this ideal and for the sake of which they suffer but become successful.

During the twentieth century, at least four persons from the different parts of the world convinced that politics is rooted in ethics, endeavored to act on the basis of their views and succeeded, too. These four persons were Vacláv Havel,[436] Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, and Imām Khomeinī. Vacláv Havel, the Czechoslovakian thinker, intellectual and combatant, who became president of his country after the collapse of the communist system, regards moralization of politics as the most urgent concern of today’s world. He writes, “My experience and observations affirm the fact that in politics, ethical practices are possible although I do not deny that treading this path is not always easy, and I have never claimed it to have been so.”[437]

After having obtained power he says,

One thing that seems certain to me is that my responsibility is to emphasize as much as possible on the moral source of all kinds of decent politics, and reliance on the importance of moral values and standards in all aspects of social life.[438]

Standing on the conviction that cheating never pays[439] and that "Truth cannot be attained through lying,"[440] he stresses that there is only one way to success and that is honesty[441] and "Ethics, in fact, is latent within everything and this matter is true; because, every time I face a problem and try to reach its depth, I always find a sort of moral aspect in it."[442]
Havel stresses,

The point that the politicians should tell a lie has no validity whatsoever… The necessity of telling lies and intriguing on the part of the politician is a completely baseless statement which is propounded and propagated by those who want, for whatever reason, to discourage others from having concern and interest in social affairs.[443]

This utterance does not mean that the politician should divulge every political issue to anybody. Instead, it means that he should not tell a lie; that is all. Besides regarding commitment to ethics as a political necessity, he considers it as the foundation of success in this regard and lays emphasis on it.

The second personality, who entered the political arena with this viewpoint and was also killed for its sake but never trampled on his principles, was Mahatma Gandhi whose struggles led to the independence and sovereignty of today's India.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (1869–1948), who belonged to the Brahman caste and was educated in England, relied only on truthfulness and the principle of non–violence in fighting against colonialism. It was by means of this weapon that he succeeded in obtaining the independence of India. Owing to his long–term political resistance and reliance on the principle of *Ahimsa* (non–violence), he was called, *Mahatma* (Great Soul) by the people of India. He never abandoned the principles of ethics nor assail ethical rules with those in vogue in politics, even in the face of the aggressor—England, the old colonialist.

He commenced his struggle against racial discrimination in South Africa and continued it in India. He even consented to the division of India and the formation of the state of Pakistan but never allowed himself to trample on the principles of ethics. He did not at all regard the ends as justifying the means, and believed that every means should justify itself, saying: "In my philosophy on life, means and ends are things that can be interchanged."[444] To those who would consider means as means and nothing else, he used to say:

I say that means are, ultimately, everything and your ends will be just like your means, whatever they are. There is no wall to separate the means from the ends. It is obvious that the Creator has endowed us with the capability of putting the means under our control (and, that too, to a limited extent, of course). But to have control of the goals is not possible. The (extent of) realization of the goals will be proportionate to the means that are employed in attaining them. This case knows no exception.[445]

In his commitment to principles, Gandhi had gone so far as to stand fearlessly against the Hindu fanatics who were criticizing him for his supportive position with respect to the Muslims. It was for the sake of this that he was killed by one of the Hindu fanatics.

Nelson Mandela is also one of these figures. Since he launched his struggle against the ruling government's policy of racial discrimination, he was deprived of his social rights. As he did not compromise, he spent almost thirty years in prison. His commitment as well as that of his comrades bore fruit; finally racial discrimination withered away in that country. When he became the president of the country, he announced that the crimes committed against the Blacks could not be forgotten, but they could be forgiven. During the course of his tenure, Mandela was committed to his principles of ethics. After the end of the normal tenure of his presidency, he resigned peacefully from politics and continued his social activities with dignity. A survey of Imām Khomein□'s views in this regard is the subject of the next chapter.

In an article entitled, *Politics and the Problem of Dirty Hands*, Coady endeavors to prove the bitter reality that politics is incompatible with remaining innocent and pure, and anyone who enters the political arena should accept the veneer of infamy, meanness, defilement, and any kind of pollution. It is because political expediency and the human condition are such, and "If they mean dirty hands, then they are the mere offshoot of the human condition"[446] and one cannot escape from them.

The Imām's approach to this issue is of a different kind: His stand is that politics can, and should, be ethical, for politics is nothing but implementation of ethics in a broader spectrum of the society as well as realization of religious ideals and goals. As such, he believes in the oneness of ethics and politics and in a bid to prove it, he puts forth certain points which are discussed in the content of the following:

- Universality of Islam;
- Meaning of politics and the status of power;
- Politics as indispensable for the realization of Islam; and

● Oneness of ethics and politics in Islam.

Universality of Islam

It was mentioned earlier that man has numerous existential realms and he should nurture and let all of them grow. Now, keeping in view this fact, all divine religions, especially Islam, have appeared so as to nourish these dimensions. The One who holds the reins of authority over the universe, with the knowledge of all the needs of humanity, has sent a prophet (*'a*) to every community in every epoch in order to let man attain his perfection: "Because the human being is a multidimensional creature, with many needs, the prophets came to answer these needs and teach man how to act in order to attain true happiness."[447]

As such, all religions in their respective times have been universal and all the prophets (*'a*) have explained all the things needed by the people. "The prophets (*'a*) have spoken of those things which concern the spirit, things which concern the different stages of understanding and which relate to the realms of the unseen."[448] Thus, every religion has had its own particular time of universality until we reach Islam, which is the culmination and perfection of Abrahamic faiths. In this religion, all the needs of humanity have been anticipated and the ways of meeting them precisely specified.

The traditions and the Holy Qur'an have spoken both of issues which concern individual duties and which play a part in man's development and maturation, and of political issues as well as economic issues; issues which concern society and have something to do with the regulation and moral teachings of the society.[449]

It is with this perception that we see, "We have such a book in which personal affairs, social affairs, political affairs, state administration, and all things are encompassed."[450] The least doubt on the universality of Islam, and limiting its scope is tantamount to the negation of its principles.

Those who confine Islam to [merely] eating, sleeping, praying, and fasting while not interfering with the problems of this nation, and of the predicaments of this society are not Muslims, [451] according to the narration of the Most Noble Messenger (*s*).[452]

In the opinion of the Im□m, Islam is not a religion which is only concerned with the spiritual and personal needs; rather, "Islam is everything for the human being; that is, it has ideas and views on everything from nature to beyond nature to the celestial world; Islam has a thesis; Islam has a program."[453] This program of Islam takes into account all the facets and dimensions of life: "Islam has rules and decrees

for the entire life of man from the day he is born up to the moment he is delivered to his grave."[454]

The meaning of politics and the status of power

Politics is inextricably intertwined with all the dimensions of our life and it is so palpable and conspicuous that its existence and influence cannot be denied. But, what is politics really? Innumerable descriptions of politics have been advanced. But one thing is certain: politics is related to the acquisition of power or the struggle for the acquisition of power. So, at the core of the concept of politics, ruling (over others) and attempts at exerting influence lie latent.

If such is the meaning of politics, then it cannot be evaded and must be accepted. It is because the requisite of social welfare and well-being of the society lies in the existence of power, and attainment of power is tied to politics. "What is politics by the way? It is the relations between the ruler and the nation, relations between the ruler and the other governments and, I should say, it is to prevent the corruption and mischief that exist. All of these constitute politics and it is so."[455] If politics is such and forbidding corruption is deemed part of it, then Islam also has politics as it pursues the enjoinment of what is good and the preclusion of what is bad. Hence, the Imm describes Islam itself, thus: "Islam is governance along with its affairs and decrees."[456] Similarly, the Infallibles (*'a*) have always been involved in politics in this sense.

On what day was the Most Noble Messenger (*s*) concerned with political issues? He (*'a*) used to establish a government; he (*s*) used to resist those who were anti-Islam and oppressed the people; he (*s*) used to wage war against them.[457]

It was not only the Most Noble Messenger (*s*) who used to engage in politics in this sense; the aspect of politics was there in all the prophets (*'a*). Because, politics means ensuring the interests of the people, and the prophets (*'a*) used to perform this duty in the best manner.

Politics means guiding the society and showing the way; it means considering all the interests of the society, and taking into account all aspects of man and society and guiding them toward the things that are best for them, for the nation and the individuals. This is exclusive to the prophets (*'a*).[458]

Politics in this sense has been the principal axis of movement of all the prophets (*'a*) and no religion can be regarded as alien and distant from it.

But, the most essential element of politics is power. However, power is something that is frightening. It misleads man as well as disenchants him, that the nature of power corrupts man. A person who feels

powerful rebels, and forgets himself, as well as his being a servant of God, and nourishes an illusion of godhood. The story of Pharaoh is not a mere historical account.

Everybody has a ‘Pharaoh” within himself and awaits a favourable opportunity and situation to beat the drum of divinity for himself. François Mitterrand, the former President of France who spent his life in obtaining, preserving and extending power, says about this phenomenon, “I think that power is always a dreadful thing; the one who possesses power should—if not fear—be at least extraordinarily heedful of the nature and extent of his particular role.”[459]

Power is prone to excesses and does not stop at a certain point. If the instinct of power-seeking is given free rein, its expansion and spread, then, can no longer be prevented. Because of this, many people, the mystics in particular, have greatly feared and evaded power owing to its corruptive quality. The following story about an ascetic with the name of Ki Yuyu shows the depth of this fear and evasion:

One day, an emperor of ancient China said to a certain master of Zen named Ki Yuyu, “You are a very great man. I like to transfer the imperial throne to you after my death. Do you accept?”
Ki Yuyu was extremely annoyed and only said, “These words defiled my ears.”
Then, he left so as to wash his ears in the nearest river. While heading toward the river, he was talking to himself: “Today I have heard impure words.”
His friend, along with a cow, came to the river and asked him, “Why are you washing your ears?”
Ki Yuyu replied, “Today, I am very displeased. An emperor wants me to be his successor. He offered the imperial crown to me, and my ears have been polluted by these words. I have to wash them.”
His friend said, “I was supposed to let my cow drink from this limpid water, but now this water has been contaminated.”[460]

The view of our mystics on power has been usually a negative one. They consider the forestalling of power as the alternative to unbridled power. By reflecting on the spirit of men they have realized that only a few can withstand the enticement of power and not become its captive.

Mawl□n□ has a parable which speaks of this matter. A snake-catcher goes to a cold region in search of a snake. He finds an extremely dreadful, yet dead, dragon. He painstakingly drags it to Baghdad, which is a hot place, and tries to excite astonishment.

Due to the scorching heat of the sun in Iraq, the dragon gradually regains consciousness. It frees itself of its bonds, chases the spectators and the snake-catcher, and devours them.[461]

From this tale Mawl□n□ concludes that in the lifespan of every man, there exists a seemingly dead dragon. If a bit of the heat of power and wealth reaches it, it will corrupt man:

نفست اژدرهاست، او کی مرده‌است؟ از غمبی آلتی افسرده است

گربیابد آلتِ فرعون، او که به امر اوهمی رفت آبجو

آنگه اوبنیادفرعونی کند راهصد موسی و صدهارون زند

کرمکاست آناژدها ازدست فقر پشهای، گردد ز جاه ومالْ صقر

The dragon is thy sensual soul: How is it dead?
It is (*only*) *frozen by grief and lack of means.*
If it obtain the means of Pharaoh,
By whose command the water of the river (*Nile*) *would flow,*
Then it will begin to act like Pharaoh
And will waylay a hundred (*such as*) *Moses and Aaron.*
That dragon, under stress of poverty, is a little worm,
(*But*) *a gnat is made a falcon by power and riches.*
Keep the dragon in the snow of separation (*from its desires*)*;*
Beware; do not carry it into the sun of Iraq.
So long as that dragon of thine remains frozen (*well and good*)*;*
Thou art a mouthful for it, when it gains release.[462]

In the words of the Imam, the Hitlerian makeup and his mania for power exist in the mind of everyone. “Hitler was ready to annihilate the whole of humanity and make himself stay in power in Germany. The superior race and that which was in the mind of Hitler are in the minds of all of you. You have made yourselves unwary.”[463] Can it be concluded from this matter that power is evil in itself?

In reality, the claim of those people is that since power has unpleasant repercussions such as excesses, injustice and insolence, it follows then that one must eschew it totally. This view has been propagated by many of the Muslim mystics and it has been one factor in the decadence of the Muslim societies. But if gluttony has dire consequences, it cannot be concluded that food must be absolutely discarded.

If abundant wealth is corruptive, one cannot reject it totally and abandon the same. As in the previous discussion on instincts, the way of approaching the insolence of instincts is not to uproot them, but to guide them. On the issue of power too, the same approach must be adopted. Keeping aloof from the detriments of power by giving it up cannot be realized.

The evils should be identified and their emergence prevented. Mitterrand who himself speaks about the

dangers of power, regards the solution to lie in controlling and guiding it, and in his words, in acquiring anti-power. “If the one who is in power… is of sound reasoning, he will search for anti-powers.”[464]

This anti-power can prevent the excesses of power as well as the corruption of the power-holder. It can be within a person, and is called ‘conscience’ according to Mitterrand: “Some of my powers only rely on my conscience.”[465]

But one should not content himself with this anti-power; rather, “the society, likewise, ought to bring into existence anti-powers within the framework of its institutions.”[466]

In other words, power should be controlled through the mechanisms of distribution of power, the partnership of the people, and the supervisory bodies. Nevertheless, between these two types of anti-power, it seems that the internal anti-power has primacy. As, sometimes, the power-holder is in such a position of strength that he can neutralize all the social anti-powers. It is here that “the only brake that exists for his actions is the one within him.”[467]

Therefore, according to Weasel, it can be deduced that “the true power is that power which man exercises on his self.”[468] It is this point that can be regarded as among the axiomatic truths of Islamic ethics and mysticism. It is only through internal edification and dominance over the self that power can be properly handled and its perils avoided.

In the opinion of the Imām, the essence of power is an attribute of perfection and God also possesses this attribute in its absolute sense. “Power is a form of perfection in itself. God, the Sublime and Exalted, is powerful.”[469] As such, one should not shun power. Instead, he should understand it and benefit from it, in an optimal way, and the proper way of benefiting from something, in the view of the Imām, is internal refinement. Thus, he stands on the proposition that in case it is acquired by unrefined individuals, power is dangerous. In case power is obtained by corrupt persons, this same perfection will lead him to corruption.[470]

Yes, all the evils that are found in the world arise from egocentrism. Craving position, desire for power, love of riches, and the like—all of them spring from self-love, and this ‘idol’ is the biggest one, breaking which is also far more difficult than everything else.[471]

Therefore, in the intellectual code of the Imām, power ought not to be feared or evaded. Rather, it should be properly utilized, nourished and embellished; by means of relentless trimming of the extra branches of power, its possible centralization and absolutism can be parried.

Imām lived at a time when, owing to the influence of extensive propaganda of the antagonists, and the ineffectual actions of the protagonists, serious doubts on Islam and its functioning has arisen in people's minds. One of these doubts concerned the relationship between Islam and politics, and the duty of the religious scholars vis-à-vis politics.

The outcome of these doubts was the preponderance of the notion of separation of religion and politics, which the Imām used to attack severely, viewing it as an offshoot of the imperialist designs. At various places, he used to speak of the role of Islam in politics and also about the duty of all Muslims to be involved in politics and that the two were inseparable.

On various occasions he would point to the episode of Pākravān, the Head of the State Organization for Security and Information (SAVAK) of the Shāh's regime, and his (Pākravān's) views on the nature of politics and on the clergy keeping away from this chicanery [*pedar-sūkhtegīh*][472] saying that it was an imperialist design which a number of religious people believed.[473] And 'politically-minded' clergyman [*khānd-e siyāsī*] in our religious culture was more a fault-finding [term], and even a term of vilification. "Once they find a fault with a particular cleric [*khānd*], they say that he is a politically-inclined clergyman."[474]

This is while if we do not take the social precepts of Islam into account, nothing will be left of this pure religion except a spiritless skeleton. The principal part of Islam is concerned with its social aspect; giving effect to this depends on having power and being the ruler. As such, Islam cannot be regarded as merely a personal religion and the private matter of an individual. This notion that politics can be separated from religion is either the outcome of the misconception of the principle of religion, or the effect of the propaganda of the ill-wishers. If man is a social and political being, and if we accept that Islam is all-embracing and has a plan for every dimension of man, the logical implication of these premises is that religion is not separate from politics. So, all this talk about religion and politics being separate is suspicious.

This slogan of the separation of religion from politics and the demand that Islamic scholars should not intervene in social and political affairs have been formulated and propagated by the imperialists; it is only the irreligious who repeat them. Were religion and politics separate in the time of the Prophet (*s*)? Did there exist, on one side, a group of clerics, and opposite it, a group of politicians and leaders?

Were religion and politics separate in the time of the caliphs—even if they were not legitimate—or in the time of the Commander of the Faithful (*'a*)? Did two separate authorities exist? These slogans and claims have been advanced by the imperialists and their political agents in order to prevent religion from ordering the affairs of this world and shaping Muslim society.[475]

According to the Imām, [Islam] is a school of thought which, contrary to non-monotheist schools of thought, has function and jurisdiction in all aspects of the individual and society, material and spiritual,

culture and politics, military and economy. It has not neglected any point including the most trivial one, which has a role in the nourishment of man and the society as well as in the material and spiritual advancement.[476]

With such an approach, basically, one who speaks about the separation of the two categories has indeed not understood the function and nature of neither of the two. “The meaning of ‘What have we to do with politics?’ is that we should totally put Islam aside; Islam ought to be set aside; Islam must be buried in our chambers; Islam must be buried in our books.”[477]

In the view of the Imām, “Basically, the foundation of Islam is in politics.”[478] “The Messenger of God (*s*) has laid the edifice of politics in piety.”[479] “From the time of the Messenger of God (*s*) up to the period when there was not yet any deviation, politics and piety were in tandem.”[480]

These topics have been repeated time and again, and are more understandable and acceptable particularly in light of the definition of politics that he gives. As stated in the previous discussion, in his view, “Politics is meant to guide the society and take it forward. It should take into account all the interests of the society; it should consider all the dimensions of man and society and lead them to whatever is to their good, the good of the nation and of the individuals. This is specific to the prophets (*‘a*).”[481]

With this perspective, all the decrees and laws of Islam have a political facet and “The religion of Islam is a political religion; it is a religion in which everything is politics, including its acts of devotion and worship.”[482] In this view too, “The moral precepts of Islam are political as well.”[483]

Oneness of ethics and politics in Islam

The Imām believes that if man is left to himself he will fall under the sway of his carnal desires and material needs and any type of educational and political system, even the correct one, will be incapable of nourishing his spiritual dimensions, whereas the foundation of everything is spiritual and by reforming and nourishing this dimension in man, all other problems will be solved.

In his opinion, the enigma of today’s world is a moral one and if it is not solved, the world will head downhill toward destruction. “The things that are threatening the world are not arms, bayonets, missiles, and the like… What is leading these people and these countries to perdition and decadence is the degenerations among the heads of countries and in the actions of the governments, which is emerging from the moral decadence.”[484]

According to the Imām, “The school of thought of Islam is not a materialist school; it is a material–

spiritual school… Islam has come for the edification of man. The mission of Islam and the goal of all the prophets (*'a*) is this—to nurture man."[485]

Therefore, the source of every political approach should be ethics. Attention to spirituality is inevitable because "the foundation is spiritualities."[486] Basically, without ethics, politics is incapable of guiding the people and securing their true interests and if we assume that there is a person who implements a correct policy… this policy is just one dimension of the politics which had been for the prophets (*'a*), the saints [*awliy*ā*'*], and now for the scholars [*'ulam*ā*'*] of Islam. Man is not one-dimensional.

The society too is not one-dimensional. Man is not a mere animal whose affairs only concern food and eating. If there were both satanic policies and correct policies, they would guide and lead the community in one dimension and that is the animal dimension and material-social dimension. Such is of politics which in Islam is fixed for the prophets (*'a*) and for the saints. They want to guide the nation, the nations, the society, and the individuals, and to pave the way for all the conceivable interests of man and the society.[487]

This point is the kernel of Imām Khomein's moral-political thought. As such, we are not dealing with two independent types of knowledge and realms. Politics is the extension of ethics while ethics is the underpinning of politics. By reflecting on the above-mentioned pivots, this point becomes very clear. Since its goal is the growth of man's material and spiritual dimensions and as these dimensions are supposed to be nourished concordantly and harmoniously, Islam has enacted laws for mankind.

These laws, although concern the individual, while some others concern the society, and some have educational aspects while some others have political ones, all are in pursuit of a single goal. So, these laws ought to have various features. First of all, they should cover all the dimensions and aspects of man's existence. The other is that they should be comprehensive in scope. Finally, they should not be defective. Instead, they should complement one another. In reality, such are the laws of Islam.

From the viewpoint of the Imām, "Islam has rules and regulations covering the entire life of man, from the day he is born up to the moment he enters his grave."[488] Similarly, these laws are comprehensive and versatile. "Islam is everything for this man; that is, it has facts from nature to beyond nature to the celestial world; Islam has a thesis; Islam has a program."[489] And finally, all the laws of Islam have a single framework.

The religion of Islam is not only a devotional religion… Neither is it a mere political sect and religion. It is both devotional and political. Its politics is identical with its devotion. Its devotion is indistinguishable from its politics. That is, its very devotional aspect has also a political facet.[490]

The Imām even goes to the extent of explicitly considering religious ethics and politics as one. Anchored to the notion of unity of the two, he emphatically says:

Islam's ethical precepts are also political. That precept in the Qur'an that all believers are brothers is an ethical precept, a social precept, and a political precept as well. If the believers of the different schools of thought existing in Islam, and who are faithful to God and the Prophet of Islam (*s*), be as brothers to one another, just as one has love for his own brother, and that all segments have love for one another, apart from being a great Islamic morality with far-reaching moral effects, it is a great social precept with great social effects.[491]

To sum up, the core of the Imām's view and the quintessence of his thought on ethics and politics is the unity of the two, and its being obvious and needless of argumentation. Now that ethics and politics are interwoven, and that lying, oppression, injustice, mischief, etc., both in the individual and social spheres are bad, the Islamic ruler should try to always abide by the principles of ethics and not overstep its limits. Although this task is difficult, it is possible. The only way of preserving political authority and guaranteeing the real interests of the Islamic system in the long term is to abide by the principles of ethics and keep aloof from any form of deception at all costs. Not a single Muslim statesman can overlook this principle. The last statement of the Imām on the preservation of political authority and his emphasis on ethics should always be our motto:

Through Islamic behaviour; preservation of the movement; advancement of the movement; paying heed to the fact that God, the Sublime and Exalted, approves of us; and Islamic conduct and morality, you can preserve this power which has taken you to victory."[492]

In conclusion, not only politics could, but should be, ethical. Through these moral standards, politics should be cultivated since the basis and essence of the Islamic teachings is such. History bears witness to the prominence of this tenet. If this tenet has failed elsewhere, it cannot be concluded that it will always fail and that it is an impossible venture.

Nowadays, most of the political thinkers have arrived at the conclusion that it is only through ethical politics that the chance for survival exists. Even Machiavelli, who would stress so strongly on the independence of politics from ethics, believed that this immorality is more dependent on the type of government, not on the principle of politics. He used to say that the possibility of ethical politics is more in the republican form of government than in absolute and dictatorial governments.

Then, in order to substantiate his view he used to narrate an interesting story. While discussing the drawing up of a contract, he poses this question: "Which pact of alliance is more reliable—alliance with a republican government or with an absolute monarchy?" Then, he stresses the fact that there are various reasons for violation of contracts, one of which is the state's expedience.

But even in this case, republican governments remain faithful to their contracts and promises for a longer period of time than the monarchies do. There are abundant instances wherein a very minute gain has

induced a monarch to violate a treaty while profuse interests have failed to compel a republican government to infringe an accord.

Themistocles said before the national assembly of Athens, “I have a suggestion, which entails a great gain for Athens… The assembly appointed Aristides to hear his suggestion on the basis of his recommendation and decide. Themistocles said to Aristides, “All the warships of Greek cities which have trust in their pacts of alliance with Athens, have all collected in a certain place where they could all be easily destroyed, and by destroying them, the Athenians could gain control over the whole of Greece. After listening to this suggestion made to the assembly, Aristides said, “The suggestion of Themistocles is extraordinarily beneficial and extraordinary contrary to dignity. The assembly voted against the suggestion.[493]

Thus, immorality and informality is not a political necessity; it is, rather, a function of the form of rule and government, its goals and officials.

By giving nobility and validity to ethics and with the belief in the oneness of ethics and politics, Imām Khomeinī (*r*) endeavored in the course of various admonitions to the employees and officials of the [Islamic] system, to present a portrayal of his ideal ethical politics, or in other words, the Islamic politics.

During the first decade of the Islamic Revolution in Iran it rarely happened that he did not emphasize, in his speeches and messages, the centrality of ethics in politics. In fact, this ethical view on politics is the continuation of the same tradition he had in his *Sharh-e Chehel Hadīth*—that is, reformation of the society is only possible through inner reformation and it is only through self-purification and constant supervision of the self that a righteous society can emerge and the foundation of authentic politics be laid down.

He used to point out to the statesmen on various occasions that every one has a ‘Pharaoh’ within him and there is a kind of dictatorship in one’s inner self. But one should always be vigilant not to let this ‘Pharaoh’ acquire power and this dictator to gain in strength. All these emphases that man is always in the presence of God stem from his view on the place of ethics.

He used to enumerate innumerable moral attributes and qualities for the statesmen, and reckon them as requisites for ethical politics. Among them, we will selectively identify three features here and discuss them so as to find out the Imām’s outlook on them. Of course, this choice does not imply inattention to the importance of other moral features of ethical politics; it is, rather, merely a selection among many other choices. These three features are as follows:

● Sincerity;

● Openness to criticism; and

● Simple living.

Sincerity

As a moral virtue, truthfulness [*sid□qah*] has been always cherished and lauded among all the peoples throughout history. There is hardly a place where this virtue has been spoken of unfavourably.

When mentioning one of the prophets (*'a*), the Glorious Qur'an points to this same truthfulness as one of his characteristics, stating: ***"And make mention in the Scripture of Ishmael. Lo! He was a keeper of his promise* [*as-s□diq al-wa'd*].** "[494]

Similarly, the Glorious Qur'an identifies the truthful ones along with the prophets (*'a*).[495] But, what is truthfulness? Truthfulness means honesty but in reality it is beyond that. Truthfulness is the opposite of lying but it is the opposite of treachery as well. Indeed, truthfulness [*sidq*] and treachery [*khiy□nah*] are diametrically in opposition to one another.[496]

In this sense, truthfulness is synonymous with trust [*am□nah*]. Hence, truthfulness in politics means veracity, being honest with the people, abiding by contracts and promises, and trustworthiness. The truthful statesman is he who moves in the direction of truth and righteousness, for truthfulness [*sidq*] means concordance and harmony with the truth.[497]

The truthful statesman is true to his commitments, shows himself to the people as he really is, and refrains from any sort of deceit. Anyone who nourishes this moral quality and attribute in his self never exploits the people's confidence in him and is not afraid of acknowledging his mistakes. He views this [acknowledgment] not as a sign of weakness but as the result of self-confidence. The concept of truthfulness [*sidq*] itself embodies the meanings of uprightness, perseverance, tenacity, and power, and it is far higher than mere honesty. After a precise analysis of this term, Tuchihiko Izutsu says:

The term truthfulness [*sidq*] takes the implicit meanings of sincerity, perseverance, uprightness, and trust. As such, we encounter so many cases of the real function of the term *sidq* in the Glorious Qur'an as well as in other places all of which can never satisfactorily be substituted by the word 'truthfulness'.[498]

The broader meaning of the word, *s□diq*, in the lexicon of the Qur'an is such that at times it is used in contradistinction to the words *mun□fiq* [hypocrite] and *k□fir* [disbeliever].[499]

Well, the truthfulness that is discussed in politics is this general meaning of the term. Therefore, the truthful politician should possess all these qualities in order to be deemed ethical. In the practical aspect this truthfulness goes to the extent of the politician regarding himself as the servant of the people—not their administrator—and wherever he commits a mistake, he fearlessly and courageously expresses it.

So, if we had committed a mistake before, then we should explicitly say that we erred. Deviation [*'udūl*] among the jurists [*fuqahā*] from one edict [*fatwā*] to another has exactly the same meaning... The jurists of the Council of Guardians[500] [*Shūrā-ye Nigahbān*] and members of the Supreme Judicial Council[501] [*Shūrā-ye 'ālī-ye Qaday*] should also be like this so that, in case they erred in any matter, they should say so categorically and recant their views; we are, after all, not infallible.

Before the Revolution I used to imagine that once the Revolution triumphed there were pious people who would do the works in accordance with Islam... Later I found out that it was not so; most of them were impious individuals. I realized that what I had said was not true, and so I explicitly announced that I had made a mistake.[502]

According to the Imām, therefore, confession of one's mistake, apart from not being considered a flaw, is a value and a form of the politician's truthfulness in relation to himself as well as to others.

Karl Popper[503] describes his ideal democracy in the following manner: At the time of the election campaign, instead of enumerating the list of his accomplishments the candidate for a seat in the parliament courageously announces that the previous year he has discovered thirty-one mistakes committed by him, and has tried to compensate for thirteen mistakes while his election rival has only discerned twenty-seven of his mistakes.[504]

That is, it is a value in itself that the politician, before letting others find out his mistakes, himself, steps forward, and dauntlessly and truthfully enumerates his own faults one by one. From the Imām's viewpoint dictatorship starts when man commits an error and after realizing it, instead of admitting and rectifying it he importunately sticks to it and continues with his crooked ways.

You mention an issue and in case you realize that it is a mistake, you are ready to say that you erred, you committed a mistake, or you want the same mistake to be carried out to the end. Among the corruptions that dictatorship has and with which the dictator is afflicted, is that he opens a subject and then he cannot, that is, he has no power over himself that this subject he has opened if it is against expediency... He cannot renounce his statement... This is the greatest dictatorship with which man is afflicted.[505]

From this aspect, admitting one's fault, apart from not being a sign of weakness, is a sign of power over one's self and occasions one's greatness and increase in popularity. "If you realize that you have erred in something, you must admit it. This confession of yours makes you great in the eyes of the nation; not

that it humiliates you. Persisting in one's mistake greatly debases a person."[506]

Hence, confession of one's fault which is the result of truthfulness is a human virtue and excellence and is considered a manifestation of ethical politics. Thus, the Imām emphatically says:

You should know and do know that man is not free from fault and error. As soon as you commit a mistake, turn away from it and admit it. In this lies human perfection, whereas justifying and persisting in a wrong action is a defect and the work of Satan.[507]

The point worthy of consideration is that some politicians think that if they express their faults, the people's confidence in them will diminish and the people will think them to be incapable. So, instead of admitting their faults they prefer to cover them with yet another mistake, and under the excuse of preserving the people's confidence and by relying on them they commit other errors. But the answer to this illusion is that the justification itself, in the words of the Imām, is of the guiles and tricks of Iblīs (Satan) and is considered as part of the defense mechanism of internally inept individuals in avoiding facing the truth.

On the other hand, people's confidence itself stems from truthfulness and does not exist absolutely; rather, it depends on the observance of truthfulness and sincere practices of the politicians. Once the people notice a degree of untruthfulness in them, their confidence in them diminishes twofold. Confidence is, indeed, a tree that matures and grows by means of the water of truthfulness of the rulers, and dries up by their lies and untruthfulness. So, one cannot rely too much on the withered confidence since it is fragile and, in the words of Bertolt Brecht,[508] "People's confidence wanes once it is relied upon."[509]

The confidence of the people is no excuse for the rulers to commit mistakes and take refuge in it. It is, in reality, a kind of emotional reserve which should always be augmented and not spent indiscriminately and without any backing.

A truthful politician is one who remains in the political sphere so long as he feels that he is useful. But whenever and for whatever reason he feels that he can no longer perform his duties, then, instead of continuing with his previous ways and concealing his impotency, he relinquishes his responsibility heroically. In doing so, he adds another golden page in his record and places another virtue alongside his other ones.

Anytime anybody feels that he is inadequate for whatever position he holds—be it inadequacy in management or will-power—he should, with courage and dignity, submit his resignation to the competent authorities which is, in itself, a pious and devotional act.[510]

Therefore, truthfulness is not a mere individual moral virtue. Rather, it is a social and political value and

has various facets. The truthful politician presents himself to the people as he really is; he knows himself, his capabilities well and makes proper use of them. He talks to the people truthfully and fulfills his commitments. Just as he views political tasks and activities as values, in times of necessity he views resignation as a value as well. He tries not to commit a mistake. Once he commits a mistake, instead of concealing or justifying it, which is itself another mistake, he courageously admits it. He regards this as an indication of the greatness of his soul and the reason for his courage; not weakness and lethargy.

Openness to criticism

The truth of the matter is that we have dual attitudes with respect to the term ‘criticism’. We like it and regard openness to criticism a kind of perfection and value, while at the same time we are very afraid of it. So, usually we invite our friends to criticize us and our actions.

But we immediately put up a shield against the flood of criticisms and reject them one by one in various ways. For this purpose we usually first make it clear as to what type of criticism we wish to face.

Through the addition of such modifiers as ‘constructive’, ‘guidance-giving’, ‘reformative’ and the like, we specify the type of criticism we have in mind.

Finally, if the criticism leveled against us was not to our liking, we practically neutralize its effect and protect our personality through the use of such clichés as bias of the critic, weakening motive, falsity of the criticism, and others.

An anecdote of this type of facing criticism and reacting to it calls to mind the story of man who, pretending to be a champion, went to a tattooist and asked him to tattoo his shoulder with the image of a lion. As the tattooist started his work, the man became restless due to the intensity of the pain of the needles that penetrated his body. He asked the tattooist which part of the lion he was tattooing. He replied that he had started from the tail. The ‘champion’ said that there was no need for the tail and that he should start with another part. The tattooist started again from the other part, but the pain persisted. Again the question was asked and the answer was that he had started from the mane. Again the request of the ‘champion’ was to abandon the mane and to start with another part. These questions and answers, and complaints about the pain thus continued until finally the tattooist got angry over this situation, flung the needles to the ground and said:

شیر بی دمّ و سر و اشکم که دید اینچنین شیری خدا هم نافرید

Who (*ever*) *saw a lion without tail and head and belly?*
God Himself did not create a lion like this.[511]

Our attitude toward criticism is more than this. We welcome criticism and sometimes insist on it. But once we experience its sting, we evade from it and in order to cover up our evasion, we assign various labels to it. We brand it as the venting of complexes, vengeance, accusation, and injustice.

This duality in words and in deeds is so vivid to obviate the need for description. Criticism is looked upon as a gift in our religious culture, and to present an 'offering of faults' is deemed a value and, at times, a duty so much so that Im□m as-S□diq (*'a*) says: "The most beloved of my brothers is he who presents me an offering of my faults."[512]

However, in cultures, there is practically nothing worse than criticism and unethical than criticizing, the reason being that we try not to criticize and, in case we have no alternative, we strive to make it very mild and practically ineffective; while leveling it apologetically and reticently. Even then, instead of thanks, an immediate storm of wrath, calumny and misunderstanding confronts us in that motive, purpose, malice, envy, and the like have compelled us to make this criticism. In short, criticism is not welcome in our culture.

Nevertheless, the truth must be accepted that, in life, we cannot escape from criticism. Even supposing that we promise ourselves not to criticize anybody and to be true to our commitments, we cannot prevent the flood of criticisms of others to be cast on ourselves. So, another option must be sought and our view on criticism be changed since there is no absolute way of eliminating criticism. "The reality is that so long as you have relations with others, that is, so long as you are alive, you will hear criticism and need it."[513]

This fact is more vivid in the political arena and political function is always subject to criticism. Therefore, anyone who enters the political arena must learn how to confront criticisms and make good use of them. Criticism, particularly in the political arena, is the most basic channel of communication between the citizens and government officials, and through which they realize the effectiveness or otherwise of their policies and their repercussions. As such, criticisms are a mirror in which the politicians see the impact of their actions and the strengths and weaknesses thereof.

In spite of this, individuals and organizations practically dodge criticism and see it as a personal attack on them. Consequently, in most cases, instead of accepting the purport of criticism they rebut it in a sense and consider it unfair. It is because criticism is undertaken on the presumption that the characteristic, attitude, action, or speech of the person being subjected to criticism is not correct. This for some means bringing into question their entire existence and the shattering of their personalities.

As if to say the critic has come to wage war against the personality of the person being criticized and he, in turn, has no alternative but to fight and protect his integrity. The reason for this is that the nature of

man is such that he deems himself, his attitude and intellect as perfect and flawless. In as much as it is possible for anybody not to complain about the scarcities in his life, it has, however, not been seen for a person to whine over his own imperfection and lack of intelligence. Sa‘dī describes this mental condition in this manner:

همه‌کس را عقل‌خود به کمال‌نماید وفرزند خودبه جمال.

Everyone thinks his own wisdom perfect and his child beautiful.[514]

Then, he slyly concludes:

گر ازبسیط زمین‌عقل منعدم‌گردد به خودگمان نبردهیچ کس که‌نادانم

If wisdom were to cease throughout the world,
No one would suspect himself of ignorance.[515]

Descartes,[516] the French philosopher, describes this state in a satirical manner thus: “Among the people intellect has been divided better than anything else, although every person thinks he has such a complete portion of it that the people who are hard to please in anything, do not wish to have an intellect more than they already possess.”[517]

This is the reason why everybody, immediately upon hearing a criticism, imagines that his wisdom and intellect has been insulted, and so he tries to dispel this insult through the use of weapons and answer his critic or rival; the beginning of the fall of man from the ethical aspect being this very attitude. As was discussed before, man is a mixture of good and bad dispositions and is in need of inner nourishment and spiritual purification. Therefore, apart from not being fearful of criticism anyone yearning for perfection also seeks it earnestly.

Dodging criticism means claiming perfection and flawlessness; this is peculiar only to God. Anyone with such pretensions is claiming partnership with God and, as a result will, all at once, be expelled from His Presence. It is through this approach that the Imām admonishes thus:

Nobody, no establishment and no individual can claim, ‘I have no defect whatsoever.’ If one claimed so, his gravest flaw then, is this very claim. No one can say, ‘I have no flaw anymore ...’ We do not have a flawless one in this world. We should always pay attention to these flaws of ours.[518]

Basically, from the viewpoint of the Imām anyone who is in pursuit of advancement and perfection should be pessimistically and critically in search of his flaws and faults, and not see what virtues he has. In our ethics and ethical literature it is propounded that man should refrain from critical observation and should have an optimistic view of others. Hence, Hāfiz says:

کمال سرّ محبت ببین نه نقصِ گناه که هر که بی هنر افتد، نظر به عیب کند

Look well with love, and not at the filth of sin.
He who is artless (*always*) *looks at the defects* (*of others*).[519]

But this issue is different from the one we are currently discussing. The first issue is that we should refrain from pessimistic and critical views on others while the other issue is that we should judiciously, critically and meticulously evaluate ourselves. This is not only ethical, but also a requisite for man's growth and perfection.

In the view of the Guardian of the Pious and Commander of the Faithful ['Alī ibn Abī Ṭ&ālib] (*'a*) one of the attributes of the pious is that they always indict and scrupulously call themselves to account. According to Karen Harney, a contemporary psychoanalyst,

As long a person is proud of a certain state, propensity and attribute, and considers them as virtues, it is natural for him not only to exert no efforts for their elimination, but also, because he feels himself worthy due to them, he defends it and tries to preserve them.[520]

Thus, the first condition for seeking perfection is that man should consciously strive for his exaltation, and critically assess himself.

The man who would like to work for God and reach the station of humanity should constantly be in pursuit of uncovering his own shortcomings. He should not be after identifying his virtues. As a person wants to know his faults, it might make him think of eliminating them, while being in pursuit of finding out his virtues veils his eyes by which he cannot see his faults.[521]

In this manner, offering criticisms constitutes the grounds for the growth of individuals, particularly the politicians who seek to secure the interests of the public.

Another point is that reforming the society is basically dependent on making criticisms and their

assessment. So as to know whether the state organizations are functioning properly, or have had shortcomings at times, everybody should put forth whatever criticism he has to offer and, in doing so, participate in the reformation of the society.

Hence, from the Imām's viewpoint, "There should be criticism; without criticism a society cannot be reformed. This is also true with faults. Man is defective from head to foot and these defects must be stated. Criticisms must be stated so as to reform the society."[522]

It is true that the nature of man is such that he does not like being criticized. But if man goes beyond the level of instincts and nurtures himself, he welcomes criticisms with open arms no matter how acrimonious and harsh they may be. "If man builds himself, he will not dislike a peasant criticizing him. He does not dislike it at all. He does not mind being criticized."[523]

In spite of this, since most men have not yet reached this extent of perfection to welcome criticism and take advantage of it, they have an inappropriate attitude toward it and prevent it in various ways. The totality of these reactions that the individual shows in protecting himself against the reality of criticism can be classified under the general heading of 'defense mechanisms'. "Defense mechanisms are unconscious strategies through which the person preserves himself from the more unmerciful aspects of reality."[524]

Thus, when facing the bitter reality of criticism man engages in self-deception. Through falsification of reality and ignorance in relation to it, he conceals the reality from himself. If this act happens rarely it is perhaps admissible. But if man, particularly in the political arena, makes it a habit of always adopting one of these mechanisms vis-à-vis criticisms, it is then that his relation to reality is completely severed and he will pass his days in the cocoon of his illusions.

Some of these defense mechanisms, which, unfortunately, most of the people including the politicians utilize, are the rejection of criticism, reading the critic's motive, corresponding criticism, humiliating the critic, coining justification, belittling the criticism, evasion and reversion, blaming others, and classifying criticisms as 'constructive' or 'destructive'.

Sometimes, in facing the criticism against him, the person denies the basis of criticism and deems it a calumny. At other times, instead of reflecting on the concept of criticism and its acceptance, he tries to uncover the treacherous motive of the critic, defaming him and proving that the critique stems from the malevolence and bad faith of the critic. Sometimes also, instead of answering the criticism the person reciprocally criticizes the critic and answers blow by blow.

On occasion, he humiliates the critic and does not consider him to be qualified to offer criticism. Every so often instead of sincerely acknowledging the criticism he reckons it a trivial and worthless issue, needing no investigation at all. Sometimes, he becomes furious and since his worth has remained unrecognized and his kindness has been reciprocated with criticism, he is offended and is indignant of the 'ungrateful' people. At times, he attributes to his critic whatever is in his own heart as well as his motives and ideas,

and unbelievingly thinks of him based on his own religion.

Occasionally, he acknowledges the basis of criticism but instead of assuming his accountability in this context, he blames the circumstances and time, and shows himself as being entirely innocent. Finally, he sometimes classifies any criticism as constructive or destructive, true or false, justifiable or unjustifiable. These mental classifications relieve him of acknowledging the criticism and reforming himself, and he leaves the matter unsolved.

All the above mechanisms are, in reality, the promptings of the carnal self and delusions of Satan. They are the curtains that blind the truth-seeing eyes of man, prevent him from understanding himself correctly and impede his growth and perfection. Anyone wanting to enter the arena of politics and ethically practicing it should listen sincerely to all criticism, evaluate it dispassionately and utilize it for his reformation.

He should not adopt any of the aforementioned mechanisms, and instead of classifying criticism as proper or not, should entertain every criticism and make good use of it for his development. It was with this view that Imām, in addressing Dr. 'Alī Akbar Wilāyatī, the then Foreign Minister, said: "You and our friends in the Foreign Ministry should bear criticism, whether justified or not."[525]

In this context, Imām goes to the extent of saying that, basically, criticism from the enemy should be heard and heeded. It is because friends are usually indifferent to our flaws, and even if they do notice, they do not mention them. So, for us friends are not good teachers; whereas our enemies who inconsiderately notice our shortcomings and mention them unsparingly—albeit with spiteful motives—can be our best teachers. Therefore, that man should not only expect criticism from friend and foe alike, but should also be prepared to receive and solicit it from everybody.

Man should come to a person who is his enemy and see what his judgment on him is so as to enable him to realize his faults. He cannot learn from his own friends; he should learn from his enemies. When he says something, he should know what the enemies say and should think that the enemies understand his faults. Although you and I might have flaws, friends…say: 'How eloquently you delivered your speech!'… Man's friends are his real enemies while his enemies are his real friends. Man should learn from those who find his faults. He should know that those who extol him, this tongue, the tongue that admires an affair which is supposed to be criticized, is the very tongue of Satan.[526]

Therefore, from the viewpoint of the Imām one of the fundamental values and pillars of ethical politics is the element of the politicians' openness to criticism. As far as they can, they should make use of the enemies even for understanding their own flaws and treat them as their own teachers. This element of openness to criticism not only leads to the spiritual loftiness of the politicians but also makes them more successful in the political arena. It is because they will recognize better the strength and weakness of their own actions, and on the basis of the criticisms that have been expressed they can reform their own

policy and give direction to it.

Besides, the channels of communication between them and the people will remain open. Indeed, these criticisms, however bitter they are, are the best expression and exhibition of the people's notions on the political practices of the politicians. If a politician is responsibly in pursuit of improving his own practice and function, he should regard their existence as booty and make use of them for the reformation of the society. The existence of criticism, from the Imām's viewpoint, makes the concerned officials perform each of their duties and no one would go beyond the ambit of their prerogatives.

In other words, the existence of the spirit of criticism and openness to criticism hinders the growth of dictatorship. "If I did something wrong, all of you would rush to say, 'Why are you doing this?' [Thus] I will sit in my own place (I will perform my duty properly). All of you are responsible; all of us are responsible."[527]

It is possible for some people to imagine that criticism is incompatible with compliance and wherever criticism is offered the pillars of compliance are weakened. Because of this, criticism must be avoided as far as possible especially in religious governance. This notion is based on the proposition that compliance implies blind allegiance and adherence, whereas criticism connotes noticing and mentioning faults and defects. In answer to this notion it should be stated that in Islamic governance there is no place for absolute compliance.

Compliance must be conscious and based on accountability. Every citizen is duty-bound to comply with the authority while at the same time he is obliged to check its deviation. The Imām's slogan, 'All of you are responsible; all of us are responsible,' refers to this point. In reality this saying is a paraphrase of the statement of the Most Noble Messenger (*s*) who said: "All of you are responsible and you will be asked about the things you have been in charge of."[528]

Thus, we cannot speak of unrestrained, unconditional and absolute compliance in the political arena and prevent criticism from being made. The consequences of whatever happens in the Islamic society involve both the citizens and rulers. So, all are equal and accountable with respect to social responsibilities. It is from this perspective that *Shahīd* Mutahharī says: "Laudable and legitimate imitation does not mean allegiance and turning a blind eye. It is opening the eyes and being watchful. Otherwise, it is accountability and participation in crime and sin."[529] He goes beyond this point and believes, "Islam does not allow for deafness and abstention from sin for anybody even for the person of the Most Noble Messenger (*s*)."[530] Then, in a bid to express his opinion he narrates the story of Hadrat Mūsā (*'a*) and a pious servant who, based on our tradition, has been identified as Prophet Khidr (*'a*), and concludes:

The story of Moses and the pious servant which has been mentioned in the Holy Qur'an is an amazing one.[531] One point of the story that can be utilized is that the follower and adherent is submissive, obedient and compliant so long as he does not break and violate the principles, bases and law. If he

notices that the act of obedience is performed contrary to the principles and bases, he cannot remain silent… Why did Moses not remain patient and kept on objecting although he would promise and suggest himself not to object, and again kept on raising objections and criticizing? Moses' fault was not in objecting and criticizing. It was because he was not conscious of the absolute secret and essence of actions… Some have said that if the practice of the pious servant is repeated up to the Day of Resurrection, Moses will also not cease objections and protestations.[532]

Basically, if one day criticism and openness to criticism is to be forgotten on the excuse of obedience, the Islamic society will experience a crisis and all will become afflicted with irreparable flaws. As such, Mutahhar strongly emphasizes the necessity for criticism at all levels: "I did and do believe that every non-infallible position which is not liable to criticism is dangerous to the holder of the position as well as to Islam."[533]

Hence, obedience and compliance with the religious rule and following the authorities do not imply indifference to their policies and non-criticism.

Of course, undoubtedly, there are individuals who use criticism as a means of settling their personal accounts, and instead of criticizing they are actually taking revenge. There are also those who, in the name of criticism give vent to their inner complexes as well as those who, again in the name of criticism, intend disgracing others. But nothing can justify improper behaviour of politicians toward these people and such criticisms. Here we are facing two separate issues. One is those who take unfair advantage of the weapon of criticism.

By way of advice, the Imam emphasizes to such people that the language of criticism should be polite and courteous, and it is in this context that he says, "If they have criticism, they should have a brotherly criticism; it should be prudent and sensible."[534]

Or he stresses that the language of admonition is different from that of disgracing individuals. "The language of admonition is different from the language of disgracing and damaging the reputation [of others]."[535] From the viewpoint of the Imam as a neutral observer, most of the criticisms made in the political arena and encountered by politicians stem from resentment, self-love and injustice, and they cannot be doubted.

But the second issue is that none of these realities can be the grounds for the politicians to evade criticisms or to decide on determining which criticism is justified or not; in good faith or hostile. It is because his nature will persuade him in a bid to preserve his personality and prevent its destruction, to reject whatever he does not accept as done in bad faith, destructive, detrimental, unfair, and the like. Thus, in order to distinguish the honest from the spurious from among the criticisms, we need a third party, which is actually the public opinion. The politician performs his task while the critic criticizes. It is the duty of the politician to listen to criticism and to heed it as much as possible. But with regard to their correctness or otherwise, it is the public opinion that determines and classifies them.

In the final analysis, from the Imām's viewpoint openness to criticism is among the human perfections. It draws man from the existential sphere of instinct and egoism to the status of the lofty and God-loving human being, and obliterates his flaws.

This is due to the fact that the God-loving man removes his weaknesses by means of these criticisms and makes good use of this effective tool. Instead of asking for the basis of criticism he pays attention to its spirit, and it is in this context that he is grateful for the criticisms of his enemies and considers them as his sympathetic teachers. This kind of attitude calls to mind a story that Mawlān narrates: Contrary to convention, a preacher would pray for his enemies every time he ascended the pulpit. Because the people found fault with this practice—of his praying for the bad ones in place of the good ones,

گفت: نیکویی از اینها دیده ام　　من دعاشان زین سبب بگزیده ام

خُبث و ظلم و جور چندان ساختند　　که مرا از شر به خیر انداختند

He replied, "I have seen (*experienced*) *goodness from these folk:*
For this reason I have chosen to pray for them.
They wrought so much wickedness and injustice and oppression
That they cast (*drove*) *me forth from evil into good.*[536]

We will read a more explicit one in the poem of Abū Hayyān Andalusī, an Arab poet, who considers himself beholden by, and debtor to, his own enemies, deems their existence as necessary, and says:

عِداي لهمفضلٌ علىّ ومنّةُ　　فلاذهبالرحمن منىالا عاديا

هُم بحثواعن زلّتيفاجتنبتها　　وهم نافسونىفاكتسبتالمعاليا

For me enemies are favour and grace.
O God, take not these enemies from me.
They are so painstakingly in search of my slip.
Thus, I evaded it.
And they are in competition with me.
As an outcome, I attained excellent qualities.[537]

Therefore, instead of wasting time in finding out the motive of the critic and adopting the unscrupulous defense mechanisms, it is better for us to consider every type of criticism as a favour, blessing and in the words of Im□m as-S□diq (*'a*) a gift, and to benefit from it in the political arena.

Simple living

Simple living in the individual's life is a moral virtue. But in the political arena and for the Islamic statesmen, it is, apart from this, a political necessity. What is meant by simple living is what has been referred to in our religious culture as *zuhd* [asceticism].

Of course, throughout history this term has been laden with negative connotations and usually the term *z□hid* [ascetic] gives the impression of a disheveled man, impudent, crowd-evading, anti-social, reclusive, narrow-minded, and without activity. Even now, if one is asked to describe a *z□hid* man, most probably he will describe him in this manner: a thin and pale person, clothed in a patched garment, wearing disheveled hair, dirty body, detached from social responsibilities, indifferent toward the fate of his fellow human beings, and lurking in the corner of prosperity.

Although this notion is not much to our liking, numerous historical testimonies affirm it. The truth of the matter is that *zuhd* at the advent of Islam, and in the words of the Infallibles (*'a*) was described in a certain manner while in the our Sufi culture, it has been expressed in yet another fashion, which is actually a metamorphosis of the real meaning and function of this term.

Negative Asceticism

Here, in order to substantiate these remarks, we will first mention instances of what have been introduced as asceticism and ascetic. Then, we will deal with the correct and original conception of this term. They said to D□w□d at-T□'□ who was one of the disheveled Sufis and notable ascetics, "Comb the end part of [your] beard." He said, "Have I remained disengaged that I should do it?"[538]

Of course, the occupation of D□w□d was not of the social occupations. Rather, it was a sort of ecstasy. A part of *K□my□-ye Sa'□dat* [*The Alchemy of Happiness*] is allocated to asceticism and its etiquette such as indigence and seclusion. It is mentioned therein that there was someone who said to D□w□d at-T□'□, "Give me a piece of advice."

He said, “Keep aloof from the world of all-embracing subsistence and the people until the time of death, just as they run away from the lion.”[539]

Likewise, al-Ghazzālī narrates, “Sa‘d ibn al-Waqqās and Sa‘īd ibn az-Zayd who were among the great Companions lived near Medina. It was a place which they called ‘Aqīq; they did not use to attend the Friday,[540] and they did nothing else until they died there.”[541]

Similarly, the ascetics would think of marriage as one of the signs of non-asceticism and the cause for attachment to the world. So, most of them refrained from it and preferred a bachelor’s life to it. According to these ascetics, seclusion and indigence was superior to social life and wealth. The dispute of Sa‘dī with a claimant on the issue of riches and mendicancy is an exquisite attempt to express the logic of those who view indigence as superior to fortune, which is very interesting.[542]

This anti-social and narrow-minded approach of the ascetics has taken an extensive form in our literature and has been subjected to severe criticism. According to these men of letters ascetics are clad in wool, hollow persons, intolerable, insensible, idle, self-indulgent, pretentious, and worthless who, wearing sackcloth and wool, seek to gain a reputation for themselves. In reality, they have portrayed asceticism as a snare of guile. For instance, Hāfiz says:

پشمینه‌پوش تندخو، از عشق نشنیده است بو

از مستتاش رمزی بگو تا ترک هوشیاری کند

The wool-clad hot-tempered has not heard of love;
Talk to him of its (*love’s*) *intoxication that he would abandon soberness.*[543]

Likewise, according to Hāfiz these people wear patched and mended clothes as a symbol of asceticism, and keep their sleeves short as a sign of simplicity and abstinence from luxury. But all of these are tricks to deceive the people:

به زیر دلق ملمّع کمندها دارند دراز دستی این کوته آستینان بین

There are tricks under the patched-clothes;
See how deceitful the short-sleeve wearers are.[544]

Sa‘dī also narrates a wholesome story concerning this which is very interesting:

An ascetic was the guest of a king. He was invited for a dinner. He ate less than what he wanted to take, and since the time for prayer had come, he prayed more than what he used to do…As he returned to his place, he again asked for the spreadsheet of food so as to eat. He had a son… He said, ‘O father, have you not eaten at the invitation of the sultan?’ He said: [According to him] I have eaten nothing that would be useful. [The king said: ‘Perform also the compensatory prayer as I have performed nothing that would be useful.’][545]

Mawlānā who was one of the great mystics and ascetics of his time also mentions, bitterly and disparagingly, the ascetics and their narrow-mindedness. In the course of the story of an ascetic who had intrusively broken the jug of wine of an emir and had then run away, Mawlānā narrates the story thus in the words of the ascetic’s neighbors who had come to intercede on his behalf:]

اوچهداندامرِمعروفازسگی　　طالبِمعروفاستوشهرگی

تا بدین سالوس خود را جا کند　　تا به چیزی خویشتن پیدا کند

کو ندارد خود هنر الاّ همان　　که تسلّس مىکند با این و آن

What should he know about enjoining (*others*) *to do right?*
He is currishly seeking notoriety and fame,
In order that by means of this hypocrisy he may make a position for himself
And somehow make himself conspicuous;
For in truth he has no talent save this alone,
That he plays the hypocrite[546] *to all and sundry*[547].[548]

At any rate, much has been said about asceticism and ascetic in our mystic and critical literature which we shall pass over. The only important point is that from this perspective, ascetics have not been quite popular. Nowadays, asceticism in this sense is also not acceptable. It is enough for us to imagine that one day all the people of the society decide to become ascetics. That is, family units would disintegrate, social life would be deranged; economic activity would stagnate; everyone would be heading toward the mountains and jungles, lurking in the corner of prosperity, and in pursuit of managing his own affairs.

Undoubtedly, asceticism in this sense is not only unethical at the individual level but also a defect, and in the political arena, it is baseness and a source of societal backwardness. Then, what is meant by asceticism and simple living which has been much mentioned in the speeches of the Infallible Ones (*'a*) and which Im□m Khomein□ also used to repeat so often while addressing the government officials?

Positive Asceticism

Here, in order to present a correct picture of the ideal Islamic asceticism, we will state its features and facets in the course of some questions and answers:

What is asceticism?

By citing reference in the Holy Qur'an, Im□m 'Al□ (*'a*), who was among the pioneering figures of asceticism during his time, describes asceticism in this manner:

The whole of asceticism is confined between two expressions of the Qur'an. Allah, the Glorified, says: ***That ye grieve not for the sake of that which hath escaped you, nor yet exult because of that which hath been given***.[549]

Whoever does not grieve over what he misses and does not revel over what comes to him, acquires asceticism from both its sides.[550]

As such, asceticism has no relation whatsoever to indigence and mendicancy. Asceticism is a psychological state and a sort of inner freedom. In this respect, the ascetic is one who remains so even if he is affluent and if he loses all his possessions, he will not look back on his past and fret about it.

He is such a master of himself that if he were given the whole world, he would still not lose nor forget himself. In fact, asceticism is a sort of mastery and control over oneself and regulation of one's emotions. In this sense, not only can an indigent man not be an ascetic; but, in order for one to know whether he is an ascetic or not, he should have wealth.

The indigent man has nothing to lose. We can only speak about asceticism when one has wealth and then lose it but is still able to preserve and maintain his spiritual mastery. Im□m 'Al□ (*'a*) who so describes asceticism, though he led an ascetic life, was a productive person, and even during the time of his caliphate and amidst all his engagements and worries, he never gave up his economic activities.

Throughout his life, he worked just like other laborers did, but not for himself, rather for pious purposes. On the very day that the people swore their allegiance to him, he took his spade and pick-axe in hand and went to finish a job he was doing. He was digging a well, digging it with his own hands. And to whom were congratulations to be extended when water sprung forth? He said that congratulations were to be given to those who would inherit this and asked that he be brought a pen and paper so that there and then he could dedicate the well to pious purposes.[551]

Therefore, asceticism has no direct bearing on indigence. Asceticism implies freedom from want, not dependency and parasitism. A beggar who desires riches is not an ascetic. But a wealthy man who has no attachment to his wealth is an ascetic. As such, asceticism means to use amenities as needed and not beyond that. Asceticism connotes enjoyment of the blessings to attain goals, and not making blessings the goals. In this sense, asceticism is the opposite of lavishness. But, "Lavishness is something that the people are in quest for, even though they may have the least need for it."[552]

Is asceticism abstention from the blessings?

Well, some have thought that asceticism means abstention from the blessings and legitimate enjoyments and imagined that the ascetic is he who refrains from eating, drinking and wearing clothes except what is needed for survival. The story of Sufyān ath-Thawrī, the ascetic who found fault with Imām as-Sādiq (*'a*) for wearing a beautiful garment, is expressive of this wrong view on asceticism. With this same thinking, 'Asim ibn Ziyād al-Hārithī abandoned his wife and child, retreated to a corner, closed his eyes to all the divine favours, and considered all these acts as values. But Imām 'Alī (*'a*) rescued him from his wrong conception, viewing it as the result of Satanic inculcations and said to him: "Do you believe that if you use those things which Allah has made lawful for you, He will dislike you?"[553]

In refuting this inadmissible notion, the Holy Qur'an states: *"Say: Who hath forbidden the adornment of Allah which He hath brought forth for His bondmen, and the good things of His providing? Say: Such will be only for those who believed during the life of the world."*[554] Similarly, the Qur'an emphatically urges the believers to be pure and smart and thus commands them: *"Look to your adornment at every place of worship, and eat and drink, but be not prodigal."*[555]

Basically, from this perspective refraining from eating and drinking cannot be considered a value. The believers are well-groomed, and they eat and drink commensurate to their vital needs. What has been forbidden to them is extravagance, and in today's jargon, 'wasting the favours of God,' and not 'depriving oneself of the favours.' A cursory glance at the lives of the Infallible Ones (*'a*) illustrates this approach.

The Most Noble Messenger (*s*) was so fond of applying perfume that he would skip his supper so as to

procure his needed perfume. If perfume was not at his disposal, he would soak the perfumed scarf of his wife and rub his face with it so as to be perfumed. Likewise, before going out he would always look at himself in the mirror or water, and groom himself to such an extent as to always be an embodiment of adornment and dressing well. He would apply so much perfume that his beard had turned white as a result.[556]

Well, this has been the tradition and way of the true ascetics. Now, let us compare it with that of Dāwūd at-Tā'ī who used to assert that he had not enough time to comb or trim his disheveled beard, or with that of the other (person) who was pleased with the lousiness of his clothes, or that of another, that is, Mālik ibn Dīnār who claimed to have not eaten meat for twenty years, about which he was proud, saying: "I do not know the meaning of the statement that if a man does not eat meat for forty days, his intelligence is diminished. I have not eaten meat for twenty years and my intelligence increases every day."[557] Apparently, it refers to a *hadīth* attributed to the Most Noble Messenger (*s*) which states: "Whoever would not eat meat for forty days, the call to prayer [*azān*] should be recited again near his ear."

Another story is narrated about this Mālik which, if assumed to be true, not only does not confirm any value for him, but is also incompatible with the indisputable principles of religion. The story is as follows:

For forty years he [Mālik] lived in Basrah and never ate fresh dates. When the season of ripe dates came around he would say, 'People of Basrah, behold, my belly has not shrunk from not eating them, and you who eat them daily—your bellies have not become any larger.' After forty years he was assailed by a mood of restlessness. However hard he tried, he could not withstand the craving for fresh dates. Finally after some days, during which the desire daily increased while he constantly denied his appetite, he could resist no more the importunity of his carnal soul.
'I will not eat fresh dates,' he protested. 'Either kill me, or die!'
That night a heavenly voice spoke.
'You must eat some dates. Free your carnal soul from bondage.'
At this response his carnal soul, finding the opportunity, began to shout.
'If you want dates,' Mālik said, 'fast for a week without breakfasting once, and pray all night. Then I will give you some.'
This contented his carnal soul. For a whole week he prayed all night and fasted all day. Then he went to the market and bought some dates, and betook himself to the mosque to eat them. A boy shouted from the rooftop.
'Father! A Jew has bought dates and is going to the mosque to eat them.'
'What business has a Jew in the mosque?' the man exclaimed. And he ran to see who the Jew might be. Beholding Mālik, he fell at his feet.
'What were those words the boy uttered?' Mālik demanded.
'Excuse him, master,' the boy's father pleaded. 'He is only a child, and does not understand. In our quarter many Jews live. We are constantly fasting, and our children see the Jews eating by day. So they

suppose that everyone who eats anything by day is a Jew. What he said he said in ignorance. Forgive him!'
When M□lik heard this, a fire consumed his soul. He realized that the child was inspired to speak as he had.
'Lord God,' he cried, 'I had not eaten any dates, and Thou didst call me a Jew by the tongue of an innocent child. If I eat the dates, Thou wilt proclaim me an unbeliever. By Thy glory, if I ever eat any dates!'[558]

Obviously, it was the hidden voice which had been making fun of him. Besides, day and night fasting for seven whole days, even though it is possible, is certainly forbidden [*har□m*] and can be considered an 'uninterrupted fasting' [*r□zeh-ye wis□l*], which Islam has sternly prohibited.

Anyway, we have plenty of similar stories. But no matter what we call them, we cannot regard them as asceticism that is one of the teachings of the Infallibles (*'a*). The Messenger of God (*s*) as well as other Infallibles (*'a*) would eat meat, dates, and other permissible foodstuffs. They did not prohibit for themselves anything which God had permitted for them. In the heat of the Battle of Jamal, Im□m 'Al□ (*'a*) asked for water but they brought him honey syrup. He drank it and said that the honey is that of T&□'if.[559]

This tranquility and control which such a war failed to disturb the Im□m's (*'a*) mind, surprised others, and 'Abdull□h ibn Ja'far, paternal nephew of the Im□m (*'a*), asked him (*'a*), "In such a situation, how could you identify the place of origin of the honey just by taste?" He (*'a*) replied, "My son, I swear to God, none of the world's affairs has ever satisfied your uncle."[560]

Even if the Im□m (*'a*) used to refrain from eating food or wearing (expensive) clothes, it had definitely a social philosophy and his action was not inappropriate. In fact, it was considered a lesson and education for the governors. After the Im□m was informed that his governor in Basrah, Uthm□n ibn al-Hunayf, had accepted the invitation of one of the affluent men of the city to a banquet, he (*'a*) in the course of a letter, admonished him, dissuaded him from repeating such actions, and reminded him that he (*'a*) who is the caliph of the Muslims has worn two garments and sufficed himself with two loaves of bread, and he urged the state officials to follow this practice. He (*'a*) emphasized that this abstinence and asceticism did not arise from indigence and mendicancy and [then, he (*'a*) said:]

If I wished I could have taken the way leading toward [worldly pleasures like] pure honey, wheat germ and silk clothes but it cannot be that my passions lead me and greed take me to choosing good meals while in the Hij□z[561] or in Yam□mah[562] there may be people who have no hope of getting bread or who do not have a full meal.[563]

This abstinence shows the height of his humanity. The Im□m led an austere life because he felt that possibly others were not be able to dress and drink as they liked. This was very different from what

M□lik ibn D□n□r did—a kind of self-torment.

In another instance, the Im□m (*'a*) expounds the philosophy behind this self-mortification. As he (*'a*) had prohibited 'Al□ ibn Ziy□d from seclusion and self-mortification, the latter asked, "Why are you so austere in your own case?" He (*'a*) replied, "Woe be to you, I am not like you. Certainly, Allah, the Sublime, has made it obligatory on true leaders to live like the poor people, so that they are not tormented by their poverty."[564] And he (*'a*) deemed it endurable. Thus, as he (*'a*) himself saw that one of his companions had built a huge house, he (*'a*) told him that he did not need a house of such a vast size unless it was for entertaining visitors and establishing relations with kinsmen;[565] and would be used as a means of social interaction and helping others.

Therefore, asceticism does not mean poverty and indigence, or depriving oneself of the [divinely-endowed] favours, but a sort of independence and detachment from worldly possessions, absence of attachment, and in the words of H□fiz, freedom from any 'color' of attachment:

غلامِ همّت آنم که زیرِ چرخ کبود ز هرچه رنگ تعلق پذیرد آزاد است

I am slave of he under the sky (*the world*)
Who is free from any color of attachment.[566]

Is asceticism a hindrance to economic activity?

Some have believed that asceticism means solitude and seclusion, and have concluded that it is discordant with any kind of economic activity, and consequently, social progress. It is because they think that asceticism summons man to eat and drink less, be indifferent to the world and to minimize desires, while the prerequisite of any type of economic activity and social development is long-term planning and active presence in the society.

So, they conclude that if all the people are supposed to be ascetic then there will be no sign of the bustle of economic activities, and expansion and progress of the society.

Of course, undoubtedly, some have taken asceticism to mean seclusion, monasticism and solitude. The point must not be overlooked that sometimes, in the different phases of the life of man, seclusion is needed and by remaining alone, man can closet and assess, himself. As such, in our religious tradition *i'tik□f* [seclusion in the mosque for prayer and other devotional acts] has a special status.

The Messenger of God (*s*) would sometimes go to the cave of Hir□, and sometimes seclude himself in

the mosque and meditate; but it was only for a short period. In reality, seclusion is a medication and a kind of short–term relaxation; not a strategy for one's life. In the words of Will Durant,[567] "Seclusion is a medication and a sort of therapy through abstinence; but it cannot be food. As what Goethe[568] had said, once and for ever, "Human habits and disposition grow only amidst the waves and confusion of this world."[569]

So, asceticism should not be equated with mere seclusion. Consequently, apart from not being an impediment to economic activity, asceticism, with the magnanimity that it creates in man and warns him of excessive elation over his possessions can be a promoter of economic activity.

This is especially true if the economic activity is a value and a kind of religious worship and devotion [*'ibādah*]. With the notion that economic activity is discordant with devotion and reliance on God [*tawakkul*], some companions of the Infallibles (*'a*) abandoned all endeavor and stayed in their houses. But the Holy Infallibles (*'a*) dissuaded them from this act and said that the supplications of such persons will not be granted and that everybody should exert efforts to find his sustenance.

One of these persons asked Imām as–Sādiq (*'a*) to pray for him and ask God to give him sustenance without the need for him to exert any effort. He (*'a*) said, "I will not pray for you as God has commanded you to strive in pursuit of sustenance."[570] Similarly, the Messenger of God (*s*) said, "Worship has seventy parts, among which the most superior is the search for permissible [*halāl*] sustenance."[571] Economic activity from the viewpoint of Imām as–Sādiq (*'a*) is so blessed that he commanded Hishām that even "If you saw a war break out and the opposing forces take up positions, you should not stop your economic activities."[572]

We have also dwelt on the story of Imām as–Sādiq (*'a*) busy working in extreme heat and being subjected to his companions' objection. And we have also heard his reply.[573]
On the other hand, poverty, according to Islam, is not a value; it is, rather, a matter of disgrace.

Thus, in the supplications of the Infallibles (*'a*) refuge has been sought in God from it. Imām 'Alā (*'a*) calls destitution as the greatest death.[574] He (*'a*) says to his son, Muhammad ibn Hanafiyyah: "O' my son, I fear lest destitution overtakes you. So, you should seek Allah's protection from it, because destitution is deficiency of religious belief, perplexity of intelligence, and it is conducive to hatred of obstinate people."[575]

Therefore, the very person who views asceticism as a value and invites people to it, brands destitution as loathsome and the source of defilement of religion and the intellect. As such, a connection between asceticism and destitution cannot be established except that of duality and alienation.

Well, the question is: Will the emergence of asceticism at the general level not obstruct economic activities? The answer is 'no'. Even nowadays there are countries where asceticism is embedded in the depth of their culture, but, at the same time, are enjoying the peak of economic prosperity and boom. We are referring to Japan.

In the culture of Japan, what can be approximately regarded as the equivalent of asceticism of our religion is *wabi*. *Wabi* means "not being bound to the things of this world such as wealth, power and fame and, notwithstanding all this, deeply experiencing the most precious things that are above time, place and status."[576]

These are the words expressed by one of the most notable Japanese culturologists and masters of Zen, who is himself a devotee of this way of life. "*Wabi* spells out the totality of Japanese culture."[577]

It is present in all aspects of the individual and social life of the Japanese and has left its marks on the architecture, industry and other facets of today's life in Japan. Even the wealthy Japanese, who devote their entire life to production and make investment again and again, lead mostly ascetic lives, based on the *wabi* doctrine. They work and produce wealth as they regard it as holy and blessed. At the same time, they lead ascetic and disciplined lives.

They refrain from profligacy in their lives as they believe in the doctrine of *wabi*. It is better for us to see what the chairman of the board of directors of the huge Daewoo Organization has to say about this matter. Kim Wu Chung, who is a South Korean and one of the most hard-working economic figures, reproaches the profligacy of some of his countrymen and summons them to learn from the Japanese:

Albeit the standard of living of the Japanese is far higher than ours, their life is far more moderate. Even the high-ranking directors of giant Japanese corporations live in 100-130 meter houses with very simple furniture. The chairman of the board of directors of the eminent Toshiba Company has an annual salary of approximately 100 million yen, but he lives in an 83-meter house. His monthly expenses do not also exceed 15,000 yen, but in [South] Korea some managers of small companies have 330-meter houses with luxurious imported equipment and furniture.[578]

These words have been uttered by someone who himself has spent almost his entire life in travel, signing contracts and production of wealth. He says that he experiences joy in increasing the wealth of his country and is not so much in pursuit of personal enjoyment from his wealth and prosperity. After emphasizing the intensification of economic activity, he recommends, "Let us be hard-working and faithful."[579] According to this economic icon,

[t]he Japanese are unrivalled in saving and frugality. It is this very saving and frugality that has transformed Japan into one of the richest nations on earth today. Sometimes, things must be learned from others and we have no alternative but to be ashamed of the frugality and modest life of the Japanese.[580]

Then, he urges the people of [South] Korea:

Therefore, the more your possession is, the more you should be frugal in your living, for, through

frugality and diligence you are responsible in leading your society toward what is desirable and wholesome. You should bear in mind that one of the greatest hindrances in the progress of every society is immoderation and over-consumption.[581]

Therefore, asceticism is a value, and apart from not being incompatible with other values such as work and activity, it is even a requisite for them. Now, we understand the utility and importance of asceticism. At this juncture, it is a good idea to indicate the three fundamental elements of Islamic asceticism, which the late Martyr Mutahhar has pointed out. According to him, the essential elements of asceticism are as follows:

(1) Natural and physical enjoyments are not the sole factors of obtaining happiness;

(2) Individual destiny is not separate from that of society;

(3) While the soul is in union with the body, it is loftier than the latter.[582]

With the same notion of asceticism and positive outlook on it, the Imam urges the government officials to behave ascetically in their lives, take simple living as their motto and, in this path, take Imam 'Ali (*'a*) as their leader and model.

What is the political utility of asceticism?

From the political perspective, asceticism and simple living are not merely moral virtues; rather they are political necessities. One can enter the political arena and employ ethical politics provided he does not have attachment and devotion to materialism, position and power. To the extent that one becomes dependent, the possibility of his 'movement' and progress will decrease by the same degree.

Try to consider a mountaineer who wants to climb a summit which can be conquered (climbed) within one night. If this mountaineer is really well-experienced, he will only bring with him the things that he will need for one day and one night and will bring only a maximum of four meals. Now, the more this person increases the weight of his knapsack, the harder his climb will be, and traversing the route, he will become more tired. Inexperienced and neophyte mountaineers have had this bitter experience time and again of bringing along with them equipment that was more than needed and weighed heavily on their shoulders, making them wish that they had set out with a lighter load.

The same is true in the political arena. Those who have many financial, emotional, social, and economic attachments have less chance of keeping their boat on an even keel along this tumultuous river. This aside, the more one has attachment to and affection for something, the more is his chance of being deceived and of forgetting his objective. In fact, bullets do not kill the statesmen; rather, it is the sugar-coated bullets that destroy them.

A glance at history bears witness to the claim that so many statesmen were seduced by the sight of gold or the illusion of power and splendor, and betrayed their ideals and country. In contrast, history shows that the only statesmen who succeeded were those who had taken simple living as their motto and weapon. From among our religious narratives, Im□m ‘Al□ (*‘a*) can be mentioned the story of this great man being frequently told and retold.

From among the contemporaries, Gandhi is worth mentioning. A man with a few meters of hand-woven canvas named *khadi* covering his body, a manual spinning machine and a milking goat, succeeded in obtaining the independence of India and overawed British colonialism with his spiritual power. In the contemporary history of Iran, the late □yatull□h Sayyid Hasan Mudarris[583] can be mentioned. H

e was a person with respect to whom persons such as Rid□ Kh□n[584] stood helpless. The latter asked the former, “Sayyid, what do you want from me?” He answered, “I want you to be no more [in the position of power].” It was only due to his unflinching faith, simple living, and ascetic life that Mudarris succeeded in not being swayed by power and splendor and in not forgetting his goals. The Im□m describes the spiritual strength of Mudarris and reminisces about him with great admiration:

You have noticed and seen the history of the late Mudarris who was a very slim Sayyid [having], I say, a canvas garment (which is one of the abusive words coined by the poet for him—‘clad in canvas trousers’). A person like this stood against the brutality (which was such) that whoever is aware of those times knows that the time of Rid□ Sh□h was not the same as that of Muhammad Rid□ Sh□h. At the time when there reigned tyranny, with which our history is perhaps less acquainted, he stood up to such a person (the tyrant). In the *Majlis* (Parliament)... (Rid□ Kh□n) once asked him, ‘What do you want from me?’ He replied, ‘I wish you to be no more [in the position of power]; I wish you no more [in power]’. This person... used to come to Sepahs□l□r *Madrasah* [theology school]... to give lectures.

One day I attended his class; it appeared that he had nothing else to do; a mere theologian engaged in teaching. He had such strength of character... Even in the days when he used to attend the *Majlis* sessions, he was held in high esteem by everybody... It seemed as if the Parliament was waiting for Mudarris to come. Although they were not well disposed toward him, it was as if the Parliament felt that something was missing whenever Mudarris was not there. But once he came, it was as though something new had happened. What was the reason for this? It was owing to the fact that he was a person who paid no heed to position, possessions and the like. He paid no heed to anything; no position was able to attract him... Why was it so? It was because he was upright; he was not attached to carnal desires... And neither was he afraid of anyone... It was because he was free from carnal desires. He was honest; he was not dependent [on anything and anybody].[585]

Therefore, political courage, mental freedom, intelligence, and power of practical innovation emerge only when the politician is free and upright [*v□rasteh*] and not dependent [*v□basteh*]—this exactly is asceticism. From this perspective, asceticism does not mean not eating, drinking and wearing (beautiful)

clothes. Basically, this individual level is problematic. At the highest level, asceticism is that very freedom and independence that emerges only when the person disengages himself from his diverse attachments. The Most Noble Messenger (*s*), who was able to cleanse the entire Arabian Peninsula from the pollution of polytheism, succeeded due to the very fact that, apart from divine assistance, he (*s*) was free from various attachments; he was upright and free of want; notwithstanding all his authority and in spite of the fact that

he was the vicegerent of God [*khal*ī*fatull*ī*h*], everybody accepted him; when he was sitting in the mosque, they were not able to recognize him; one who entered (the mosque) did not recognize him for there was no such thing as sitting in 'superior' or 'inferior' places in the mosque.[586]

Simple living from the Imām's viewpoint is discussed as one of the pillars of governmental politics. After indicating the simple lifestyle of Imām 'Alī (*'a*) and regarding it as the model, he says:

That which we want is this... In Iran we want it to be so that when the head of state of some country, for example, the President or Prime Minister, is among the people, there should be no such privilege for him that the people have to step aside with 'ahs' and 'ohs'.[587]

In the opinion of the Imām, the Messenger of God (*s*) who was the most authoritative individual in the Muslim society, "His (material) condition in life was lower than the common people who were then living in Medina."[588]

From the Imām's viewpoint, not only does simple living ensures the independence of political authorities, but also secures their political future. If one day the officials abandon their simple lifestyle, they will be forsaken by the people. While addressing the clergymen, he would say:

Praise be to God that, today, there is nothing wrong in dealing with political issues; however, you should bear in mind that all are watching you; Therefore, you must preserve your image as scholars. Live modestly, exactly like the *'ulam*ā [religious scholars] of the past... If one day your living standards exceed those of the common people, then, sooner or later, you will be rejected and ostracized.[589]

He staunchly opposed lavishness and would enumerate, one by one, its negative effects. Some of the consequences of lavishness are, according to him, ostracism by the people, dependency and attachment, drifting away from spiritualities, fallen reputations and, finally, spiritual debasement. Even the responsible leaders of society should not engage in lavish formalities on the excuse of their own security. "Even those who want to protect themselves should realize that sometimes a Peykan[590] (automobile) could be safer for them than any other vehicle."[591]

Some erroneously think that lavishness is a symbol of power, and the more lavish we are in life, the more powerful we are. This notion on the alleged relationship between lavishness and authority has led

to the issue of lavishness, or what is called ‘power symbols’, being brought into administrative circles and international relations. One, who thinks of luxury from this angle, and as a political or administrative necessity, endeavors to possess all symbols of power such as costly tables and chairs, showy cars, and palatial mansions. These they use to show their personal or national power. Those who are after such excuses are, actually, deceiving and covering up their concealed desires. One thing certain is that, in the long run, all those who have been engaged in the power play (of politics) and have employed its symbols have gradually been affected and tainted by these symbols. Thus, these are facilities and symbols that are not without their (unsavory) consequences. In fact, they take firm control of the mentality and psyche of man.[592]

In essence, once the politician gets used to simple living he will not be dejected and dispirited by any failure, and will not experience a sense of emptiness or loss. “We should live in such a way that we will not rue the things that were taken from us.”[593]

In the Imām’s code of ethics, asceticism and simple living has such a lofty status that it is the axis and cornerstone of every kind of movement for independence and dignity. Anyone who likes to tread safely the tortuous, dreadful and horrendous path of politics should be an ascetic and accustomed to simple living. He should know that the desert tree which receives a lesser amount of water is more resilient. It seems as if, the Imām has obtained this viewpoint by reflecting on the utterance of our master ‘Alī (*‘a*) who says, “Remember that the tree of the forest is the best for timber, while green twigs have soft barks, and the wild bushes are quick to kindle but slow in dying off.”[594]

It is with this perception that Imām Khomeinī regards simple living as the key to success and the secret of felicity and honor in both the worlds, saying:

If you want to stand fearless and intrepid against falsehood; to defend the truth; and the superpowers, their advanced weapons, the devils, and their conspiracies not to affect you mentally; and not drive you away from the scene, get yourself accustomed to simple living and refrain from having fondness for riches and position. Most of the great men who have rendered remarkable services to their nations have lived modestly and have been uninterested in the vanities of the world.

Those who were and are captives of mean carnal and bestial desires are willing to endure hardship and humiliation to preserve or obtain them (all that they long for). In front of satanic forces and powers they are humble and meek while in relation to the weak masses of people they are despotic and cruel. But the upright ones are contrary to them owing to the fact that, for them, human and Islamic values cannot be preserved through an aristocratic and consumerist lifestyle.[595]

Therefore, from the Imām’s perspective, asceticism and simple living are deemed part of the triple pillars of ethical politics. The one who can tread this path is like Ya‘qūb ibn Layth as-Saffār[596] who would suffice with mere bread and onion, and reckon ascetic life as his motto so as to be counted as a

formidable threat to the ‘Abb□sid caliphate.

In the course of the foregoing discussions we started from ethics going toward politics and its connection to ethics. Then, we reverted to ethics and its station in politics. As we have seen, the Im□m’s view on politics is an ethical one, and he regards it as an extension of ethics on a broader level.

From this perspective, precepts and moralities for politics that are separate from the general precepts of Islamic ethics cannot be found. Any attempt to make politics independent from ethics is, in effect, and in the long run the annihilation of not only ethics, but also results in obliterating politics. As such, from the Im□m’s viewpoint, it is not only the other-worldly interests that require the statesman to be bound by ethics; even practical reason and political reason demand from him this abidance by ethics. Thus, in admonishing the lawmakers of the Islamic society, he says:

You ought to be the teachers of ethics of the society and the entire society ought to rally behind you… and if, God forbid, deviations arise and selfish motives appear… this, first of all, constitutes a grave moral degeneration and degeneration in the presence of God, and secondly, there is the fear that you will not be able to take this load home.[597]

Therefore, to behave ethically in all spheres, political spheres in particular, leads to emotional and spiritual loftiness and progress of man apart from being a requisite and demand of reason. One of the duties of the political authorities in the Islamic society is the preservation and promotion of Islamic values and slogans, and the best way to this end is for the authorities to observe these values, mottos and ethical principles and to reform themselves.

Today is the day when you ought to preserve Islam; you ought to preserve Islam. Preservation of Islam is that you should modify your actions, you should behave well with the people; be brothers to the people; you should not look upon the people in such a way.[598]

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[1] For a bird's-eye view on the life, thoughts and movement of Imām Khomeinī, see Hamīd Algar, *Imām Khomeinī: A Short Biography*, downloadable at: http://www.al-islam.org/imam-khomeini-a-short-biography-hamid-algar [14]. [Pub.]

[2] The abbreviation, "*s*", stands for the Arabic invocative phrase, *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa ālihi wa sallam* [may God's salutation and peace be upon him and his progeny], which is used after the name of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (*s*). [Pub.]

[3] The abbreviation, "*'a*" stands for the Arabic invocative phrase, *'alayhis-salām*, *'alayhimus-salām*, or *'alayhās-salām* [may peace be upon him/them/her], which is used after the names of the prophets, angels, Imāms from the Prophet's progeny, and saints (*'a*). [Pub.]

[4] Imām Khomeinī, *Sharh-e Chehel Hadīth* (Tehran: The Institute for Compilation and Publication of Imām Khomein's Works, 1376 AHS), p. 511.

[5] *Ma'sūmīn*: those possessing the quality of *'ismah* (divinely bestowed freedom from error and sin)

such as the prophets and Im□ms from the Prophet's Progeny (*'a*). [Pub.]

[6] The original work in Persian, *Sharh-e Chehel Had□th* was written by Im□m Khomein□ sixty-four years ago and was completed in the month of Muharram 1358 AH (April-May 1939). Under the title, *Forty Had□ths: An Exposition of Mystical and Ethical Traditions*, its English translation is recently published by the Institute. The manuscript of this work, together with that of two other then unpublished works of the author, *Sharh-e Du'□'-e Sahar*, and □*d□b as-Sal□t*, were recovered from the library of the late □yatull□h □kh□nd al-Hamed□n□. All the three works have been published by the Institute. [Pub.]

[7] ***"So blessed be Allah, the Best of Creators!" S□rah al-Mu'min□n* 23:14.**

Unless stated otherwise, all the Qur'anic quotations throughout this volume are based on Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall's translation of the Glorious Qur'an. Pickthall's translation as well as others such as those of 'Abdull□h Y□suf 'Al□, M□r Ahmad 'Al□ and Muhammad Sh□kir, are accessible online at http://www.al-islam.org/quran [15]. [Trans.]

[8] ***"And man assumed it. Lo! He hath proved a tyrant and a fool." S□rah al-Ahz□b* 33:72.**

[9] Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-80): French philosopher, novelist, playwright, and exponent of existentialism. His writings reflect his vision of the human being as master of his or her own fate, with each life defined by a person's actions: "Existence precedes essence." His works include *Being and Nothingness* (1943); the novels *Nausea* (1938) and *The Roads to Freedom*, a trilogy (1945-49); and the plays *The Flies* (1943) and *No Exit* (1944). Sartre founded the review *Les Temps Modernes* in 1945. [Trans.]

[10] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Existentialism va Is□lat-e Bashar* [*Existentialism and Human Nature*], trans. Mustaf□ Rah□m□ (Tehran: Marv□r□d, 1358 AHS), p. 24.

[11] A towering figure of the Illuminationist School of Islamic Philosophy and likewise known as Shaykh Ishr□q, Shah□b ad-D□n Yahy□ Suhraward□, was born in Suhraward, near Zanj□n, Iran in 1155. After studying in Isfah□n, a leading center of Islamic scholarship, Suhraward□ traveled through Iran, Anatolia and Syria. Influenced by mystical teachings, he spent much time in meditation and seclusion, and in Halab (modern Aleppo) he favourably impressed its ruler, Malik az-Z□hir. His teachings, however, aroused the opposition of established and learned religious men [*'ulam□*], who persuaded Malik to have him put to death. The appellation *al-Maqt□l* [the killed one] meant that he was not to be considered a *shah□d* [martyr].

Suhraward□ wrote voluminously. The more than 50 works that were attributed to him were classified into two categories: doctrinal and philosophical accounts containing commentaries on the works of Aristotle and Plato, as well as his contribution to the Illuminationist School; and shorter treatises, generally written in Persian and of an esoteric nature, meant to illustrate the paths and journeys of a mystic before he could achieve *ma'rifah* (gnosis or esoteric knowledge). [Pub.]

[12] "النفسو ما فوقهاانيات صرفه."

[13] Yathr□b: the former name of the town which after the migration [*hijrah*] of Prophet Muhammad (*s*) to

it, was renamed *Mad□nah an-Nab□* [City of the Prophet]. It is now briefly called Mad□nah (Medina).
People of Yathr□b: It is in reference to the following verse in the Qur'an (*S□rah al-Ahz□b* 33:13):
And when said a party of them: "O ye the people of Yathr□b! There is no place for you to stand, so return ye," and a party of them asked permission of the Prophet saying: "Verily our houses are exposed* (*to destruction*)*: they only intended to flee away.
The verse was revealed when a group of Muslims, misled by the defeatist rumors spread by the hypocrites, had suggested to the others to leave Islam and return to idolatry or to leave the ranks of the Muslims and go back to their homes. And some, under the pretext of taking care of their undefended homes, wanted to leave the ranks and go away to take shelter somewhere away from the battlefield, though their homes were not undefended. See M□r Ahmad 'Al□, p. 1251.[Trans.]
[14] *H□y□l□*: the primary substance of creation. [Trans.]
[15] One of the most valuable schools of Islamic philosophy, the Illuminationist School combines Neoplatonic and Islamic ideas. According to this philosophy, the source of all things is Absolute Light. That which is visible requires no definition, and nothing is more visible than light, whose every nature consists in manifestation. We may distinguish two illuminations, i.e. modes of being of the Primal Light: 1) pure, abstract, formless; 2) accidental derivative, possessing form. Pure light is self-conscious substance (spirit or soul), knowing itself through itself 'for whatever knows itself must be pure light'. Accidental light is related to pure light as effect to cause and only exists as attribute in association with the illuminated object.

Accidental light is of two kinds: a) dark substance; b) dark forms, i.e. quantities, and the combination of these two make up a material body. Since darkness is nothing but the absence of light, and light is identical with reality, the substance and forms of the universe consist of illumination diffused from Primal Light in infinite gradation of intensity. It follows that everything partakes of reality in proportion to the radiance which it receives and toward which it ever moves "with lover's passion, in order to drink more and more of the original fountain of Light." This perpetual flow and ebb of desire produces the revolutions of the heavenly spheres, the processes of nature, and all human activities. While the entire universe is eternal as emanating from Eternal Light, but contingent if regarded as the object of irradiation, some illuminations are simple, others compound and therefore inferior. The intelligences, the celestial spheres, the souls of the heavens, time, motion, and the archetypes of the elements belong to a higher world, which may be called eternal in contrast with all below it, though in the relation existing between them not posteriority but parallelism is implied. [Pub.]
[16] Im□m Khomein□, *Ta'l□q□t 'al□ Sharh Fus□s al-Hikam wa Misb□h al-Uns* (n.p.: Mu'assaseh-ye P□sd□r-e Isl□m, 1410 AH), p. 78.
[17] Barry L. Recce and Ronda Brandt, *Human Relations: Principles and Practices* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1990), p. 54.
[18] Hak□m Ab□'l-Q□sim Firdaws□ (Ferdows□) (940-1020): the greatest epic poet of Persia who wrote the *Sh□hn□meh* [The Epic of Kings], one of the world's greatest literary masterpieces. [Pub.]
[19] *Sharh-e Chehel Had□th*, p. 528.
[20] *Ibid.*, p. 510.

[21] *Ibid*., 110.

[22] *Nahj al-Balāghah*, trans. Sayyid Ja'far Shahīdī (Tehran: Intishārāt va āmūzesh-e Inqilāb-e Islāmī, 1373 AHS), p. 297.

[23] Mawlawī Jalāl ad-Dīn ar-Rūmī (1207–1273) was the greatest mystic poet in the Farsi language and founder of the Mawlawiyyah order of dervishes ("The Whirling Dervishes"). He is famous for his lyrics and for his didactic epic, *Mathnawī-ye Ma'nawī* [*Spiritual Couplets*]. [Pub.]

[24] Jalāl ad-Dīn Muhammad Balkhī [ar-Rūmī], *Mathnawī-ye* [*Ma'nawī*] [*Spiritual Couplets*], ed. Muhammad Isti'lāmī (Tehran: Zovvār, 1372 AHS), vol. 6, p. 60.

Reynold A. Nicholson (ed. and trans.), *The Mathnawī of Jalālu 'ddīn Rūmī* (Tehran: So'ūd Publisher, 2002), Book Two under *The man who planted a thornbrush on the road and delayed to uproot it*, vol. 2, p. 131. [Trans.]

[25] *Sharh-e Chehel Hadīth*, pp. 110–111.

[26] *Mathnawī*, vol. 2, p. 61.

Nicholson, Book Two under *The man who planted a thornbrush on the road and delayed to uproot it*, vol. 2, p. 133. [Trans.]

[27] *Sharh-e Chehel Hadīth*, p. 273.

[28] Erich Fromm (1900–1980): German-born US psychoanalyst. He combined the ideas of Sigmund Freud and Karl Marx for the analysis of human relationships and development in the context of social structures and for proposed solutions to the problems of the modern industrial world, such as alienation. His books include *Escape from Freedom* (1941), *The Art of Loving* (1956), and *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (1973). [Trans.]

[29] *Muqaddimāt* Moroccan Magazine, issue no. 3 (1994), p. 25.

[30] *Sūrah Luqmān* 31:34.

[31] A Prophetic narration [*hadīth*]. See Muhammad Muhammadī Reyshahrī, *Mīzān al-Hikmah* (Qum: Dār al-Hadīth, 1375 AHS), vol. 1, p. 102.

[32] *Sūrah al-A'rāf* 7:99.

[33] *Sūrah Yūsuf* 12:87.

:The text of the hadīth is as follows [34]

بِسَنَدي المُتَّصِلِ إِلى مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ يَعْقُوبَ ثِقَةِ الإِسْلامِ وَعِمَادِ المُسْلِمِينَ، عَنْ عِدَّةٍ مِنْ أَصْحَابِنَا، عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ، عَنْ عَلِيِّ بْنِ حَدِيدٍ، عَنْ مَنْصُورِ بْنِ يُونُسَ، عَنِ الحَارِثِ بْنِ المُغِيرَةِ أَوْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِاللهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلامُ قَالَ: قُلْتُ لَهُ: مَا كَانَ فِي وَصِيَّةِ لُقْمَانَ؟ قَالَ: كَانَ فِيهَا الأَعَاجِيبُ. وَكَانَ أَعْجَبَ ما كَانَ فِيهَا أَنْ قَالَ لِإِبْنِهِ: خَفِ اللهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ خِيفَةً لَوْ جِئْتَهُ بِبِرِّ الثَّقَلَيْنِ لَعَذَّبَكَ. وَارْجُ اللهَ رَجَاءً

لَوْ جِئْتَهُ بِذُنُوبِ الثَّقَلَيْنِ لَرَحِمَكَ. ثُمَّ قَالَ أَبُو عَبْدِاللهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلامُ: كَانَ أَبِي يَقُولُ: إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ مِنْ عَبْدٍ مُؤْمِنٍ إلا [و] فِي قَلْبِهِ نُورَانِ: نُورُ خِيفَةٍ وُنُورُ رَجَاءٍ، لَوْ وُزِنَ هَذَا لَمْ يَزِدْ عَلَى هَذَا وَلَوْ وُزِنَ هَذَا لَمْ يَزِدْ عَلَى هَذَا.

Thiqat al-Isl□m wa ‘Im□d al-Muslim□n Muhammad ibn Ya‘q□b (al-Kulayn□): From a number of our companions, from Ahmad ibn Muhammad, from ‘Al□ ibn Had□d, from Mans□r ibn Y□nus, from al-H□rith ibn al-Mugh□rah or his father, from Ab□ ‘Abd All□h (Im□m as-S□diq) (*‘a*). Al-H□rith, or his father, says, “I asked him (*‘a*), ‘What was (mentioned) in the testament of Luqm□n?’ ‘There were marvelous things in it’, he said, ‘and the most wonderful of that which he said to his son was this: “Have such a fear of God Almighty that were you to come to Him with the virtues of the two worlds [*thaqalayn*]He would still chastise you, and put such a hope in God that were you to come to Him with the sins of the two worlds He would still have compassion for you.” Then Ab□ ‘Abd All□h (*‘a*) added: ‘My father used to say, “There is no believer who does not have two lights in his heart: the light of fear and the light of hope. Were one of these to be measured it would not exceed the other, and were the other one to be measured, it would not exceed this one.” Al-Kulayn□, *al-K□f□*, ed. ‘Al□ Akbar al-Ghif□r□, 4th edition, D□r Mus‘ab D□r at-Ta‘□ruf, Beirut, 1401 AH, vol. 2, *had□th* 1, p. 67.

For a detailed mystical and ethical exposition of this *had□th*,see *Sharh-e Chehel Had□th*, “Fourth *Had□th*:Fear of God,” p. 221.

[35] *M□z□n al-Hikmah*, vol. 1, p. 726.

[36] *Ibid*.; *Sharh-e Chehel Had□th*, p. 221.

[37] *Sharh-e Chehel Had□th*, p. 223.

[38] *Ibid*., p. 230.

[39] *S□rah al-Qiy□mah* 75:14.

[40] *S□rah an-Nis□’* 4:49.

[41] *S□rah an-N□r* 24:21.

[42]Bal‘am ibn B□‘□r refers to the man at the time of Pharaoh who knew the Greatest Name of God [*Ism al-A‘zam*], through which anything and everything sought for is immediately granted by God and it is a very closed secret. Pharaoh urged him to pray that Moses might fall into his clutches. Bal‘am agreed and mounted a donkey but the animal would not move. However much he beat the poor donkey, the animal did not stir from its place at all. At last the animal raised its head toward heaven and cried in clear cut words, “Why do you beat me Bal‘am? O man, woe unto you! Do you want me to take you to curse an Apostle of God and the faithful ones with him? Yet, Bal‘am did not relent and beat the faithful animal to death, consequently causing himself to forget the Holy Name of God whereupon he became an infidel. See Ahmad ‘Al□’s commentary of *S□rah al-A‘r□f* 7:175. [Trans.]

[43] Hadrat: The word *Hadrat* is used as a respectful form of address. [Trans.]

[44] *Mathnaw□*, vol. 1, p. 157.

Nicholson, Book One under *How Bal‘am son of B□‘□r prayed* (*to God*)*, saying, “Cause Moses and his*

people to turn back, without having gained their desire, from this city which they have besieged", vol. 1, p. 355. [Trans.]

[45]Fad□l ibn 'Ayy□d (Samarqand, circa 101–105 AH – Mecca, 187 AH): He heard *ah□d□th* from Sulaym□n at-Tam□m□, Muhammad ibn Ish□q, Im□m as-S□diq (*'a*), Sufy□n ath-Thawr□, and others. Fayd spent most of his life at the precinct of the House of God in Mecca and passed away in the month of Muharram in 187 AH in Mecca where he was buried. [Pub.]

For his life account, see Arthur J. Arberry, trans. *Muslim Saints and Mystics: Episodes from the Tadhkirat al-Awliy□'* (*Memorial of the Saints*) *by Far□d ad-D□n 'Att□r* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1966), pp. 52–61. [Trans.]

[46] *S□rah al-Had□d* 57:16. [Trans.]

[47] Far□d ad-D□n 'Att□r Neysh□r□r□, *Tadhrikat al-Awliy□'*, ed. Muhammad Isti'l□m□ (Tehran: Ziw□r, 1384), p. 90. See Arberry, p. 52. [Trans.]

[48] William James (1842–1910): US philosopher and psychologist, considered the originator of the docrine of pragmatism; brother of novelist Hendry James. His first major work was *Principles of Psychology* (1890). Turning his attention to religion, in 1902 he published *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, which has remained his best-known work. James' pragmatism, which he called 'radical empiricism,' argued that the truth of any proposition rested on its outcome in experience, and not on any eternal principles. [Trans.]

[49] Quoted in George Land and Beth Jarmin, □*yandeh-ye Khal□qiyyat va Khal□qiyyat-e* □*yandeh* [*The Future of Creativity and Creativity of the Future*], trans. Hasan Q□simz□deh (Tehran: Intish□r□t N□h□d, 1379 AHS), p. 245.

[50] □yatull□h M□rz□ Muhammad 'Al□ Sh□h□b□d□ (1292–1362 AH): an outstanding jurist, mystic and philosopher of the 14th century AH who studied religious sciences at the Islamic theological centers of Isfah□n, Tehran (in Iran) and Najaf (in Iraq). He was Im□m Khomein□'s teacher in *irf□n* [mysticism] and *akhl□q* [ethics]. [Pub.]

[51] *Sharh-e Chehel Had□th*, p. 67.

[52] Muhammad ibn Murtad□ (K□sh□n, circa 1006–1090 AH) known as Mull□ Muhsin Fayd K□sh□n□ was a philosopher and mystic of the Safavid era. He studied philosophy and mysticism with Mull□ Sadr□ in Isfah□n. Among his important works are *Abw□b al-Jin□n*, *Tafs□r-e S□f□*, *Kit□b-e W□f□* (*dar Sharh-e K□f□*), *Ris□leh-ye Isr□r*, *Sharh Sah□fah as-Sajj□diyyah*, and a collection of poems with about 12 thousand couplets. [Pub.]

[53] Mull□ Sadr□ (d. 1050 AH/1640), also called Sadrudd□n Sh□r□z□ and Sadr al-Muta'allih□n, was a philosopher who led the Iranian cultural renaissance in the 17th century. The foremost representative of Ishr□q□ [Illuminationist] School of philosopher-mystics, he is commonly regarded by Iranians as the greatest philosopher of Iran. A scion of a notable Sh□r□z□ family, Mull□ Sadr□ completed his education in Isfah□n, then the leading cultural and intellectual center of Iran. After his studies with scholars there, he produced several works, the most famous of which was his *Asf□r* (Journeys). *Asf□r* contains the bulk of his philosophy, which was influenced by a personal mysticism bordering on asceticism that he experienced during a 15-year retreat at Kahak, a village near Qum in Iran. Toward the end of his life,

Mull Sadr returned to Sh r z to teach. His teachings, however, were considered heretical by the orthodox Sh ‘ah theologians, who persecuted him, though his powerful family connections permitted him to continue to write. He died on a pilgrimage to Mecca. [Pub.]

[54] *Ibid*., p. 456.

[55] *Ibid*., pp. 456–457.

[56] Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679): English political philosopher who sought to apply rational principles to the study of human nature. In Hobbes' view, humans are materialistic and pessimistic, their actions motivated solely by self-interest, thus a state's stability can only be guaranteed by a sovereign authority, to which citizens relinquish their rights. *Leviathan* (1651), his most celebrated work, expresses these views. [Trans.]

[57]Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–78): Swiss-born French writer, philosopher, and political theorist. Greatly influenced by Denis Diderot, Rousseau first gained fame from his essay *Discourse on the Sciences and the Arts* (1750), an attack on the arts as a source for the increased wealth of the rich and an instrument of propaganda. In his *Discourse on Inequality* (1755), he professed the equality and goodness of 'natural man' and asserted that the golden age of humanity occurred before the formation of society, which bred competition and the corrupting influences of property, commerce, science, and agriculture. *The Social Contract* (1762), influential during the French Revolution, claimed that when human beings formed a social contract to live in society, they delegated authority to a government; however, they retained sovereignty and the power to withdraw that authority when necessary. [Trans.]

[58] Richard Tock, *Hobbes*, trans. Husayn Bashariyyeh (Tehran: Tarh-e N , 1376 AHS), p. 90.

[59] Iain McLean, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 222.

To know the context of the statement, see Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1946), p. 81–83. [Trans.]

[60] Gerard Shumin, et al. Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *Qar rd d-e Ijtim ‘ : Matn va Zam neh-ye Matn* [*The Social Contract: Text and Context*], trans. Murtad Kal ntari n (Tehran: g h, 1379 AHS), p. 84.

[61] *Hobbes*, p. 167.

[62] Book of Genesis is the first book of the Old Testament, in particular, and the Bible, in general, and the first of the so-called Five Books of Moses, *Pentateuch*. [Trans.]

[63] See *Genesis* 3:1–19 (i.e., chap. 3, verses 1–19).

[64] *Job* 15:16. In the New International Version (NIV) of the Bible, it is *Job* 15:15. [Trans.]

[65] *Psalms* 51:6. In the NIV it is *Psalms* 51:5. [Trans.]

[66] *Romans* 3:9–10. In the NIV it is *Romans* 3:9–11. [Trans.]

[67] *Galatians* 3:22.

[68] *The Social Contract*, p. 56.

[69] *Ibid*., footnote of p. 52.

Article 1 of the Declaration stipulates in full: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act toward one another in a spirit of brotherhood." [Trans.]

[70] *Ibid*., p. 85.

[71] *Goftar-h-ye dar B-b-e Mansha'-e 'Adam-e Mus-w-t* [*Discourses on the Origin of the Absence of Equality*] as quoted in *The Social Contract*, p. 8.

[72] *Ibid*., p. 9.

[73] *Ibid*., p. 10.

[74] François-Marie Arouet Voltaire (1694–1778): French author, philosopher, and major figure of the Enlightenment. An enemy of the tyrants, he spent much of his life in exile, including 23 years at his property on the Swiss border. His *Letters Concerning the English Nation* (1733) extolled religious and political toleration and the ideas of Sir Isaac Newton and John Locke. The satire *Candide* (1759), a rational skeptic's attack on the optimism of Gottfried von Leibniz, shows Voltaire's astringement style at its best. A friend of Frederick II of Prussia, Voltaire contributed to Denis Diderot's *Encyclopedia* and wrote his own *Philosophical Dictionary* (1764). [Trans.]

[75] Bertrand Russell, *T-r-kh-e Falsafeh-ye Gharb* [*History of Western Philosophy*], trans. Najaf Dary-bandar- (Tehran: Kit-b-e Parv-z, 1373 AHS), pp. 944–945.

[76] *Emile* is the title of Rousseau's didactic novel on education, which he published in 1762 together with *The Social Contract*,his *magnum opus* in political philosophy, on which he suggested that rather than imparting knowledge, education should build on a child's natural interests and sympathies, gradually developing his or her potential. [Trans.]

[77] *S-rah al-Baqarah* 2:30.

[78] See *S-rah al-Ahz-b* 33:72.

[79] *S-rah al-Baqarah* 2:30.

[80] For further information on the divine plan in man's creation from the viewpoint of the Qur'an, see M-r Ahmad 'Al-, *The Holy Qur'an: Text, Translation and Commentary* (Elmhurst, New York: Tahrike Tarsile Qur'an, Inc., 1988), *S-rah al-Baqarah* 2:30–39 commentary notes 40–50, pp. 66–94, accessible online at http://www.al-islam.org/quran [15]. [Trans.]

[81] *S-rah T&-H-* 20:121–122.

"Adam (*'a*) was accommodated in the earthly paradise, i.e. in some fertile region on earth with the natural resources of the basic requirements of life and its enjoyment. Had Adam been contented with it, he would have remained there with his issues without being worried for his living, but it was not the purpose of his creation. Adam was endowed with infinite potentiality for progress and rise toward the ultimate. Ambition was latent in his nature, unstimulated. On the other hand, the angels thought themselves as superior to Adam, and Satan too. All the three groups had to be put to test to express their latent attitudes. The order or the command of God acted as a stimulus and each group reacted to it, according to its native tendencies. The angels realized their worth and value and submitted with the due response whereas the furious and the fiery temperament of the satanic character in the angelic garb of the Satan, was exposed. Adam had no idea of the consequences of approaching the Prohibited Tree and had no desire to approach it but there was the ambition in him to march toward the glorious state of the beings with whose holy names he was acquainted. He was happy in the primitive paradise and was not alive to his nakedness as his ambition was not yet stirred. It was the command of God that acted as

the stirring factor and it was a *nəh-e tahrəs*, i.e. a stimulating warning in the sense to say: 'Behold: If thou want not worries approach not this tree, lest thou beareth the consequences.' On the other hand, Satan with his underestimation of Adam as an earthly and passive being with ease and comfort, which caused his fall, thought that he would be able to beguile Adam and wreak vengeance on him and his children. Thus the situation made the two groups to face each other and be prepared for a new development in the transformation of the natural struggle for life into a moral warfare between good and evil or the right and the wrong, *de facto* and *de jure*.

"The Prohibited Tree was the one, the approach of which was the start of the new warfare...

"Satan could not bear Adam's living in comfort and ease and was also helpless to do any harm to Adam without stirring the ambition in Adam, but Adam being cautious due to the warning he had received, Satan had no direct approach to him. Nothing could stir the latent ambition in Adam except through the social instinct of attachment to his other sex (i.e. Eve). It is through the sex medium that man steps out of his individuality into social life and starts feeling wants and develops desire after desire. It was through this medium (Eve) that Satan approached Adam. Both Adam and Eve felt their nakedness and their needs and thus their worries began. Thus Satan drove Adam and Eve out of the state of ease and comfort. Adam felt sorry for the loss, and his ambition began to develop itself. The return to the previous state was impossible because the ease and comfort in that state was due to the absence of the awakening to their nakedness and their need. A child whose social sense has not yet developed does not feel ashamed if it is naked and once the sense is developed the same condition would worry him, and the worry will not be over in him until he covers himself. After the development of the sense it would not be possible for him to remain naked and be happy. The same was to Adam and Eve when they felt their nakedness as they approached the forbidden tree and the social sense was awakened in them. They felt their helplessness as it was not possible for them to remain naked as before and be happy and feel comfortable.

"To regain the happiness, they had to turn toward God through the holy names whose potentiality they carried in them. Driven out of the lower (earthly) paradise the happiness cannot be recovered unless one qualifies for the heavenly paradise by putting all his faculties and the latent energies into work with harmony and moderation under the divine guidance.

"Thus the history of Adam, Eve, the angels, and Satan is a psychological presentation of a new development on earth along with the advent of the first man (Adam). It shows the turning point in the history of the natural development. The natural process of life is to give room for the conventional way of life. Reasoning begins to modify the instincts. The living beings developed up to the fall of Adam, were reacting to the call and the requirements, by their individual instincts to gain the objects of the animal senses and to defend themselves against the forces detrimental to their sensual interest, as the life for them had no other meaning. Adam was ordained to give a new significance to the life on the earth and that was not possible if he would not have fallen out of the Paradise wherein the object of his life as the Holy Qur'an represents was not more than mere eating and enjoying the sensual pleasures. Tempted by Satan, Adam gave up the contentment and his ambition for the higher state was stirred. He desired for the eternal life of heavenly nature, hence the change in the object of life. The immediate objects of the

human senses yielded to the distant ones of the human intellect which could not be achieved but through strife, labor and toil. This is the significance of the fall, i.e. the fall from the ease and the comfort of the animal life in the sensual paradise with the desire to gain ease and comfort of the higher order through strife and labor, which means the sense of duty and stepping out of what it is, into what it ought to be, which is the first sense of the moral imperative of the conscience—what should be done and what should not be done. Here, Adam enters into the realm of responsibility. The life now is no more mere meeting the demands of the animal senses but to control the demands and modify them harmoniously, to achieve the higher objects of dominating the higher regions and effecting the expansion of life through space and time. Remoter the object, greater would be the effect and the responsibility, but so long as the object remains within the limitations of time and space the value of life will not be much better than that of the animals. The human life shall have its value distinct from the animal life, if the object be beyond all limitations, i.e. the Ultimate (God). To have this object in the focus of the human consciousness, special guidance from the Absolute is the need.

"Adam with the potentiality he carried and with the names he was acquainted with, stepped out of the Paradise with a clean and a repentant heart and shouldering the responsibility, turned toward the Lord. Hence he was blessed with the guiding revelations. Thus the life of man starts on the earth, clean, pure, blessed, and divinely guided on the path to the Ultimate. With this lofty object in view, if man puts all his senses and the faculties into functions, with which he is endowed and the divine guidance, he is on the right path and will be termed as the blessed one. His desires in the form of greed, lust, hatred, anger, harshness, etc. will be modified and then become subordinate to the intellect guided by the divine inspiration, will be termed as excellence and good. On the contrary, if the object be anything other than God, the same qualities become condemnable and termed as base, evil and mean.

"This interpretation of the history of Adam presented by the Holy Qur'an discards the Christian theory of the fall of Adam as an evil and the original sin, and the dark aspect of the human life, and it also discards the view of Adam being a sinner. The Holy Qur'an has used the word *asa* and *ghawa* regarding Adam's approaching the tree yet taking into consideration that the prohibition was given when Adam was in the Paradise, i.e. before his shouldering the responsibility and the order was not imperative or prohibitive as already stated, and after shouldering the responsibility he is not accused of any disobedience or committing any sin. Hence Adam came on the earth as the Vicegerent of God, sinless, following nothing but the divine guidance as the tradition says: 'Every human child is born with the nature (of Adam's origin) [*fitrah*]; verily it is the parents (i.e., the environment) that turn it into a Jew, a Christian or Magian'." M□r Ahmad 'Al□, *The Holy Qur'an*, 80, 82, 84. [Trans.]

[82] Sigmund Freud (1856–1939): Austrian neurologist, author, psychiatrist, and founder of almost all the basic concepts of psychoanalysis. He graduated with an MD from the University of Vienna in 1881, and for some months in 1885 he studied under JM Charcot, whose work in hysteria converted Freud to the cause of psychiatry. Dissatisfied with hypnosis and electrotheraphy as treatment techniques, he evolved the psychoanalytic method, founded on dream analysis and free association. Because of his belief that sexual impulses lay at the heart of neuroses, he was reviled professionally for a decade, but by 1906 disciples like Alfred Adler and Carl Gustav Jung were gathering around him (both were later to break

away from the International Psychoanalytic Association, dissenting with Freud's views on infantile sexuality). For some 30 years he worked to establish the truth of his theories, and these years were especially fruitful. Fleeing Nazi anti-Semitism, he left Vienna for London in 1938 and there spent the last year of his life. [Trans.]

[83] *Sharh-e Chehel Had□th*, p. 168.

[84] *Ibid*.

[85]'All□mah Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Tab□tab□'□ (1904-81) was the Islamic scholar, thinker and philosopher best known for his 20-volume exegesis of the Qur'an, *Al-M□z□n f□ Tafs□r al-Qur'□n*. For his short biography, see Foreword of *Al-M□z□n: An Exegesis of the Qur'an*, trans. Sayyid Saeed Akhtar Rizvi (Tehran: World Organization for Islamic Services, 1983), pp. xxi-xxiv. [Trans.]

[86] Professor □yatull□h Murtad□ Mutahhar□ (1298-1358 AHS) was born on Bahman 13, 1298 AHS in the village of Fariman near Mashhad into a family of clergymen. At the age of 12, he went to Mashhad where he learned the basics of Islamic sciences and then moved to Qum where he attended the class sessions conducted by the great authorities of the theological center. From 1319 AHS Mutahhar□ had taken part in the sessions led by Im□m Khomein□ and other famous teachers of the time. Moreover, he himself conducted lessons in subjects like Arabic literature, logic, *kal□m* [scholasticism], jurisprudence, and philosophy. In 1331 AHS Mutahhari was transferred from Qum to Tehran and in 1334 AHS he was invited to teach Islamic sciences at the Faculty of Islamic Sciences, Tehran University. He was arrested on the midnight of Khord□d 15, 1342 AHS and spent 43 days in prison. After Im□m Khomeini's migration to Paris in France, Mutahhar□ went to meet him and His Eminence assigned him the responsibility of organizing the Revolutionary Council. On the night of Ord□behesht 11, 1358 AHS (May 2, 1979) Mutahhar□ was martyred by an agent of the Furq□n terrorist group. He wrote more than 50 books and tens of articles, and delivered scores of speeches. Im□m Khomein□ said of Mutahhar□: "His written and spoken words are, without exception, educational and enlivening... I recommend the students and intellectual group not to let Mutahhar□'s words be forgotten by un-Islamic tricks..." [Trans.]

[87] *S□rah ar-R□m* 30:30.

[88] See *Sharh-e Chehel Had□th*, p. 179.

[89] *Ibid*., p. 180.

[90] *Ibid*., p. 182.

[91] *Ibid*., p. 183.

[92] *Ibid*., p. 168.

[93] *Ibid*., p. 625. For further familiarity with Im□m Khomein□'s views on this issue, refer to *Sharh-e Had□th-e Jun□d-e 'Aql va Jahl*.

[94] *S□rah al-Hijr* 15:28-29.

[95] *Tafs□l Was□'il ash-Sh□'ah il□ Tahs□l Mas□'il ash-Shar□'ah*, vol. 2, p. 447.

[96] *Mathnaw□*, vol. 4, Book Four, p. 77.

Nicholson, Book Four, vol. 4, p. 171. [Trans.]

[97] *Ibid*., p. 79.

Nicholson, Book Four under *The battle of the reason against the flesh*, vol. 4, p. 177. [Trans.]

[98] “Literally, ‘take lessons from’.” Nicholson, Book Four, under *The poet and the two viziers*, vol. 4, footnote 3, p. 137. [Trans.]

[99] *Ibid*., p. 79. For information on the *ah□d□th* pertaining to this couplet, see Bad□‘ az-Zam□n Fur□z□nfar, *Ah□d□th va Qis□s-e Mathnav□*, com. Husayn D□w□d□ (Tehran: Am□r Kab□r, 1376 AHS), p. 365.

Nicholson, Book Four, under *The poet and the two viziers*, vol. 4, p. 137. [Trans.]

[100] “Literally, ‘to adopt companionship apart from thee’.” Nicholson, Book Four, under *the battle of the reason against the flesh*, vol. 4, footnote 2, p. 175. [Trans.]

[101] *Ibid*., p. 79.

Nicholson, Book Four, under *The battle of the reason against the flesh*,vol. 4, p. 175. [Trans.]

[102] Albert Schweitzer (1875–1965): German physician, theologian, missionary, musician, and philosopher. He abandoned an academic career in theology to study medicine and became a missionary doctor (1913) in French Equatorial Africa (now Gabon). He devoted his life to the hospital he founded there. His many writings include *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* (1906), and *The Decay and Restoration of Civilization* and *Civilization and Ethics* (1923), the first two volumes of his *Philosophy of Civilization.* Schweitzer won the 1952 Nobel Peace Prize for his inspiring humanitarian work. [Trans.]

[103] *Sharh-e Chehel Had□th*, p. 5.

[104]Far□d□n Mash□r□: a contemporary Iranian poet. [Pub.]

[105] Far□d□n Mash□r□, *Z□b□-ye J□vid□neh* (Tehran: Sukhan, 1376 AHS), pp. 311–313.

[106] *Existentialism va Is□lat-e Bashar* [*Existentialism and Human Nature*], p. 25.

[107] *House of water and flower*: the physical body of the human being. [Trans.]

[108] Jal□l ad-D□n Muhammad Balkh□, *Guz□deh-ye Ghazaliy□t-e Shams*, comp. Muhammad-Rid□ Shaf□‘□ Kadkan□ (Tehran: Kit□bha-ye J□b□, 1374 AHS), p. 271.

[109] *S□rah al-Ins□n* 76:2–3.

[110] *S□rah al-Balad* 90:8–10.

[111] See *Sharh-e Chehel Had□th*, p. 401.

[112] *S□rah al-An‘□m* 6:148.

[113] *S□rah al-An‘□m* 6:35.

[114] *S□rah al-M□’idah* 5:48.

[115] *Mathnaw□*, vol. 1, p. 37.

Nicholson, Book One under *How the disciples raised objections against the vizier’s secluding himself*, vol. 1, p. 71. [Trans.]

[116] *Ibid*., vol. 5, p. 149.

Nicholson, Book Five under *Another story in answer to the Necessitarian*, vol. 5, p. 367. [Trans.]

[117] Written by Miguel de Cervantes (1547–1616), a Spanish novelist, dramatist and poet, *Don Quixote* is the story of Alonso Quixano, a country gentleman, whose crazed mind leads him to change his name to Don Quixote de la Mancha and to go forth to right the world’s wrongs. Cervantes’ reputation as one of the world’s greatest writers rests almost entirely on this most famous work of his. [Trans.]

[118] “Reading فضل.” Nicholson, Book Three, vol. 3, footnote 3, p. 293. [Trans.]

[119] “That is, the science of jurisprudence [*fiqh*].” Nicholson, Book Three, vol. 4, footnote 3, p. 293. [Trans.]

[120] “‘The religion of old woman’ is synonymous with ignorance and superstition.” Nicholson, Book Three, vol. 3, footnote 5, p. 293. [Trans.]

[121] *Ibid*., vol. 3, p. 125.

Nicholson, Book Three under *Explaining* (*what is signified by*) *the far-sighted blind man, the deaf man who is sharp of hearing, and the naked man with the long skirts*, vol. 3, pp. 293, 295. [Trans.]

[122] Existentialism: 20th century philosophical current that stresses political responsibility and the relation of the individual to the universe or to God. In general, existentialists emphasize the fear and despair that isolated individuals feel. [Trans.]

[123]Søren Aabye Kierkegaard (1813–55): Danish religious philosopher and precursor of existentialism. Opposing GWF Hegel, he emphasized that one has a free will and can pass from the aesthetic (or material) to the ethical point of view and finally, through ‘a leap of faith,’ to the religious. Ignored in the 19th century, he has influenced 20th century Protestant theology and modern literature and psychology. His main works are *Either/Or* (1843), *Fear and Trembling* (1843), and *Philosophical Fragments* (1844). [Trans.]

[124] This discussion is extracted from the lectures of Prof. Mustafā Malikiān in *The History of Western Philosophy*, vol. 4, pp. 111–112. For further information on the philosophy of existentialism and its rudimentary teachings, refer to vol. 4, pp. 29–189 of the book, which is a versatile and precise introduction to philosophy.

[125] *Mathnawī*, vol. 3, p. 94.

Nicholson, Book Three under *Return to the story of Daqīqī*, vol. 3, p. 215. [Trans.]

[126] *The History of Western Philosophy*, vol. 4, p. 22.

[127] *Loc. cit.*

[128] Muhammad Muhammadī Reyshahrī, *Mīzān al-Hikmah* (Qum: Dār al-Hadīth, 1375 AHS), vol. 3, p. 1876.

[129] *Loc. cit.*

[130] *Loc. cit.*

[131] *Ibid*.

[132] See *loc. cit.*

[133] *Sharh-e Chehel Hadīth*, p. 7.

[134] *Sharh-e Chehel Hadīth*, p. 63.

[135] *Sharh-e Chehel Hadīth*, p. 95.

[136] *Golestān-e Sa‘dī*, ed. Ghulām-Husayn Yūsufī (Tehran: Khwārazmī, 1374 AHS), p. 117. Shaykh Muslihuddīn Sa‘dī ash-Shīrāzī, *The Gulistan or Rose Garden*, trans. Francis Gladwin (London: Alhoda, 2000), chap. 3, *On Excellence of Contentment*, Tale xxii,p. 197. The whole tale is as follows:

I saw a merchant who possessed one hundred and fifty camels laden with merchandize, and fifty slaves and servants. One night, in the island of Kīsh, he entertained me in his own apartment, and during the

whole night did not cease talking foolishly, saying, "I have such and such property in Turkistan, and such goods in Hindustan; these are the title-deeds of such a piece of land, and for this matter, such one is security." Sometimes he would say, "I have an indication to go to Alexandria, the air of which is very pleasant." Then again, "No, I will not go, because the Mediterranean Sea is boisterous. O Sa'd, I have another journey in contemplation, and after I have performed that, I will pass the remainder of my life in retirement, and leave off trading." I asked what journey it was. He replied, "I want to carry Persian brimstone to China, where I heard it bears a very high price; from thence I will transport chinaware to Greece; and take the brocades of Greece to India' and Indian steel to Aleppo; the glassware of Aleppo, I will convey to Yemen, and from thence go with stripped cloths to Persia; after which I will leave off trade, and sit down in my shop." He spoke so much of this foolishness that at length, being quite exhausted, he said, "O Sa'd, relate also of something of what you have seen and heard." I replied:
"Have you not heard that once upon a time, a chief, as he was traveling in the desert of Ghr, fell from his camel? He said that the covetous eye of the worldly man is either satisfied through contentment, or will be filled with the earth of the grave." Ibid., pp. 196-197.[Trans.]
[137] "انّ الحرّ حرّ على جميع احواله." *Usl al-Kfi*, vol. 2, p. 89. [Pub.]
[138] *Sharh-e Chehel Hadth*, p. 257.
[139] *Ibid.*, p. 379.
[140] *Ibid.*, p. 380.
[141] Muhammad ibn Ya'qb al-Kulayn, *Fur' al-Kf*, vol. 5, p. 12. For information on the references of this hadth and its Sunn narrations, see *Ahdth wa Qisas Mathnaw*, p. 63
[142] *Sharh-e Chehel Hadth*, p. 6.
[143] *Loc. cit.*
[144] *Mathnaw*, vol. 1, p. 71.
Nicholson, Book One under The jihd against the flesh, vol. 1, p. 149. [Trans.]
[145] *Sharh-e Chehel Hadth*, pp. 12-13.
[146] For information about this claim and its spuriousness, see *Guzdeh-e Ghazalit-e Shams*, footnote of page 578.
[147] *Loc. cit.*
[148] Khwjah Shams ad-Dn Muhammad Hfiz Shrz (ca. 1325-1391) was the fourteenth century Persian lyric bard and panegyrist, and commonly considered as the preeminent master of the *ghazal* form. [Pub.]
[149] Syeh, *Hfiz* (Tehran: Krnmeh, 1376 AHS), p. 113.
[150] Jainism: a religion and philosophy of India. Along with Hinduism and Buddhism, it is one of the three most ancient of India's religious traditions still in existence. The name Jainism derives from the Sanskrit verb root *ji*, 'to conquer.' It refers to the ascetic battle that the Jaina monks must fight against the passions and bodily senses in order to gain omniscience and the complete purity of soul that represents the highest religious goal in the Jaina system. The monk-ascetic who achieves this omniscience and purity is called a Jina (literally, 'Conqueror' or 'Victor'), and adherents to the tradition are called Jainas or Jains. Although Jainism has a much smaller number of adherents than do Hinduism

and Sikhism, its influence on India's culture has been considerable, including significant contribution in philosophy and logic, art and architechture, grammar, mathematics, astronomy and astrology, and literature.

For an introductory survey of Jainism, see Hermann Jacobi, "Jainism," in *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* (1928) vol. 7, pp. 465–474 and Colette Caillat, "Jainism," in *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. Mircea Eliade (1987) vol. 7, pp. 507–514.[Trans.]

[151] Mahavira: literally means 'Great Hero' is the title labeled to Vardhamana to whom the origin of Jainism in the 6th century BC is attributed. Mahavira was the 24th and last Tirthankara (literally, 'Ford-maker') of the current age (*kalpa*) of the world. (Tirthankaras, also called Jinas, are revealers of the Jaina religious path [*dharma*] who have crossed over life's stream of rebirths and have set the example that all Jainas must follow.) Mahavira was a contemporary of Siddhartha Gautama (the Buddha) and was born in the same area, the lower Gangetic Plain in India. Although Mahavira was a historical figure, all of the accounts of his life are legendary and serve the ritual life of the Jaina community better than they do the historian. However, a little of the historical circumstances of Mahavira and the early Jaina community can be pieced together from a variety of sources.

Mahavira, like the Buddha, was the son of a chieftain of the Kshatriya (military or ruling) class. At age 30 he renounced his princely status to take up the ascetic life. It is likely that he pursued the discipline of a preestablished ascetic tradition and had a reforming influence on it. His acknowledged status as the 24th Tirthankara (or Jina) means that Jainas perceive him as the last revealer in this cosmic age of the Jaina *dharma*. Mahavira had 11 disciples (called *ganadharas*), all of whom were Brahman converts to Jainism; all founded monstic lineages, but only two—Indrabhuti Gautama and Sudharman, the disciples who survived Mahavira—served as the points of origin for the historical Jaina monastic community. [Trans.]

[152] For familiarity with these sects, see D□ry□sh Sh□yig□n, *Ady□n va Maktabh□-ye Falsafeh-ye Hind* [*Religions and Philosophical Schools of India*] (Tehran: Am□r Kab□r, 1375 AHS).

[153] B□b□ T&□hir: An Iranian poet and mystic of the mid-5th century AH. [Trans.]

[154] Sa'd□: Shaykh Musl□h ad-D□n Sa'd□ (1184–1283) was one of the greatest Persian poets. Born in Shiraz, he studied Sufi mysticism at the Niz□miyyah madrasah at Baghdad, with Shaykh 'Abdul-Q□dir al-J□l□n□ and with Shih□b ad-D□n Suhraward□. He made the pilgrimage to Mecca many times and traveled to Central Asia, India, the Seljuq territories in Anatolia, Syria, Egypt, Arabia, Yemen, Abyssinia, and Morocco. His best known works are *B□st□n* [Garden] and *Golest□n* [Rose-Garden], also known as *Sa'd□ N□meh*. The former is a collection of poems on ethical subjects, the latter a collection of moral stories in prose. Sa'd□ is also renowned for his lyric poetry and his panegyrics (written works of praise), composed in both Persian and Arabic. His influence on Persian, Turkish and Indian literatures has been very considerable, and his works were often translated into European languages from the 17th century onward. [Trans.]

[155] *Golest□n*, p. 142.

Gladwin, chap. 4, *On the Advantages of Taciturnity*, Tale xxii, p. 197. [Trans.]

[156] *Ibid.*, p. 104.

[157] *M□z□n al-Hikmah*, vol. 2, p. 1122.

[158] *Loc. cit.*

[159] Wearing a woolen garment signifies leading a life in seclusion usually associated with asceticism, self-mortification and the like. [Trans.]

[160] *Nahj al-Bal□ghah*, Sermon 209.

[161] *Sharh-e Chehel Had□th*, p. 6.

[162] *S□rah al-Anbiy□'* 21:16.

[163] See *S□rah al-Mulk* 67:4.

[164] *S□rah □li-Imr□n* 3:191.

[165] Dalai Lama and Howard C. Cutler, *Hunar-e Sh□dm□ndeg□* [*The Art of Happiness*], trans. Muhammad-'Al□ Ham□d Raf□'□ (Tehran: Kit□bs□r□-ye Tand□s, 1379 AHS), pp. 249-250.
The book, *The Art of Happiness: A Handbook for Living* (New York: Riverhead Books, 1998), hardcover, 322 pages, is based on conversations between the Dalai Lama and Dr. Howard Cutler, a Diplomat of the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology, in which the latter endeavors to frame the former's teachings, stories, and meditations in such a way that makes it interesting for even non-Buddhists. Exploring topics such as intimacy, compassion, suffering, anger, kindness, hatred, and change, the Dalai Lama makes clear that real happiness depends on transforming our deepest attitudes, the very way we look at, and deal with, ourselves and others. [Trans.]

[166] See *Sharh-e Chehel Had□th*, pp. 133-143.

[167] *S□rah al-Fath* 48:29.

[168] *Sharh-e Chehel Had□th*, pp. 134-135.

[169] *Bih□r al-Anw□r*, vol. 8, p. 170. [Pub.]

[170] *Mathnaw□*, vol. 5 (Book Five), p. 32.
Nicholson, Book Five under *"No Monkery in Islam"*, vol. 5,p. 71. [Trans.]

[171] *Ibid.*, vol. 6 (Book Six), p. 32.
Nicholson, Book Six under *The Fowler and the Bird*,vol. 6, p. 59. [Trans.]

[172] *Sharh-e Chehel Had□th*, p. 16.

[173] *S□rah Q□f* 50:30. [Trans.]

[174] Q□r□n (Korah): one of those who had believed in the ministry of Prophet Moses (*'a*) but when God tested him with the abundance of wealth, he was proved to be a disbeliever. See *S□rah al-Qasas* 28:76, 79; *S□rah al-'Ankab□t* 29:39; *S□rah al-Gh□fir* 40:24. [Trans.]

[175] *Hunar-e Sh□dm□ndeg□* [*The Art of Happiness*], pp. 21-22.

[176] *Ibid.*, p. 25.

[177] *Mathnaw□*, vol. 1 (Book One), p. 10.
Nicholson, Book One under *Proem*, vol. 1, p. 7. [Trans.]

[178] *M□z□n al-Hikmah*, vol. 3, p. 2639.

[179] *Sharh-e Chehel Had□th*, p. 19.

[180] *Loc. cit.*

[181] Ab□ 'Al□ Hasan Muhammad M□k□l: known as Hosang, a pious and intellectual person. He was appointed as vizier by Sult□n Mahm□d, the 3rd most powerful Ghaznavid king. [Pub.]

[182] *Sharh-e Chehel Had□th*, p. 16.

[183] *Sharh-e Chehel Had□th*, pp. 19-20.

[184] ***"Hast thou seen him who chooseth for his god his own lust?" S□rah al-Furq□n* 25: 43.**

[185] *Tadhkirat' ul-Awliy□'*: a book written in Persian by 'Att□r Neysh□b□r□ concerning the life story of 92 saints [*awliy□'*] and Sufi shaykhs along with their moral excellences and wise sayings. An abridged English version of the book is translated by Arthur J. Arberry, *Muslim Saints and Mystics* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1966). [Trans.]

[186]Ab□ Sa'□d Hasan Yas□r al-Basr□ (21-110 AH): one of the notable jurists and ascetics at the time of Hajj□j ibn Y□suf and 'Umar ibn 'Abdul-'Az□z. For his life account, see Arberry, *Muslims Saints and Mystics*,pp. 19-25. [Trans.]

[187] Far□d ad-D□n 'Att□r Neysh□b□r□, *Tadhkirat' ul-Awliy□'*, Ed. Muhammad Isti'l□m□ (Tehran: Zov□r, 1384 AHS), p. 46.

[188] *Loc. cit.*

[189] *Ibid*., p. 317. For the life account of Sahl ibn 'Abdull□h at-Tustar□, see Arberry, *Muslims Saints and Mystics*,pp. 153-160. [Trans.]

[190] Ab□ Sulaym□n ibn Nusayr D□w□d at-T□'□ was a famous ascetic [*z□hid*], jurist [*faq□h*] and scholar of the sciences of *had□th* [*muhaddith*] during the 2nd century AH. For his life account, see Arberry, *Muslims Saints and Mystics*,pp. 138-142. [Trans.]

[191] *Tadhkirat' ul-Awliy□'*, p. 262.

[192] *Ibid*., p. 264.

[193] *Ibid*., p. 266.

[194] Hujjat al-Isl□m Ab□ H+□mid Muh$ammad ibn Ghazz□l□ at-T□s□ was born in Iran in 1058 at T□s, Khor□s□n, where he died in 1111. Al-Ghazz□l□ is recognized by many as a great theologian of Islam and the final authority for Sunn□ orthodoxy. Starting his religious life as orthodox, al- Ghazz□l□ soon turned to Sufism. He spent many years roaming from place to place before eventually going to Baghdad to preach and teach. It was there that he composed what many see as his masterpiece, *Ih$y□' 'Ul□m ad-D□n* [The Revivification of the Sciences of Religion]. His other well-known works include: *F□tih$at al-'Ul□m*; *Tah□fut al-Fal□sifah*; *Al-Iqtis,□d f□'l-I'tiq□d* and *K□my□-ye Sa'□dat* [The Alchemy of Happiness] which is *Ih$y□' 'Ul□m ad-D□n* re-presented on a smaller scale for Persian readers. Al-Ghazz□l□ was, however, among a number of classical Sunn□ authorities who attempted to legitimize both the hereditary caliphate and the usurpation of power by military dynasties, by means of their political theories. The influence of these theories has far outlived the circumstances that produced them and it continues to affect the political attitudes of Sunn□ Muslims, although it is now diminishing. [Trans.]

[195] The abbreviation, "*r*" stands for the Arabic invocative phrase, *rahmatull□h 'alayh*, *rahmatull□h 'alayh□*, *rahmatull□h 'alayhim* [may God's mercy be upon him//her/them], which is used after the names of pious individuals. [Pub.]

[196] Ab□ H□mid Muhammad al-Ghazz□l□, *K□my□-ye Sa'□dat* [The Alchemy of Happiness], ed. Husayn Khady□jam (Tehran: Intish□r□t-e 'Ilm□ va Farhang□, 1374 AHS), vol. 1, p. 434.

[197] *Ibid*., p. 435.

[198] *Loc. cit.*

[199] *Ibid.*, pp. 442–443.

[200] *Ibid.*, p. 445.

[201] ‘Abdul-Karīm Surūsh, *Qisseh-ye Arbāb-e Ma‘rifat* (Tehran: Intishārāt-e Sirāt, 1373 AHS), p. 368.

[202] On the correlation between enjoining what is good [and forbidding what is wrong, on one hand,] and accountability, [on the other hand,] see Sayyid Hasan Islāmī, *Amr beh Ma‘rūf va Nahy-e az Munkar* (Qum: Khurram, 1375 AHS).

[203] *Usūl al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 164.

It is to be noted that this *hadīth* is universally accepted by Muslims and are quoted by the followers of the different Islamic schools of thought. [Trans.]

[204] *Sahīfeh-ye Imām*, vol. 18, p. 40.

[205] Mīrzā Husayn Nūrī T&abarsī, *Mustadrak al-Was’il wa Mustanbit al-Mas’il* (Qum: Mu‘assasah āli al-Bayt (*‘a*) Li-Ihyā at-Turāth, 1408 AH), vol. 12, p. 183.

[206] Concerning this *hadīth* and Imām Khomeinī’s discussion of it, see *Sharh-e Chehel Hadīth*, p. 559.

[207] *Sahīfeh-ye Imām*, vol. 18, p. 314.

[208] *Ibid.*, vol. 17, p. 41.

[209] *Ibid.*, p. 42.

[210] *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Maxim 131.

[211] *Sūrah al-Hadīd* 57:20.

[212] For instance, see *Sūrah al-An‘ām* 6:32; *Sūrah al-‘Ankabūt* 29:64; *Sūrah Muhammad* 47:36.

[213] *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Maxim 77.

[214] *Sharh-e Chehel Hadīth*, p. 120.

[215] *Loc. cit.*

[216] *Ibid.*, pp. 120–121.

[217] *Sūrah al-Isrā’* 17:72.

[218] *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Maxim 303.

[219] *Sharh-e Chehel Hadīth*, p. 122.

[220] *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Sermon 133.

[221] *Sharh-e Chehel Hadīth*, p. 121.

[222] *Usūl al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 315.

[223] *Sharh-e Chehel Hadīth*, p. 124–125, 127–128.

[224] *Sūrah ar-Rūm* 30:7.

[225] “من لا معاش له، لا معاد له.” [Trans.]

[226] It refers to the Prophetic saying, “نعم المال الصالح للرجل الصالح.” *Ahādīth wa Qisas Mathnawī* [*Hadīth*s and the Story of *Mathnawī*], p. 49.

[227] *Mathnawī*, Book One, vol. 1, p. 53.

Nicholson, Book One, under *How the lion again declared exertion to be superior to trust in God and expounded the advantages of exertion*, vol. 1, p. 107. [Trans.]

[228] It refers to the followers of the Mani cult. The cult of Mani consists of the teachings of Mani, which had emerged as a form of creed and religion during the Sassanid period in Iran. [Pub.]
[229] Paulo Cuello, *K□h-e Panjom* [*The Fifth Mountain*], trans. Del-□r□ Qahrem□n (Tehran: Nashr-e Alborz, 1377 AHS), p. 80.
[230] The other points of the Four Noble Truths are as follows: The cause of suffering is wrongly directed desire; removal of the desire is the way of removing the cause of suffering; and that the Noble Eightfold Path leads to the end of suffering. [Trans.]
[231] Its refers to the Noble Eightfold Path, which consists of (1) right understanding, (2) right thought, (3) right speech, (4) right action, (5) right means of livelihood, (6) right effort, (7) right concentration, and (8) right meditation. [Trans.]
[232] See *S□rah S□d* 38:41-44.
[233] *Kit□b-e Ayy□b dar Majm□'eh-ye Kutub-e T□r□kh□ va Hikmat* ["The Book of Job," in *Collection of Books on History and Wisdom*], translation under the supervision of Saru Khacheki, p. 798.
Book of Job 1:1-2. [Trans.]
[234] *Loc. cit.*
[235] *Loc. cit.*
[236] This issue has been discussed in the books of philosophy and scholasticism [*kal□m*] under the issue of *shur□r* [evils, or bad things or happenings]. One of the best books on this topic written in Persian language is the book entitled, *'Adl-e Il□h□* [Divine Justice] by the late Prof. □yatull□h Murtad□ Mutahhar□. In that book, he examines the largely technical subjects in a non-technical and attractive manner. Besides, for information on the new approaches on this issue, see Michael Peterson, [et al.], *'Aql va I'tiq□d-e D□n□: Dar□mad□ bar Falsafeh-ye D□n* [*Reason and Religious Belief: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion*], trans. Ahmad Nar□q□ and Ibr□h□m Sult□n□ (Tehran: T&arh-e N□, 1376 AHS), pp. 175-213.
[237] *"And of knowledge ye have been vouchsafed but little." S□rah al-Isr□'* 17:85.
[238] Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-82): US philosophical essayist, poet, and lecturer. He resigned a Unitarian pastorate (1831) and, after traveling in Europe, settled in Concord, Mass. His *Nature* (1836) was the strongest motivating statement of US transcendentalism. After 1837 he became nationally renowned as a public speaker and after 1842 as editor of the transcendentalist journal, *The Dial*. He later adjusted his idealistic view of the individual, expressed in essays and addresses like "The American Scholar" and "Self-Reliance," to accommodate the US experience of humanity's historical and political limitations, especially over the issue of slavery. [Trans.]
[239] Tuchihiko Izutsu, *Maf□h□m-e Akhl□q□-D□n□ dar Qur'an* [*Ethical-Religious Concepts in the Qur'an*], trans. Far□d□n Badreh'□ (Tehran: Farz□n, 1378 AHS), pp. 14-15.
[240] *Mathnaw□*, Book Four, vol. 4, pp. 11-12.
Nicholson, Book Four, under *Conclusion of the story of the lover who fled from the night-patrol into an orchard unknown to him, and for joy at finding his beloved in the orchard called down blessings on the night-patrol and said, 'It may be that you loathe a thing although it is better for you*,vol. 4, p. 13. [Trans.]
[241] *Sharh-e Chehel Had□th*, p. 120.

[242] “لولاالتضاد، لما صح دوام الفيض عن مبدأ الجواد.” [Trans.]

[243] *Sharh-e Chehel Had□th*, p. 643.

[244] *Sharh-e Chehel Had□th*, p. 643-644.

[245] *Mathnaw□*, Book Six, vol. 6, pp. 10-11.

Nicholson, Book Six, under *Proem*,vol. 6, pp. 7-9. [Trans.]

[246] Michael Peterson, [et al.], *‘Aql va I‘tiq□d-e D□n□: Dar□mad□ bar Falsafeh-ye D□n* [*Reason and Religious Belief: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion*], trans. Ahmad Nar□q□ and Ibr□h□m Sult□n□ (Tehran: T&arh-e N□, 1376 AHS), pp. 175-213.

:The text of the statement is as follows [247]

أنَّ أَشَدَّ النَّاسِ بَلاءً النَّبِيُّونَ، ثُمَّ الوَصِيُّونَ، ثُمَّ الأَمْثَلَ فَالأَمْثَلَ. وَإِنَّمَا يُبْتَلى المُؤْمِنُ عَلَى قَدْرِ أَعْمَالِهِ الحَسَنَةِ، فَمَنْ صَحَّ دِينُهُ وَحَسُنَ عَمَلُهُ اشْتَدَّ بَلاؤُهُ، وَذَلِكَ أَنَّ اللهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ لَمْ يَجْعَلِ الدُّنْيَا ثَوَاباً لِمُؤْمِنٍ وَلا عُقُوبَةً لِكَافِرٍ، وَمَنْ سَخُفَ دِينُهُ وَضَعُفَ عَمَلُهُ قَلَّ بَلاؤُهُ، وَإِنَّ البَلاءَ أَسْرَعُ إِلَى المُؤْمِنِ التَّقِيِّ مِنَ المَطَرِ إِلَى قَرَارِ الأَرْضِ.

Al-Kulayn□, *Us□l al-K□f□,* vol. 2, p. 259, *had□th* no. 29. For an elaborate exposition of this *had□th*, see *Sharh-e Chehel Had□th*, Fifteenth *Had□th*, “The Believer’s Trials and Tribulations,” pp. 235-251. [Trans.]

[248] *S□rah al-Anbiy□’* 21:35.

[249] *S□rah al-A‘r□f* 7:168.

[250] There are many □*yah*s in the Qur’an regarding *bal□*. See, for example, the following □*yah*s: *S□rah al-Qalam* 68:17; *S□rah Muhammad* 47:31; *S□rah al-Baqarah* 2:155; *S□rah al-Kahf* 18:7; *S□rah al-An‘□m* 6:165; *S□rah al-Anf□l* 8:18; *S□rah al-Fajr* 89:15-16.

[251] *Hunar-e Sh□dm□ndeg□* [*The Art of Happiness*], p. 205.

[252] *Ibid*., p. 206.

[253] *Sharh-e Chehel Had□th*, p. 245.

[254] *Ibid*., p. 240.

[255] *Ibid*., p. 241.

[256] *Ibid*., p. 242.

[257] *Ibid*., p. 240.

[258] *S□rah an-Nis□’* 4:79.

[259] *S□rah ar-R□m* 30:41.

[260] Sa‘□d Sh□ml□, *Behd□sht-e Rav□n□* [*Mental Hygiene*] (Tehran: Intish□r□t-e Rushd, 1378 AHS), p.

85.

[261] Imām Ridā: eighth of the Twelve Imāms from the Prophet's Progeny, born in 148 AH/765 and died in 203 AH/817 in Tūs (Mashhad). He was poisoned by the 'Abbāsid caliph Ma'mūn, who had appointed him as his successor at first, but then grew fearful of the wide following he commanded. His shrine in Mashhad is one of the principal centers of pilgrimage and religious learning in Iran. See Bāqir Sharīf al-Qarashī, *The Life of Imām 'Ali bin Mūsā al-Ridā*, trans. Jāsim al-Rasheed (Qum: Ansariyan Publications, 2001); Muhammad Jawād Fadlallāh, *Imām al-Ridā: A Historical and Biographical Research*, trans. Yāsīn T. al-Jibourī, http://www.al-islam.org/al-rida/index.html [16]; Muhammad Mahdī Shams ad-Dīn, "Al-Imām ar-Ridā (*'a*) and the Heir Apparency," *At-Tawhīd Journal*, http://www.al-islam.org/al-tawhid/heir.htm [17].

[262] It refers to the event when the Egyptian woman [Zulaykhā] was seducing Joseph (*'a*) to commit fornication with her. In reply, he uttered the above statement and as a result he was put behind bars. See *Sūrah Yūsuf* 12:33.

[263] *Mīzān al-Hikmah*, vol. 3, p. 2,023.

[264] *'Aql va I'tiqād-e Dīnī: Darāmadī bar Falsafeh-ye Dīn* [*Reason and Religious Belief: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion*], p. 197.

[265] *Sharh-e Chehel Hadīth*, p. 245.

[266] *Loc. cit*.

[267] *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Sermon 28.

[268] *Sharh-e Chehel Hadīth*, p. 245.

[269] Loc. Cit.

[270] That is, he is really acting as your friend and well-wisher. It refers to the porcupine's habit of exerting its quills when attacked. See, Nicholson, Book Four, vol. 4, footnote 1, p. 15. [Trans.]

[271] *Mathnawī*, Book Four, vol. 4, p. 13.

Nicholson, Book Four under *Story of the preacher who at the beginning of every exhortation used to pray for the unjust, hard-hearted and irreligious*, vol. 4, pp. 15, 17. [Trans.]

[272] That is, the carnal nature.

[273] *Mathnawī*, Book Four, vol. 4, p. 13.

Nicholson, Book Four under *Story of the preacher who at the beginning of every exhortation used to pray for the unjust, hard-hearted and irreligious*, vol. 4, p. 17. [Trans.]

[274] *Mathnawī*, Book One, vol. 1, p. 37.

Nicholson, Book One under *How the disciples raised objections against the vizier's secluding himself*, vol. 1, p. 67. [Trans.]

[275] *Ibid*., p. 27.

Nicholson, Book One under *Story of the Caliph's seeing Laylā*, vol. 1, p. 47. [Trans.]

[276] This attack refers to the series of widespread killing, bloodshed and encroachments of Mu'āwiyah's army after the Battle of Siffīn on cities within the Commander of the Faithful's (*'a*) domain.

Mu'āwiyah ibn Abū Sufyān was the first caliph of the Umayyad dynasty (40 AH/662 CE), which ruled the Muslim world after the martyrdom of the Commander of the Faithful, 'Alī ibn Abū Tālib and the five-

month rule of the second Im□m, Hasan ibn ‘Al□ (*‘a*). As the founder of the Umayyad dynasty (Umayyad is derived from Ban□ ‘Umayyah, the name of the tribe to whom he belonged), Mu‘□wiyah revived hereditary monarchy and aristocracy in sharp contrast and opposition to the rudimentary precepts of Islam. History is replete with innumerable instances of cruelty and oppression perpetrated in the world of Islam during the reign of the Umayyads including the murder, banishment and imprisonment of the followers of the Prophet’s Progeny [*Ahl al-Bayt*] (*‘a*) as epitomized by the tragedy in Karbala (61 AH) during the reign of Mu‘□wiyah’s son and second Umayyad caliph, Yaz□d. [Trans.]

[277] *Ahl adh-Dhimmah* is the term used to designate the non-Muslims living under the protection of the Islamic state. [Trans.]

[278] *Nahj al-Bal□ghah*, Sermon 27.

[279] John Stuart Mill (1806-73): son of James Mill—a disciple of Jeremy Bentham, the father of utilitarianism—is considered one of the most important thinkers of the 19th century. Mill was the head of the utilitarian movement and worked actively to promote the rights of workers and women. His most important work, *System of Logic* (1834), is a seminal one. Other works include *Principles of Political Economy* (1848), the famous *On Liberty* (1859), *The Subjection of Women* (1869), and *Autobiography* (1873). Mill was a brilliant child, who at the age of 14, mastered Latin, classical literature, history, mathematics, economics, and philosophy. He followed in his father’s footsteps and became head of the East India Company but then went on to become a Member of Parliament in 1865. [Trans.]

[280] Utilitarianism: theory of ethics that holds that the rightness or wrongness of an action is determined by the happiness its consequences produce. The theory dates from the 18th century thinker Jeremy Bentham, who believed that actions are motivated by pleasure and pain and that happiness can be assessed by the quantity of pleasure. His follower John Stuart Mill later argued in *Utilitarianism* (1863) that some pleasures should be sought for their intrinsic quality. He interpreted the principles of utilitarianism as a basis for the struggle for political and social reforms. [Trans.]

[281] John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism*, ed. Roger Crisp (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 57.

[282] *S□rah T&□-H□* 20:2.

[283] *S□rah F□tir* 35:8.

[284] *S□rah at-Tawbah* 9:128.

[285] *Al-J□mi‘ as-Sagh□r*, vol. 2, p. 144.

[286] *Sharh-e Chehel Had□th*, p. 246.

[287] For an overview of the pertinent *had□th* on smiling, see *M□z□n al-Hikmah*, vol. 1, p. 262.

[288] For information on the viewpoint of religion with respect to happiness, see Sayyid Hasan Isl□m□, “*Haqq-e Sh□d b□dan* [*The Right of Being Happy*],” *Zendeg□* [*Life*], vol. 2 (Spring 1379 AHS), pp. 4-6.

[289] *Mathnaw□*, Book Two, vol. 2, p. 142.

Nicholson, Book Two, under *Story of the desert Arab and his putting sand in the sack and the philosopher’s rebuking him*,vol. 2, p. 335. [Trans.]

[290] *Mathnaw□*, Book Two, vol. 2, p. 143.

Nicholson, Book Two, under *Story of the desert Arab and his putting sand in the sack and the philosopher’s rebuking him*,vol. 2, p. 335. [Trans.]

[291] *Mathnaw*ī, Book Two, vol. 2, p. 144.

Nicholson, Book Two, under *Story of the desert Arab and his putting sand in the sack and the philosopher's rebuking him*,vol. 2, p. 337. [Trans.]

[292] "Reading فضل." Nicholson, Book Three, vol. 3, footnote 3, p. 293. [Trans.]

[293] *Ibid*., vol. 3, p. 125.

Nicholson, Book Three under *Explaining* (*what is signified by*) *the far-sighted blind man, the deaf man who is sharp of hearing, and the naked man with the long skirts*, vol. 3, pp. 293, 295. [Trans.]

[294] Donald D. Palmer, *Kierkegaard for Beginners* (London: Writers and Readers, 1996), pp. 35–36.

[295] See *S*ī*rah al-Baqarah* 2:31–33.

[296] *Sah*ī*feh-ye Im*ī*m*, vol. 13, p. 448.

[297] *Ibid*., p. 172.

[298] *Ibid*., p. 451.

[299] *S*ī*rah az-Zumar* 39:9.

[300] *Sah*ī*feh-ye Im*ī*m*, vol. 14, p. 358.

[301] *Ibid*., vol. 17, p. 186.

[302] *Sharh-e Chehel Had*ī*th*, p. 392.

[303] See *S*ī*rah al-A'r*ā*f* 7:175.

[304] *Sharh-e Chehel Had*ī*th*, p. 90.

[305] Following is the text of the *had*ī*th*:

دَخَلَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ المَسْجِدَ فَإِذَا جَمَاعَةٌ قَدْ أَطَافُوا بِرَجُلٍ فَقَالَ: مَا هَذَا؟ فَقِيلَ: عَلَّامَةٌ. فَقَالَ: وَمَا العَلّامَةُ؟ فَقَالوا لَهُ: أَعْلَمُ النَّاسِ بِأَنْسَابِ العَرَبِ وَوَقَائِعِهَا وَأَيَّامِ الجَاهِلِيَّةِ وَالأَشْعَارِ العَرَبِيَّةِ. فَقَال النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ: ذَاكَ عِلْمٌ لا يَضُرُّ مَنْ جَهِلَهُ وَلا يَنْفَعُ مَنْ عَلِمَهُ. ثُمَّ قَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ: إِنَّمَا العِلْمُ ثَلاثَةٌ: آيَةٌ مُحْكَمَةٌ أَوْ فَرِيضَةٌ عَادِلَةٌ أَوْ سُنَّةٌ قَائِمَةٌ، وَمَا خَلاهُنَّ فَهُوَ فَضْلٌ.

Al-Kulayn ī, *al-K*ā*f*ī, i, "kit ā b fadl al-'ilm", "b ā b sifat al-'ilm wa fadluh", *hadith* no. 1. For an exposition of this *had*ī*th*, see *Sharh-e Chehel Had*ī*th*, *had*ī*th* 24,p. 385–397.

[306] *Sharh-e Chehel Had*ī*th*, p. 396.

[307] *Ibid*., p. 391.

[308] *Ibid*., p. 386.

[309] For information on *had*ī*th*s that emphasize only the useful knowledge, see *M*ī*z*ā*n al-Hikmah*, vol. 3, p. 2094.

[310] *Sharh-e Chehel Had*ī*th*, p. 396.

[311] *Ibid*., p. 527.

[312] To term knowledge as the legacy of the prophets (*'a*) is relevant to the unanimously accepted *had□th*, "العلماءورثةالانبياء." [The scholars (the knowledgeable ones) are the heirs of the prophets (*'a*)]. [Trans.]

[313] *Sharh-e Chehel Had□th*, p. 413.

[314] *Ibid*., p. 457.

[315] *Ibid*., p. 527.

[316] *Mathnaw□*, Book Three, vol. 3, p. 94.

Nicholson, Book Three under *Return to the story of Daq□q□*, vol. 3, p. 215. [Trans.]

[317] *Sharh-e Chehel Had□th*, p. 527.

[318] *Loc. cit.*

[319] *Sharh-e Chehel Had□th*, p. 37.

[320] *Ibid*., p. 38.

[321] Max Weber (1864–1920): German economist and sociologist. His theories contributed to the formation of modern sociological theory. Weber considered bureaucracy the crucial component of society and created an ideal type method for examining different societies. His most influential work, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1904–05), deals with Protestantism's economic aspects. Other works include *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* and *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*.

[322] *D□neshmand va Siy□satmad□r* [*Scholar and Politician*], p. 136.

[323] *Sharh-e Chehel Had□th*, p. 8.

[324] *Nahj al-Bal□ghah*, Sermon 222.

[325] *Sharh-e Chehel Had□th*, p. 97.

[326] *Loc. cit.*

[327] *Nahj al-Bal□ghah*, Sermon 193.

[328] Literal translation of the original Persian text is: "He keeps a distance of many *parasangs* away from vices such as greed and jealousy." *Parasang* is a unit of length equal to six kilometers. [Trans.]

[329] Envisioned as a human figure who faced both directions at once and was thus suited to watch over the doorway, Janus in Roman mythology is the god of doors and gateways, and also of beginnings, which the Romans believed ensured good endings. [Trans.]

[330] Latium (or Lazio): the west central region of modern Italy composed of the provinces of Rome, Frosinone, Latina, Rieti, and Viterbo on the Tyrrhenian Sea, extending north from the Liri River, on the western slopes of the Apennines range. [Trans.]

[331] It is to be noted that as the offspring of the ass and horse, especially a male donkey and a mare, the mule is used as a beast of burden, and not for procreation and reproduction. [Trans.]

[332] N□dirsh□h Afsh□r (1100–1160 AH): an Iranian king and founder of the Afsh□r dynasty. [Pub.]

[333]Sh□raveyeh: son of Khusr□parv□z who succeeded him as the king. In a bid to obtain power, Sh□raveyeh killed his own father and ordered the amputation of his brothers' hands and feet. After a short period, he murdered them. [Pub.]

[334]Khusr□parv□z Sh□hansh□h□ (366–591): Sassanid king and son of Hormoz IV. 'Khusr□' (Khosroe)

is a titular name of a number of Sassanid kings: Khosroe I (An□sh□rv□n), Khosroe II (known as Khosroe Parvez), and Khosroe III (Kuv□dh [Qub□d] and nephew of Khosroe Parvez). [Pub.]

[335] Sa'□d Ham□di□n, *Sh□hnameh-ye Ferdows□* (Tehran: Qitreh, 1375 AHS), vol. 9, pp. 282-283.

[336] *Loc. cit.*

[337] Simon Dubuar, *Naqd-e Hikmat-e '□my□neh: □rm□ngir□yi-ye Akhl□q□ va V□qi'gir□yi-ye Siy□s□* [*Criticism of the Conventional Wisdom: Ethical Normative Theory and Political Realism*], trans. Mustaf□ Rah□m□ (Tehran: □g□h, 1354 AHS), p. 45.

[338] *Ibid.*

[339] Thucydides (460?-400 BC): Historian of ancient Greece. His work *History of the Pelopennesian War* (441-404 BC) eloquently communicates a seemingly accurate account of events in the first 30 years of that war. Both sides in the conflict are quoted, analyzed, and described in detail. Thucydides was an Athenian naval general who, upon failure to defeat the Spartan troops at Amphipolis in the Pelopennesian War, was exiled (424-404 BC).

[340] Known in the political science and international relations literature as the Melian Dialogue, a considerable amount of its extract can be seen in Timothy Dunne, "Realism," in *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations*, eds. John Baylis and Steve Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), box 6.1, p. 111. [Trans.]

[341] Thucydides, *T□r□kh-e Jang-e Pol□p□nez□* [*History of the Peloponnesian War*], trans. Muhammad-Hasan Lutf□ (Tehran: Khw□razm□, 1377 AHS), p. 336.

Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, trans. Rex Warner (London: Penguin Classics, 1980). [Trans.]

[342] *Loc. cit.*

[343] *Ibid*., pp. 336-337.

[344] *Ibid*., p. 337.

[345] *Loc. cit.*

[346] Niccoló Machiavelli, *Shahriy□r* [*The Prince*], trans. D□ry□sh □sh□r□ (Tehran: Kit□b-e Parv□z, 1374 AHS), pp. 117-118.

Niccoló Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. G. Bull (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1984); *The Prince*, trans. P. Bondanella and M. Musa (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984); *The Prince*, ed. Q. Skinner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988). [Trans.]

[347] *Ibid*., p. 118.

[348] *Ibid*., p. 134. In Arabic language, there is a proverb that accurately conveys this idea: "رهبوت، خيرٌ من رحموت." [Terror is better than mercy].

[349] *Pacta sunt servanda*: abidance with a treaty in letter and spirit. [Trans.]

[350] *Ibid*., p. 129.

[351] *Ibid*., p. 66.

[352] *Ibid*., p. 130.

[353] *Ibid*., p. 88.

[354] *Ibid*., p. 47.

[355] *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Politics*, p. 301.
[356] *Raison d'éstat* ('reason of the state') means that there may be reasons for acting (normally in foreign policy, less usually in domestic policy) which simply override all other considerations of a legal or moral kind. [Trans.]
[357] Niccoló Machiavelli, *Guftārhā* [*Discourses*], trans. Muhammad Hasan Lutfī (Tehran: Khwārazmī, 1377 AHS), pp. 19–20. Anyone who wants to have in-depth information on Machiavelli's thought should read this book along with *The Prince*.
[358] For information on the circumstances surrounding the conclusion of the peace treaty, see Shaykh Rādī Āli-Yāsin, *Sulh al-Hasan: The Peace Treaty of al-Hasan*, trans. Jāsim al-Rasheed (Qum: Ansariyan Publications, 1998), available online at http://www.al-islam.org/sulh [18]. [Trans.]
[359] Sa'īd Ayyūb, *Az Zhurfā-ye Fitneh-hā* [*From the Depth of Seditions*], trans. Sayyid Hasan Islāmī (Qum: Markaz-e Barrasīhā-ye Islāmī-ye al-Ghadīr, 1378 AHS), vol. 2, p. 225.
[360] *Ibid*., p. 277.
[361]Battle of Siffīn: Battle of Siffīn: This battle was fought in the year 37 AH between Imām 'Alī (*'a*) and the Governor of Syria (ash-Shām), Mu'āwiyah, for the so-called avenging for the killing of Caliph 'Uthmān. But in reality it was nothing more than Mu'āwiyah who had been the Autonomous Governor of Syria from Caliph 'Umar's days not wanting to lose that position by swearing allegiance to Imām 'Alī (*'a*) but wanting to keep his authority intact by exploiting the killing of Caliph 'Uthmān, for later events proved that after securing the government he did not take any practical step to avenge 'Uthmān's blood, and never spoke, not even through omission, about the killers of 'Uthmān. Mu'āwiyah at the head of an army decided to wage a war against Imām 'Alī and when they reached an area close to the Euphrates River, called Siffīn, he confronted Imām 'Alī's troops. The two parties fought each other in 90 battles. When Mu'āwiyah found out he could not defeat Imām 'Alī, he resorted to a trick contrived by 'Amr ibn al-'ās and told his men to hang copies of the Qur'an on their swords and at the same time called for the end of the confrontation through arbitration. The trick was successful and Imām 'Alī finally yielded to arbitration. The Battle of Siffīn lasted for 110 days in early seventh century CE. For a brief account of the battle, see *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Sermon 123, "To exhort his followers to fight," footnote 1, http://www.al-islam.org/nahjul/index.htm [19]. [Trans.]
[362] *Az Zhurfā-ye Fitneh-hā* [*From the Depth of Seditions*], pp. 590–591.
[363] *Ibid*., p. 592.
[364] *Sahīfeh-ye Imām*, vol. 3, p. 227. Pākravān, the commander of the army and head of SAVAK, during an audience with Imam on August 2, 1963 (Mordād 11, 1342 AHS) at 'Ishrātābād garrison said: "...I took great pains to obtain a document confirming the relationship between a great *marja'* and a foreign country; and to this end I even sent an Arab to see you, but I didn't find the least evidence of a relationship between Your Great Eminence and foreign agents. . . Your Eminence is about to be released, but before that I have to tell you that politics means cheating and deceiving; politics means lies, hypocrisy and trickery. In brief, politics means chicanery. These matters are our concern and the leaders of the clergy must not soil their hands with these things; they must in no way indulge in politics." Imām, in response to the latter part of Pākravān's comments, said: "From the very beginning we played

no part in the kind of politics of which you speak." See *Barrasī va Tahlīlī az Nihzat-e Imām Khomeinī*,vol. 1, p. 575.

For the full text of the Imām's speech, see *Kauthar: An Anthology of the Speeches of Imām Khomeinī including an Account of the Events of the Revolution* (*1962-1978*) (Tehran: Institute for the Compilation and Publication of Imām Khomeinī's Works, Winter 1995), pp. 135-145. [Trans.]

[365] *Loc. cit.*

[366] State Organization for Security and Information (SAVAK) was officially established in 1336 AHS [circa 1957] by the explicit order of Muhammad Ridā Shāh Pahlavī. SAVAK was assigned to suppress any opposition to the regime and to counteract the Islamic resistance. SAVAK had close collaboration with the CIA and Mossad. The callosity and cruelty of the SAVAK in torturing political prisoners was such that the secretary general of *Amnesty International* declared in 1354 AHS [circa 1975], "No country in the world has such a dark record of human rights as Iran!" [Pub.]

[367] *Sahīfeh-ye Imām*, vol. 1, p. 269.

[368] Gladwin, chap. 1, *On the Morals of Kings*, Tale xix, p. 65. The whole tale is as follows:

They have related that Nūshīrvān, being at the hunting seat, was about to have some game dressed, and as there was not any salt, a servant was sent to fetch some from a village; when the monarch ordered him to pay the price of the salt, that the exaction might not become a custom, and the village be desolated. They say to him, "From this rifle, what injury can ensue?" He replied, "Oppression was brought into the world from small beginnings, which every new comer has increased, until it has reached the present degree of enormity. If the monarch were to eat a single apple from the garden of a peasant, the servants would pull up the tree by the roots: if the sultan orders five eggs to be taken by force, his soldiers will spit a thousand fowls. The iniquitous tyrant remaineth not, but the curses of mankind rest on him forever. [Trans.]

[369] *Discourses*, p. 20.

[370] Watergate Crisis: series of scandals involving US Pres. Richard Nixon and his administration. On June 17, 1972, five men from Nixon's reelection committee were arrested as they tried to plant electronic eavesdropping equipment in the headquarters of the Democratic Party national committee in the Watergate office building, Washington DC. As a result of their convictions and the suspicions of Judge John Sirica, who tried the case, that a conspiracy was being covered up, investigations were opened that led to Nixon's inner councils. Though Nixon easily won reelection in November 1972, his public support eroded as a televised US Senate investigation continued. Newspaper revelations (notably by Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward in the *Washington Post*) and testimony of Republican Party and former governmental officials clearly implicated his and his senior aides in a massive abuse of power and the obstruction of justice involving campaign contributions, the CIA, the FBI, the Internal Revenue Service, and other governmental agencies. The House of Representatives Judiciary Committee voted to impeach Nixon in July 1974, and his ouster from office became inevitable; on August 19, 1974 he resigned—the only US president to do so. One month later he was granted a full pardon by Pres. Gerald Ford. Almost 60 individuals, including former US Attorney General John Mitchell and senior White House staff were convicted of Watergate crimes. [Trans.]

[371] *P□y□n-e T□r□kh wa Buhr□n-e I'tim□d: B□zsin□s□-ye And□sheh-h□-ye T□zeh-ye Fukuyama* [*The End of History and the Crisis of Confidence: A Review of Fukuyama's New Ideas*], M□hn□meh-ye Ittil□'□t-e Siy□s□-Iqtis□d□ [Political-Economic Information Monthly Journal], no. 97-98 (Mehr and □b□n 1374 AHS), p. 13.

[372] *Loc. cit.*

[373] *Ibid*., p. 15.

[374] See Sayyid 'Al□ Asghar K□zim□, *Akhl□q va Siy□sat: And□sheh-ye Siy□sat dar 'Arseh-ye 'Amal* [*Political Thought in the Arena of Practice*] (Tehran: Nashr-e Qums, 1376 AHS), p. 241.

[375] Michael Pulanini, "Far□s□-ye Nihilism [Beyond Nihilism]," in *Khirad dar Siy□sat* [*Wisdom in Politics*] (Collection of Articles), collected, written and translated by 'Izzatull□h F□l□dvand (Tehran: Tarh-e N□, 1376), pp. 223-224.

[376] *Akhl□q, Siy□sat va Inqil□b* [*Ethics, Politics and Revolution*], p. 100.

[377] *Loc. cit.*

[378] *Loc. cit.*

[379] "Far□s□-ye Nihilism [Beyond Nihilism],"in *Khirad dar Siy□sat* [*Wisdom in Politics*], p. 224.

[380] *Ibid*., p. 229.

[381] Sayyid 'Al□ Asghar K□zim□, *Haft Sut□n-e Siy□sat* [*Seven Pillars of Politics*] (Tehran: Daftar-e Nashr-e Farhang-e Isl□m□, 1379), p. 323.

[382] Daniel Shiro, "What transpired in Eastern Europe in 1989," in *Khirad dar Siy□sat* [*Wisdom in Politics*], p. 515.

[383] See, *ibid*., p. 518.

[384] Glenn Tinder, *Political Thought*, trans. Mahm□d Sab□r□ (Tehran: Intish□r□t-e 'Ilm□ va Farhang□, 13 74), p. 100.

[385] Plato, *The Republic*, trans. Fu□d R□h□n□ (Tehran: Intish□r□t-e 'Ilm□ va Farhang□, 1374 AHS), pp. 152-153.

Plato, *The Republic* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1974). [Trans.]

[386] Bertrand Russell (1872- 1970): British philosopher, mathematician and man of letters. Initially a subscriber of idealism he broke away in 1898 and eventually became an empiricist. His most important work was relating logic and mathematics. His works include *The Principles of Mathematics* (1903), *Principia Mathematica* (3 vols., 1910-1913) in collaboration with A.N. Whitehead, *Marriage and Morals* (1929), *Education and the Social Order* (1932), *An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth* (1940), *History of Western Philosophy* (1945), and popularizations such as *The ABC of Relativity* (1925), as well as his *Autobiography* (3 vols., 1967-69). [Trans.]

[387] "Individual and Social Ethics," in *Khirad dar Siy□sat* [*Wisdom in Politics*], p. 308.

[388] Reinhold Niebuhr (1892-1971): One of the two US brothers and leading Protestant theologians, the other being Helmut Richard Niebuhr (1894-1962). Reinhold Niebuhr was an active socialist in the early 1930s. After World War II he turned back to traditional Protestant values, relating them to modern society in his 'conservative realism'. His *Nature and Destiny of Man* (2 vols., 1941-43) greatly influenced American theology. [Trans.]

[389] *Politid als Beruf*.

[390] Max Weber, *D□nishmand va Siy□satmad□r* [*The Scientist and the Politician*], trans. Ahmad Naq□bz□deh (Tehran: Tehran University Press, 1376 AHS), p. 136.

[391] *Loc. cit.*

[392] Immanuel Kant (1724–1804): German philosopher and founder of critical philosophy. Though originally influenced by the rationalism of Leibniz, Kant was awakened from his 'dogmatic slumber' by the work of skeptic David Hume and thus led to greatness as a metaphysician. In *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781), Kant proposed that objective reality (the phenomenal world) can be known only because the mind imposes its own structure (time and space) on it. Things beyond experience (noumena) cannot be known, though we may presume to know them. The questions of the existence of God, immortality, freedom—all metaphysical questions—cannot be answered by scientific means, and thus cannot be proved or disproved. But, according to Kant in *Critique of Practical Reason* (1788), their existence must be presumed for the sake of morality. Kant's absolute moral law states, "Act as if the maxim from which you act were to become through your will a universal law." In *Critique of Judgment* (1790), beauty and purpose form the bridge between the sensible and the intelligible worlds that he sharply divided in his first 2 *Critiques*. [Trans.]

[393] Immanuel Kant, "*Dar B□b-e Haqq-e Pand□r□-ye Dur□gh-Guft□n beh Ang□zeh-ye Ins□nd□st□neh* [*On the Truth of the Notion of Telling Lies with Humanitarian Motives*]," trans. Sayyid Hasan Isl□m□, *Fasln□meh-ye Naqd va Nazar* [*Criticism and View Quarterly*] 6, nos. 1–2 (Winter–Spring 1378–9 AHS), p. 376.

[394] *Ibid.*, p. 379.

[395] *Matthew* 5:38–42.

[396] *D□nishmand va Siy□satmad□r* [*The Scientist and the Politician*], p. 140.

[397] *Ibid.*, p. 146.

[398] *Loc. cit.*

[399] Immanuel Kant, *Dars-h□-ye Falsafeh-ye Akhl□q* [Philosophical Lessons on Ethics], trans. Man□chehr S□ni'□-Darehb□d□ (Tehran: Naqsh va Nig□r, 1378 AHS), p. 306.

[400] Immanuel Kant, *Buny□d-e M□ Ba'dat-Tab□'eh-ye Akhl□q*, trans. Ham□d 'In□yat va 'Al□ Qaysar□ (Tehran: Khw□razm□, 1375 AHS), p.61.

[401] See, for example, Stephen Cornier, *Falsafeh-ye Kant* [*The Kantian Philosophy*], trans. 'Izzatull□h F□l□dvand (Tehran: Khw□razm□, 1367 AHS); Sayyid Hasan Isl□m□, *Dur□gh dar Niz□m-e Akhl□q-e Isl□m* [*Lie in the Moral System of Islam*] (Master's Degree Thesis on Philosophy and *Kal□m* [Scholasticism] at the Tarbiyyat Mudarris Center, 1379 AHS); Rechels James, *The Elements of Moral Philosophy* (McGraw-Hill, 1993).

[402] Humhrey Carpenter, *'□s□* [*Jesus*], trans. Hasan K□msh□d (Tehran: T+arh-e N□, 1374 AHS), p. 89.

[403] *Ibid.*, p. 90.

[404] *Matthew* 10:34.

[405] *Matthew* 21:12. In the NIV it is *Matthew* 21:12–13. [Trans.]

[406] *D□nishmand va Siy□satmad□r* [*The Scientist and the Politician*], p. 143.

[407] *Ibid*., p. 144.

[408] *Akhl□q, Siy□sat va Inqil□b* [*Ethics, Politics and Revolution*], p. 104.

[409] Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832): English philosopher, economist, and jurist, founder of utilitarianism, a social philosophy whose aim was to achieve 'the greatest happiness of the greatest number.' His major work was *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* (1789). Bentham's ideas were influential in the legal reform in the 19th century and in the thinking of John Stuart Mill and David Ricardo. [Trans.]

[410]Quoted in *loc. cit.*

[411] *Ibid*., p. 101.

[412] *Loc. cit.*

[413] *Ibid*., p. 104.

[414] Francis Neumann, *□z□d□, Qudrat va Q□n□n* [*Freedom, Power and the Law*], trans. 'Izzatull□h F□l□dvand (Tehran: Khw□razm□, 1373 AHS), pp. 43–44.

[415] *Akhl□qiy□t: Maf□h□m-e Akhl□q dar Adabiyy□t-e F□rs□ az Sadeh-ye Sevvum t□ Sadeh-ye Haftum-e Hijr□* [*Moralities: Moral Concepts in the Persian Literature from the Third to the Seventh Century Hijr□*], trans. Muhammad-'Al□ Am□r-Ma'z□ and 'Abdul-Muhammad R□hbakhsh□n (Tehran: University Publication Center and Association of French Iranologists in Iran, 1377 AHS), p. 613.

[416] Of course, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (*s*) is not included in the list as he is the best of creation and the model par excellence for the entire humanity. [Trans.]

[417] See *Nahj al-Bal□ghah*, Sermon 5.

[418]'Umar ibn al-Khatt□b was the second caliph who succeeded Ab□bakr, the fisrt caliph. [Pub.]

[419] Muhammad-B□qir Mahm□d□, *Nahj as-Sa'□dah f□ Mustadrak Nahj al-Bal□ghah* (Beirut: Muassasah al-Mahm□d□, n.d.), vol. 1, p. 155.

[420] 'Uthm□n ibn 'Aff□n was the third caliph who succeeded 'Umar ibn al-Khatt□b. [Pub.]

[421] *Nahj al-Bal□ghah*, Sermon 240.

[422] Mughayrah ibn Shu'bah: born in T+□'if and became Muslim in 5 AH. He did not participate in the Battle of Siff□n; Mu'□wiyah appointed him as the governor of K□fah.

[423] Hasan Az-Zayn, *Al-Im□m 'Al□ ibn Ab□ T□lib* (*'a*) *wa Tajrubah al-Hukm* [*Im□m 'Al□* (*'a*) *and the Experience of Governance*] (Tehran: D□r al-Fikr al-Had□th, 1994), p. 66.

[424]Talh□ and Zubayr: among the companions of the Prophet (*s*) who, along with '□'ishah led the Battle of Jamal against Im□m 'Al□ (*'a*). The former died in the battle. [Pub.]

[425] *Loc. cit.*

[426] See *Nahj al-Bal□ghah*, Sermon 205.

[427] Shaykh al-Muf□d, *Al-Jamal*, researched by Sayyid 'Al□ M□r-Shar□f□ (Qum: Markaz al-I'l□m al-Isl□m□, 1374 AHS), p. 166.

[428] See *Nahj al-Bal□ghah*, Sermon 73.

[429] *Ibid*., Sermon 206.

[430] Kharijites: from the Arabic word, *khaw□rij* meaning seceders or dissenters. After the Battle of Siff□n, a group of Muslims who had fought with Im□m 'Al□ in the battle split off from his army and using

the slogan “No command except God’s” sought to kill him. This group became known as the Kharijites [*Khaw□rij*]. [Pub.]

[431] See *Nahj as-Sa‘□dah f□ Mustadrak Nahj al-Bal□ghah*, vol. 2, p. 276.

[432] See *Nahj al-Bal□ghah*, Maxim 420.

[433] *Ibid*., Letter 47.

[434] *Ibid*., Sermon 200.

[435] *Ibid*., Sermon 41.

[436]Vacláv Havel (1936–), Czech playwright and political leader, elected president of Czechoslovakia in 1989. A resistance leader under the Communist regime from the mid–1960s until 1989, he was repeatedly jailed, and his works (such as the play *The Memorandum,* 1965) were banned. Michael D. Harkavy, ed. *The New Webster’s International Encyclopedia: The New Illustrated Home Reference Guide* (Florida: Trident Press International, 1996), p. 481. [Trans.]

[437]Vacláv Havel, *Y□d-d□sht-h□-y□ dar B□b-e Akhl□q, Siy□sat, Tamaddun dar D□r□n-e Tahavvul* [*Memorandum on Ethics, Politics and Civilization during the Periods of Transformation*], Muhammad Raf□‘□ Mehr□b□d□ (Tehran: Intish□r□t-e ‘Ilm□ va Farhang□, 1374 AHS), p. 28.

[438] *Ibid*., p. 13.

[439] *Ibid*., p. 22.

[440] *Loc. cit.*

[441] *Loc. cit.*

[442] *Ibid*., p. 23.

[443] *Ibid*., p. 26.

[444] Mahatma Gandhi, *Hameh-ye Mardum Bar□darand* [*All People are Brothers*], trans. Mahm□d Tafaddul□ (Tehran: Am□r Kab□r, 13 61 AHS), p. 139.

[445] *Loc. cit.*

[446] C.A.J. Coady, “Politics and the Problem of Dirty Hands,” in *A Companion to Ethics*, ed. Peter Singer (Basil: Blackwell, 1991), p. 382.

[447] *Sah□feh-ye Im□m*, vol. 4, p. 190.

[448] *Ibid*., vol. 3, p. 237.

[449] *Loc. cit.*

[450] *Ibid*., vol. 18, p. 423.

[451] *Sah□feh-ye Im□m*, vol. 14, pp. 527–528.

[452] It refers to the statement of the Messenger of God (*s*), “One who spends the night without having concern on the affairs of Muslims is not a Muslim.”

[..من‌اصبح و لم‌یهتم بامورالمسلمین‌فلیس بمسلم

453]] *Ibid*., vol. 4, p. 9.

[454] *Ibid*., vol. 1, p. 271.

[455] *Ibid*., vol. 1, p. 271.

[456] *Al-Bay‘*, vol. 2, p. 472.

[457] *Sah□feh-ye Im□m*, vol. 15, p. 214.

[458] *Ibid*., vol. 13, p. 432.

[459] *Khāṭirāt bā Dā Sidā: Kuftigū-ye Ely Weasel bā François Mitterrand* [*Memoirs with Two Voices: Dialogue between Ely Weasel and François Mitterrand*], trans. ʻAbbās āgāhī (Tehran: Daftar-e Nashr-e Farhang-e Islāmī, 1377 AHS), p. 171.

[460] Del-ārā Qahremānn, *Sad Hikāyat-e Zen* [*Hundred Zen Stories*] (Tehran: Nashr-e Mātrā, 1377 AHS), p. 143. See Reginald Huras Blithe, *Dars-hāy az Ustādān-e Zen* [*Lessons from Zen Masters*], trans. Nasrīn Majīdī (Tehran: Hūrmand, 1379 AHS), p. 140.

[461] The story is narrated in the *Mathnawī* as follows:

Listen to a tale of the chronicler, in order that you may get an inkling of this veiled mystery. A snake-catcher went to the mountains to catch a snake by his incantations. Whether one be slow or speedy (*in movement*)*, he that is a seeker will be a finder… He was searching round about the mountains for a big snake in the days of snow. He espied there a huge dead dragon, at the aspect whereof his heart was filled with fear.* (*Whilst*) *the snake-catcher was looking for snakes in the hard winter, he espied a dead dragon… The snake-catcher took up that snake and came to Baghdad for the sake of* (*exciting*) *astonishment. In quest of a paltry fee he carried along a dragon like the pillar of a house, saying, "I have brought a dead dragon: I have suffered agonies in hunting it." He thought it was dead, but it was alive, and he did not see it very well. It was frozen by frost and snow: it was alive, but it presented the appearance of the dead… The snake-catcher, with a hundred pains, was bringing the snake along, till* (*at last*) *the would-be showman arrived at Baghdad to set up a public show at the crossroads. The man set up a show on the bank of the Tigris, and a hubbub arose in the city of Baghdad—"A snake-catcher has brought a dragon: he has captured a marvelous rare beast." Myriads of simpletons assembled, who had become a prey to him as he* (*to it*) *in his folly. They were waiting* (*to see the dragon*)*, and he too was waiting for the scattered people to assemble. The greater the crowd, the better goes the begging and contributing* (*of the money*)*. Myriads of idle babblers assembled, forming a ring, soul against soul. Man took no heed of woman: on account of the throng they were mingled together like nobles and common folk at the Resurrection. When he* (*the snake-catcher*) *began to move the cloth* (*which covered the dragon*)*, the people in the crowd strained their throats* (*necks*)*, and* (*saw that*) *the dragon, which had been frozen by intense cold, was underneath a hundred kinds of coarse woolen cloths and coverlets. He had bound it with thick ropes: that careful keeper had taken great precaution for it. During the delay* (*interval*) *of expectation and coming together, the sun of Iraq shone upon the snake. The sun of the hot country warmed it; the cold humors went out of its limbs. It had been dead, and it revived: from astonishment* (*at feeling the sun's heat*) *the dragon began to uncoil itself. By the stirring of that dead serpent the people's amazement was multiplied a hundred thousand-fold. With amazement they started shrieking and fled en masse from its motion. It set about bursting the bonds, and at that loud outcry* (*of the people*) *the bonds on every side went crack, crack. It burst the bonds and glided out from beneath—a hideous dragon roaring like a lion. Many people were killed in the rout: hundreds of heaps were made of the fallen slain. The snake-catcher became paralyzed with fear on the spot, crying, "What have I brought from the mountains and the desert?" The blind sheep awakened the wolf: unwittingly it went toward its 'Izrā'īl* (*angel of death*)*. The dragon made one mouthful of that dolt: blood-drinking*

(*bloodshed*) *is easy for Hajj□j. It would and fastened itself on a pillar and crunched the bones of the devoured man.*

Nicholson, Book Three under *Story of the snake-catcher who thought the frozen serpent was dead and wound it in ropes and brought it to Baghdad*,vol. 3, pp. 109, 111, 115, 117. [Trans.]

[462] *Mathnaw□*, Book Three, vol. 3, pp. 53–54.

Nicholson, *ibid*., p. 117. [Trans.]

[463] *Sah□feh-ye Im□m*, vol. 14, p. 379.

[464] *Kh□tir□t b□ D□ Sid□* [*Memoirs with Two Voices*], p. 171.

[465] *Ibid*., p. 177.

[466] *Loc. cit.*

[467] *Ibid*., p. 183.

[468] *Loc. cit.*

[469] *Sah□feh-ye Im□m*, vol. 18, p. 206.

[470] *Loc. cit.*

[471] *Ibid*., vol. 19, p. 250.

[472] For example, see *Sah□feh-ye Im□m*, vol. 1, p. 269; vol. 8, p. 185; vol. 9, p. 177; vol. 10, p. 124; vol. 13, p. 431.

[473] *Ibid*., vol. 5, p. 40.

[474] *Ibid*., vol. 3, p. 227.

[475] *Wil□yat-e Faq□h*, p. 16.

Im□m Khomein□, *Islamic Government: Governance of the Jurist*, trans. Ham□d Algar (Tehran: The Institute for Compilation and Publication of Im□m Khomein□'s Works, Autumn 2002), p. 16. Electronic version of the whole book is downloadable at the Institute's *Translation Unit Website*, http://www.geocities.com/icpikw/wilayat.zip [20]. [Trans.]

[476] *Sah□feh-ye Im□m*, vol. 21, pp. 402–403.

[477] *Ibid*., vol. 3, p. 338.

[478] *Ibid*., vol. 18, p. 72.

[479] *Ibid*., vol. 17, p. 204.

[480] *Loc. cit.*

[481] *Ibid*., vol. 13, p. 432.

[482] *Ibid*., vol. 10, p. 15.

[483] *Ibid*., vol. 13, p. 130.

[484] *Ibid*., vol. 16, p. 161.

[485] *Ibid*., vol. 5, p. 531.

[486] *Ibid*., vol. 5, p. 533.

[487] *Ibid*., vol. 13, pp. 431–432.

[488] *Ibid*., vol. 1, p. 271.

[489] *Ibid*., vol. 4, p. 9.

[490]*Ibid*., vol. 4, p. 447.

[491] *Ibid*., vol. 13, pp. 130–131.

[492] *Ibid*., vol. 13, p. 142.

[493] *Goftārhā* [*Discourses*].

[494] *Sūrah Maryam* 19:54.

[495] For example, ***Sūrah an-Nisā' 4:69: "All who obey Allah and the Messenger are in the Company of those on whom is the Grace of Allah, of the Prophets* (*who teach*) [*an-nabiyyīn*]*, the Sincere* (*lovers of Truth*) [*as-siddīqīn*]*, the Witnesses* (*who testify*)*, and the Righteous* (*who do good*)*: Ah! What a beautiful Fellowship!"*** ('Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī's translation) [Trans.]

[496] See Tuchihiko Izutsu, *Mafāhīm-e Akhlāqī-Dīnī dar Qur'ān-e Majīd* [*Ethical-Religious Concepts in the Glorious Qur'an*], trans. Farīdūn Badreh-ī (Tehran: Farzān, 1378 AHS), p. 197.

[497] *Ibid*., p. 198.

[498] *Ibid*., p. 184.

[499] *Loc. cit.*

[500] Council of Guardians: the council constituted for the safeguarding of Islamic laws and the Constitution and verifying the compatibility of legislation passed by the Islamic Consultative Assembly (the Iranian Majlis or Parliament) with them. Composed of six competent and just jurists and six other legal experts in various branches of the law, the council members are elected by the Leader for a period of six years. See Articles 91–99 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran. [Trans.]

[501] Supreme Judicial Council: the council constituted to carry out the responsibilities of the judiciary. After the amendment of the Iranian Constitution ratified on July 26, 1989, this highest judicial body is vested in a single person. Article 157, as amended, stipulates:

"The Leader shall appoint a *mujtahid*, possessing integrity and administrative and problem-solving abilities, and well-versed in judicial affairs as the Head of the Judiciary for a period of five years, to carry out the judicial, administrative and executive responsibilities of the judiciary. His will be the highest judicial office." [Trans.]

[502] *Sahīfeh-ye Imām*, vol. 18, p. 241.

[503] Sir Karl Raimund Popper (1902–): Austrian-born English philosopher, best known for his theory of falsification in the philosophy of science. Popper contends that scientific theories are never more than provisionally adopted and remain acceptable only as long as scientists are devising new experiments to test (falsify) them. He attacks the doctrine of historicism (presuming to understand phenomena entirely through their development) in *The Open Society and Its Enemies* (1945) and *The Poverty of Historicism* (1957).

[504] Karl Popper, *At-Tasāmih wa'l-Mas'ūliyyah al-Fikriyyah: Majmū'ah Maqālāt at-Tasāmih bayn ash-Sharq wa'l-Gharb: Dirāsāt fī at-Ta'āyish wa'l-Qabūl bi'l-ākhar*, trans. Ibrāhīm al-'Arīs (Beirut: Dār as-Sāqī, 1992), p. 99.

[505] *Sahīfeh-ye Imām*, vol. 14, p. 92.

[506] *Ibid*., p. 93.

[507] *Ibid*., vol. 18, p. 7.

[508] Bertolt Brecht (Eugen Berthold Friedrich Brecht; 1898–1956): German Marxist playwright and poet,

who revolutionized modern theater with his production techniques and concept of epic theater. He left Nazi Germany in 1933, returning to East Berlin in 1948 to found the Berliner Ensemble. His plays include *The Threepenny Opera* (1928), *The Life of Galileo* (1938), *Mother Courage* (1939), and *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*. [Trans.]

[509] Bertolt Brecht, *And□sheh□-ye M□t□* [*Matthew's Ideas*], trans. Behr□m Hab□b□ (Tehran: □g□h, 1377 AHS), p. 88.

[510] *Sah□feh-ye Im□m*, vol. 19, p. 157.

[511] *Mathnaw□*, Book One, vol. 1, p. 144.

In the *Mathnaw□* the tattooist continues to say:

O brother, endure the pain of the lancet,
That you may escape from the poison of your miscreant self [nafs]*,*
For sky and sun and moon bow in worship
To the people who have escaped from self-existence.
Any one in whose body the miscreant self has died,
Sun and cloud obey his command.
Since his heart has learned to light the candle (*of spiritual knowledge and love*)*,*
The sun cannot burn him.
God hath made mention of the rising sun as turning aside—
Like that—from their cave.
The thorn becomes entirely beautiful, like the rose,
In the sight of the particular that is going toward the Universal.
What is (*the meaning of*) *to exalt and glorify God?*
To deem yourself despicable and (*worthless*) *as dust.*
What is (*the meaning of*) *to learn the knowledge of God's Unity?*
To consume yourself in the presence of the One.
If you wish to shine like day,
Burn up your night-like self-existence.
Melt away your existence, as copper (*melts away*) *in the elixir,*
In the Being of Him who fosters (*and sustains*) *existence.*
You have fastened both your hands tight on (*are determined not to give up*) *"I" and "we":*
All this (*spiritual*) *ruin is caused by dualism.*

Nicholson, Book One under *How the man of Qazwin was tattooing the figure of a lion in blue on his shoulders, and* (*then*) *repenting because of the* (*pain of the*) *needle-pricks*,vol. 1, p. 325. [Trans.]

[512] "احباخوانی الیمن اهدیالیعیوبی." *M□z□n al-Hikmah*, vol. 3, p. 2207.

[513] Hendry Waissinger, *H□chkas K□mil N□st* [*Nobody is Perfect*], trans. Par□chehr Mu'tamad-Garch□ (Tehran: F□r□zeh, 1378 AHS), p. 123.

[514] *Golest□n-e Sa'd□*, p. 175.

Gladwin, chap. 7, *Rules for Conduct in Life*, Tale xxx, p. 357. [Trans.]

[515] *Loc. cit.* The whole tale is as follows:

Everyone thinks his own wisdom perfect and his child beautiful. A Jew and a Muslim were disputing in a manner that made me laugh. The Muslim said in wrath, "If this deed of conveyance is not authentic, may God cause me to die a Jew!" The Jew said, "I make oath on the Pentateuch, and if I swear falsely, I am a Muslim like you." If wisdom was to cease throughout the world, no one would suspect himself of ignorance. [Trans.]

[516] René Descartes (1596–1650): French mathematician, scientist, and philosopher, often referred to as 'the father of modern philosophy.' A dualist who believed the world was composed of 2 basic substances (matter and spirit), he ignored accepted scholastic philosophy and stated a person should doubt all sense experiences; but if a person can think and doubt, he or she therefore exists. Descartes stated his belief in his famous phrase, *cogito, ergo sum* ("I think, therefore I am.") This skeptical philosophy is called Cartesianism and is detailed in Descartes' *Meditations on First Philosophy* (1641). His other major works include the *Discourse on Method* (1637) and *Principles of Philosophy* (1644). Descartes also attempted to explain the universe in terms of matter and motion and invented analytic geometry. [Trans.]

[517] Quoted in Muhammad-'Al Far gh, *S r-e Hikmat dar Ur p* [*Trend of Wisdom in Europe*] (Tehran: Zuv r, 1360), vol. 1, p. 213.

[518] *Sah feh-ye Im m*, vol. 17, p. 246.

[519] S yeh, *H fiz* (Tehran: K rn meh, 1375), p. 181.

[520] Karen Hurney, *'Asabiyyat va Rushd-e dam* [*Prejudice and Human Growth*], trans. Muhammad-Ja'far Musaff (Tehran: Behjat, 1373 AHS), p. 95.

[521] *Sah feh-ye Im m*, vol. 17, p. 246.

[522] *Ibid.*, vol. 14, p. 401.

[523] *Ibid.*, vol. 13, p. 198.

[524] Frank Bruno, *Farhang-e T s f-ye Istil h t-e Rav nshin s* [*Descriptive Dictionary of Psychological Terms*], trans. Muhsh d Y s' and Farz neh-ye T&hir (Tehran: Tarh-e N, 1373 AHS), p. 297.

[525] *Sah feh-ye Im m*, vol. 21, p. 20.

[526] *Ibid.*, vol. 14, pp. 145–146.

[527] *Ibid.*, vol. 8, p. 512.

[528] "كلكم راع و كلكم مسئول عن رعيته." *Bih r al-Anw r*, vol. 72, p. 38. [Pub.]

[529] Murtad Mutahhar , *Dah Guft r* [*Ten Sayings*] (Tehran: Intish r t-e Sadr , n.d.), p. 93.

[530] *Ibid.*, p. 94.

[531] See *S rah al-Kahf* 18:60–82. [Trans.]

[532] *Loc. cit.*

[533] Murtad Mutahhar , *Mas'aleh-ye Hij b* [*The Islamic Modest Dress*] (Tehran: Intish r t-e Sadr , n.d.), p. 71.

[534] *Ibid.*, p. 40.

[535] *Sah feh-ye Im m*, vol. 20, p. 36.

[536] *Mathnaw* , Book Four, vol. 4, p. 12.

Nicholson, Book Four under *The story of the preacher who at the beginning of every exhortation used to pray for the unjust and hardhearted and irreligious*,vol. 4, p. 15.

[537] It is based on the explanations of the late Dr. Muhammad Khaz□'il□ on *Golest□n* as quoted by Ghul□m-Husayn Y□suf□ in the explanations of *Golest□n-e Sa'd□*, p. 44.

[538] *Tadhkirah al-Awliy□'*, p. 265.

[539] *K□my□-ye Sa'□dat* [*The Alchemy of Happiness*], vol. 1, p. 434.

[540] It refers to the Friday congregational prayers.

[541] *K□my□-ye Sa'□dat* [*The Alchemy of Happiness*], vol. 1, p. 435.

[542] See *Golest□n-e Sa'd□*, Part Seven, pp. 162-168.

[543] *H□fiz*, p. 262.

[544] *Ibid*., p. 470.

[545] *Golest□n*, Part Two, pp. 88-89.

[546] That is, he performs flattery and pretension.

[547] Literally it means 'to this one and that one.' [Trans.]

[548] *Mathnaw□*, Book Five, vol. 5, p. 168.

Nicholson, Book Five under *How the enraged Amir set out to punish the ascetic*, vol. 5, p. 415. The rest of the poem is as follows:

If he is mad and bent on mischief (*literally, 'digging up* (*searching for*) *mischief'*),
The cure for a madman is an ox-hide whip (*literally, 'veretrum tauri'*),
So that the devil may go forth from his head:
How should an ass go (*forward*) *without the ass-drivers' blows?"*
The Amir dashed out, with a mace in his hand:
At midnight he came, half-intoxicated, to the ascetic.
In his rage he wished to kill the ascetic,
(*But*) *the ascetic hid beneath* (*some*) *wool.*
The ascetic, hidden under the wool belonging to certain rope-makers,
Heard that (*threat*) *from the Amir.*
He said (*to himself*), *"*(*Only*) *the mirror that has made its face hard*
Can tell a man to his face that he is ugly.
It needs a steel face, like a mirror,
To say to thee, 'Behold thy ugly face'." [Trans.]

[549] *S□rah al-Had□d* 57:23.

[550] *Nahj al-Bal□ghah*, Maxim 439.

[551] *Sah□feh-ye Im□m*, vol. 4, pp. 396-397.

[552] Lashk Kolakovski, *Dars-h□-ye K□chak dar B□b-e Maq□l□t-e Buzurg* [*Simple Lessons concerning Great Subjects*], trans. Rush□n Vaz□r□ (Tehran: T&arh-e N□, 1377 AHS), p. 85.

[553] *Nahj al-Bal□ghah*, Sermon 209.

[554] *S□rah al-A'r□f* 7:32.

[555] *S□rah al-A'r□f* 7:31.

[556] For further information on these etiquettes of the Prophet (*s*), see ‘All□mah Sayyid Muhammad Husayn T&ab□tab□’□, *Sunan an-Nab□* [*Traditions of the Prophet*] (Tehran: Kit□bfur□sh□-ye Isl□miyyeh, 1370 AHS), pp. 91-92.

[557] *Tadhkirat al-Awliy□’*, p. 53.

See Arberry, *Muslims Saints and Mystics*,p. 30. [Trans.]

[558] *Ibid*., pp. 53-54.

See Arberry, *Muslims Saints and Mystics*,pp. 30-31. [Trans.]

[559] T&□’if is the name of a city situated on the southern part of the Arabian Peninsula, 12 parsang east of Mecca. T&□’if’s honey is famous for its excellent quality. [Pub.]

[560] *Nahj as-Sa‘□dah f□ Mustadrak Nahj al-Bal□ghah*, vol. 1, p. 332.

[561] Hij□z: the region in Western Arabia that includes Mecca and Medina. [Pub.]

[562] Yam□mah: another region in the Arabian Peninsula. [Pub.]

[563] *Nahj al-Bal□ghah*, Letter 45.

[564] *Ibid*., Sermon 209.

[565] *Loc. cit.*

[566] *H□fiz*, p. 35.

[567] Will(iam James) Durant (1885-1981): US educator and popular historian. He wrote the bestseller *The Story of Philosophy* (1926) and, with his wife Ariel (1898-1981) the 11-volume *Story of Civilization*. [Trans.]

[568] Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832): German poet, novelist, and playwright. His monumental work ranges from correspondence and poems to 14 volumes of scientific studies and is crowned by *Faust* (part I, 1808; part II, 1833), written in stages during 60 years, in which he synthesized his life and art in a poetic and philosophical statement of the search for complete experience and knowledge. Among his best-known novels are *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (1774) and *The Apprenticeship of Wilhelm Meister* (1795-96). [Trans.]

[569] Will(iam James) Durant, *Lidhdh□t-e Falsafeh* [*The Joys of Philosophy*], trans. ‘Abb□s Zary□b (Tehran: Intish□r□t va □m□zesh-e Inqil□b-e Isl□m□, 1369 AHS), p. 212.

[570] Shaykh at-T□’ifah Muhammad ibn Hasan at-T□s□, *Tahdh□b al-Ahk□m*, ed. ‘Ali Akbar Ghaff□r□ (Tehran: Nashr-e Sad□q, 1376 AHS), vol. 6, p. 371.

[571] *Ibid*., p. 372.

[572] *Loc. cit.*

[573] See *ibid*., pp. 372-373.

[574] *Nahj al-Bal□ghah*, Maxim 163.

[575] See *ibid*., Maxim 319.

[576] D.T. Suzuki, *Zen va Farhang-e Zh□pon□* [*Zen and the Japanese Culture*], trans. A. P□sh□-□ (Tehran: Nashr-e M□tr□, 1378 AHS), p. 65.

[577] *Ibid*., pp. 294-295.

[578] Kim Wu Chung, *Sangfarsh-e har Khiy□b□n az T&al□ ast* [*The Cobblestone of Every Street is from Gold*], trans. Muhammad S□r□ (Tehran: Int□sh□r□t-e S□m□n, n.d.), p. 259.

[579] *Ibid*., p. 263.

[580] *Ibid*., p. 260.

[581] *Ibid*., p. 263. It is said that this book is the collection of the writer's life experiences and strivings, which after publication has more than 1 million copies being sold within two years.

[582] For further explanation on these elements, see Murtadā Mutahharī, *Sīrī dar Nahj al-Balāghah* [*A Survey of the Nahj al-Balāghah*] (Tehran: Sadrā, 1376 AHS), p. 232.

[583] Sayyid Hasan Mudarris [1859–1938] was one of the greatest religious and political figures in the recent history of Iran. He received his elementary education in Isfahān and then traveled to the cities of the holy shrines (the cities of Iraq where certain of the Imāms are buried: Najaf, Karbalā and Kāzimayn, and to a certain extent some others) where he received further education from such scholars as Mullā Muhammad Kāzim Khurāsānī and, after graduation to the level of *ijtihād,* he returned to Isfahān and began teaching Islamic jurisprudence [*fiqh*] and principles [*usūl*]. In 1909, at the time of the Second National Assembly, he entered Parliament having been chosen by the *marāji' at-taqlīd* and the *'ulamā'* of Najaf as one of the five *mujtahid*s who were to oversee the law-making procedures. At the time of the Third National Assembly, he was chosen as a Member of Parliament. When Ridā Khān carried out his coup d'état, Mudarris was arrested and sent into exile, but after being freed he was again chosen by the people and again entered Parliament. In the Fourth National Assembly, he headed the opposition majority against Ridā Khān. At the time of the Fifth and Sixth National Assemblies, he opposed the proposal for the establishment of a republic, which Ridā Khān was in favour of, to replace the constitutional government, and he dissuaded the Parliament from approving it. He was resolute in his stand against the stubborn Ridā Khān, such that the Shah hired an assassin to kill Mudarris and when he escaped the attempt, he sent him first into exile in the remote town of Khāf near the Afghan border, and later in Kāshmar, where eleven years later in Ramadān 1938, the agents of the Shāh poisoned him. In this way, one of the greatest political and religious personalities of Iran was martyred in the way of Allah. Mudarris possessed outstanding qualities, and even though he was a man of great political and religious influence, he lived very simply. Imām Khomeinī always spoke of him with a great deal of respect. The Leader of the Revolution, on the occasion of the renovation of Mudarris' grave, wrote: "At a time when pens were broken, voices silenced and throats gripped, he never ceased from revealing the truth and abolishing falsehood....this feeble scholar, weak in body but strong in a spirit joyful from belief, sincerity and truth, and possessing a tongue like the sword of Haydar Karrār (Imām 'Alī), stood in front of them and shouted out the truth and disclosed the crimes, making life difficult for Ridā Khān and blackening his days. Finally, he sacrificed his own pure life in the way of dear Islam and the noble nation, and was martyred in exile at the hands of the oppressive Shāh's executioner and joined his virtuous forefathers." [Trans.]

[584] Ridā Khān, the founder of the Pahlavī dynasty in Iran, likewise known as Ridā Shāh and the father of Muhammad Ridā, staged a coup in Iran in 1299 AHS [1920] based on a plan devised by the British. In the year 1925, he was crowned. Before staging a coup, he was the commander of a unit of "Cossacks" in the city of Qazvīn. In 1941, when Iran was occupied by the Allied Forces, Ridā Shāh abdicated, as was ordered by the Allied leaders, in favour of his son, Muhammad Ridā Pahlavī whom

the Allied leaders deemed an appropriate person to rule over Iran. The political atmosphere, resulting from these changes, paved the way for a five-year-long liberalization. These charades were being organized based on the plans by the British government and executed by their agents. The British also ordered Rid Sh h into exile on Mauritius Island south of Madagascar in the Indian Ocean. Rid Sh h finally died in 1944 in Johannesburg, South Africa. [Trans.]

[585] *Sah feh-ye Im m*, vol. 16, pp. 451-453.

[586] *Ibid*., vol. 9, p. 190.

[587] *Ibid*., vol. 8, p. 429.

[588] *Ibid*., vol. 4, pp. 219-220.

[589] *Ibid*., vol. 18, pp. 452-453.

[590] Peykan is the brand name of automobile manufactured in Iran for many years, which is noted for being 'old-fashioned' and 'outmoded'. [Trans.]

[591] *Ibid*., vol. 19, p. 318.

[592] For information on these power symbols, their functions and deceptions, see Hoyle Dalton and Cincinnati Watts, *Human Relations* (Ohio: Southwestern Publishing House, 1992), pp. 216-219.

[593] *Loc. cit.*

[594] *Nahj al-Bal ghah*, Letter 45.

[595] *Sah feh-ye Im m*, vol. 18, p. 471.

[596] Ya'q b ibn Layth as-Saff r : founder of the Saff r dynasty in Iran who resisted against the 'Abb sid caliphate. [Pub.]

[597] *Ibid*., vol. 12, p. 351.

[598] *Ibid*., vol. 8, pp. 381-382

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