

Submitted by Hamid Reza Maghsoodi to the University of Exeter as a thesis for the degree of *Doctor of Philosophy in Arab and Islamic Studies in January 2019*

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The Role of ‘aql in the Thought of Mīrzā Mahdī Isfahānī

Submitted by

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Under the supervision of

Professor Robert Gleave

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Mīrzā Mahdī is known for his anti-philosophical and anti-mystical approach towards Islamic scripture, namely the Qur’ān and Sunna. This is an account of his intellectual life which became the main impetus behind a scriptural school of thought which later rose to fame as *Maktab-i Tafkīk* (The School of Separation). The concept of separation rather resembles a claim to independence for *kalām*. Mīrzā, like some other Muslim scholars, strongly believed that Hellenistic philosophy and mysticism are commodities wrongly integrated into the Islamic texture, and with rather a sinister intention. The problem with these beliefs, at a deeper level, is an epistemological debate over the territory of intellect (*al-‘aql*), or, in other words, over the right of interpretation of the Text. Mīrzā maintained that the conclusions of these two rivals are not only wrong, but also deceptive and misleading. He, intelligently and repetitively, wraps the two together and stigmatizes them by calling them human knowledge, putting them in sharp contrast with divine knowledge (*al-‘ulūm al-ilāhi*), which is, in his terminology, Islamic Scripture. He draws the battle lines on two levels: firstly, by showing self-contradiction within philosophy and mysticism, and, secondly, by exposing contradictions between their outcomes and the text. This argument, probably for many, echoes the well-worn debates between *ash‘arīs* and *mu‘tazilīs*, or later in a more *Shī‘ī* ambiance, between *akhbārīs* and *uṣūlīs*. It is true, however, that the conflict for Mīrzā is more considerable in terms of doctrine.

This research tries to find the exact boundaries of intellect in Mīrzā Mahdī’s thought by which he re-defines the functionality of it in two main realms: belief and jurisprudence. It would be much easier to understand him if he had simply rejected thinking, or augmentation had pushed him into the abyss of irrationalism, but the point is that Mīrzā Mahdī is a scriptural *Shī‘ī* scholar who thinks and argues, and, at the same time, endeavours to highlight the borders between a revelatory method of thinking and the one used by philosophers, which he calls human method, and believes is made of their systematic mistakes. On the other hand, Mīrzā, with a prominent name in anti-mystical challenges, calls for an easy and amassable personal experience (*wijdān*) which imperceptibly draws him to the threshold of mysticism. He invites everyone to experience the text, and again, to avoid a mystical method of experiencing it.

Having said this, the purpose of this thesis is to specify the exact definition of epistemological means and the functionality of them, in Mīrzā Mahdī’s view, by examining his ideas in the two main realms of doctrine and jurisprudence. It will be seen that Mīrzā uses the same method in both fields; however, the way he approached and publicized them, and consequently, the way that his pupils delivered and promoted his ideas, are different. The heritage of Mīrzā Mahdī Isfahānī has always been subject to conflicting debates between his zealot advocates and his harsh opponents. In this research, hopefully one has the opportunity to read his intellectual life in a contextualized way. I have been in touch with the most prominent scholars of the School for more than twenty years and attended their classes. However, I have had this chance to try, myself, to critically examine his philosophies and present them to academia.

To My Wife

Acknowledgement

This piece of work owes a huge debt to many of my eminent masters and teachers over the past twenty years, who patiently taught me and let me go deeper into serious issues such as the one discussed in this thesis, both in academia and seminaries. The last link of this chain was supervision by Professor Robert Gleave who opened my eyes to the reality of the academic world; he taught me how to read, think, and write critically, contextualize and stick to the main question. Not only in researching this thesis, but ever since I applied for my PhD I have faced a variety challenges which I could not have overcome without his support. I would like, also, to thank my second supervisor, Professor Sajjad Rizvi, from whom I benefited greatly during my studies. And finally, Jane Clark who kindly read the draft and edited it meticulously.

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Chapter One

Introduction

Literature Review

Mīrzā Mahdī Isfahānī is identified as the key figure behind a scriptural school within Shī‘ī seminaries which rose to fame as ‘*Maktab-i Tafkīk*’, years after his death in 1365/1946. Born in Isfahan in 1303/1886, Mīrzā Mahdī moved to Iraq to continue his seminary studies. After receiving the highest certificate of *ijtihād* (*ijāzah al-ijtihād*)¹ from grand Ayatollah Muḥammad Ḥusayn Nā’īnī in 1338/1920, he returned to Iran to disseminate his ideas within seminary circles. Although it is not easy to jump to a conclusion and simply sum up the main motifs of Mīrzā Mahdī’s works, it can generally be said that his anti-philosophical and anti-mystical messages were strong enough to spark off many fundamental debates on Qur’ānīc hermeneutics and epistemological means (*al-ilm* and *al-‘aql*) within Iranian scholarly circles. Despite being drenched with quietism and trapped by many socio-political restrictions, his controversial plan to purify Islamic doctrine from peripatetic Philosophy was warmly embraced within both seminaries and academia. According to one account, 905 works including articles, books, critiques, interviews, biographies, and historiographies had been written, associated with the School, before 2009. According to another report, 241 related works had been published during only a short two-year period from 2010 to 2012³. This means that up to the end of 2012, there were around 1146 works published in Iran discussing different aspects of the *Maktab-i Tafkīk*. This survey does not include online resources, TV/radio broadcasts, and articles published in the West. These numbers show the position of the School among the authors’ interest in the field. However; they all have not been located at the centre of the interest of this thesis, as it is more concentrated on Mīrzā Mahdī’s own works; specifically, *Abwāb al-Hudā* as it will be discussed further.

As Robert Gleave points out, ‘the [epistemological] debate is, of course, not new, and the challenge over the employment of both Greek Philosophy and personal experience of divine presence as heuristic devices in the course of textual exegesis was controversial from the point of its inception’⁴. Almost all of the recurrent disputes find their way back to the fundamental challenges between the *Ashā’irah* and *Mu’tazilah*. As Sajjad Rizvi indicates, ‘Philosophy as an intellectual discipline emerging from Hellenism, had an ambiguous and disputed role in the theology and apologetic of Islam and continues to be continuous’⁵. Muslim scholars have always confronted each other in severe doctrinal areas. Al-Ghazālī’s famous work, *Tahāfut al-Falāsifa* (*Incoherence of Philosophers*) and Ibn Rushd’s response to him, *Tahāfut al-Tahāfut* (*The Incoherence of*

1 *ijāzah al-ijtihād* literary ‘permission of diligence’. The term, technically, refers to a legal certificate of ability for deducing Sharia law thorough discretion. Traditionally, the certificate is signed by teacher/ayatollah and given to a pupil after achieving the level of discretion. The ability is normally achieved after a long time of study and effort (*ijtihād*).

3 Rabbānī, H. (1392 SH). *Kitābshināsi-yi Tuṣīṭi-yi Maktab-i Tafkīk*, Qum: Pajhūhishgāh-i ‘Ulūm wa Farhang-i ’Islāmī.

4 Gleave, R. (2010). ‘Continuity and Originality in Shi‘i Thought: The Relationship between the Akhbariyya and the Maktab-i Tafkīk’, in Mervin, S. and Hermann, D. (ed.) *Shiite Streams and Dynamics*. Beirut: Orient-Institut, pp. 1800–1925.

5 Rizvi, Sajjad H. (2012) “Only the Imam Knows Best” The Maktab-e Tafkīk’s Attack on the Legitimacy of Philosophy in Iran’, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 22(3-4), pp. 487–503.

The Incoherence) can be taken as notable examples⁶. The conflict over how to maintain the balance between scripture, reason, and heuristic experiences is not confined to the Islamic context. To the contrary, it holds a far extended background in Christian tradition. ‘This [ironic metaphor] was first posed by the church father Tertullian (c. 160–230 CE), and it remains a central preoccupation among contemporary philosophers of religion: “what indeed has Athens to do with Jerusalem”? ⁷’ In this epistemological debate, Sayyid Sharīf Jurjānī ⁸ (740/1339–815/1412) lays out different epistemologies on an almost comprehensive spectrum from an absolute intellectualism to blunt literalism: (1) Peripatetic Philosophers: Aristotelians; (2) Heuristics: Plato and his followers - these two groups are considered irreligious; (3) Sufis and mystics (*’urafā*); (4) Theologians and Apologists (*mutakallims*); (5) and Scripturalists: literalists. Besides this, the significant role of Mullā Ṣadrā (d. 1045/1635), who came after Jurjānī and therefore is not included in his list, should not be neglected. For the first time, Mullā Ṣadrā merged *kalāmī* disciplines with Philosophical texture and came out with a cohesive apologetic system in Islamic Philosophy known as *ḥikmat-i Muta’alīyya*. Indisputably, the *Ṣadrāyīan* School substantially influenced all ensuing Shī‘ī doctrinal dialogues. Mullā Ṣadrā is hence placed at the very centre of the attacks of Mīrzā Mahdī and his advocates.

Using this historical background, Robert Gleave delineates the epistemic role of *Maktab-i Tafkīk* as ‘an interesting example of a reform school which claims a version of Shī‘ī heritage in which the sciences of philosophy (*falsafa*), mysticism (*taṣawwuf*, or more precisely philosophical informed mystical contemplation, *’irfān*) are subjected to an enforced separation (*Tafkīk*) from any exploration of religious truth’⁹. The question about *Maktab-i Tafkīk* is: what characteristics of the School place it at the centre of attention in academia and seminary circles? Is it a new *akhbārīsm*? Or, is it just an amalgamation of some pre-existing schools? In other words, why is *Tafkīk* important?

To deliver a socio-political explanation for the considerable number of works published for, or against *Tafkīk*, the following reasons can be taken into account; (1) the *quietist* essence of the School and the selective teaching classes which have not allowed its doctrine to be publicized widely during the past decades, (2) political restrictions imposed upon it particularly after Iran’s Revolution in 1979 under the absolute power of the great philosopher and mystic Ayatollah Khomeini, (3) and finally, the extent of Mīrzā Mahdī’s literature, unpublished until very recently. Yet, from a more academic perspective, public curiosity is mainly rooted in the recent publication of Mīrzā Mahdī’s corpus, which was

6 Al-Ghazālī’s attacks on Philosophers have been described by Abu al-Qāsim Fanā’ī to be irretrievable in Arab philosophical scope. He believes that Islamic philosophy survived in Iran later on but never came back to arena in Arab World after Ghazālī’s harsh attacks. For him Ibn Rushd’s responses were not sufficient, he provided some historical-geographical accounts for insufficiency of Ibn Rushd’s responds. Montreal Toheed Societt (2012) *Fanā’ī:Tafkīk*. [See bibliography for online source].

7 Amesbury, R. (First published 2005; substantive revision 2016), Fideism. *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. [See bibliography for online source].

8 Jurjānī, M.S.A. (1085 AH). *Risālat fī marātib al-vujūd*. Isfahān: Majlis.

9 Gleave, R. (2010). ‘Continuity and Originality in Shī‘ī Thought: The Relationship between the Akhbāriyya and the Maktab-i Tafkīk’, in Mervin, S. and Hermann, D. (ed.) *Shiite Streams and Dynamics*. Beirut: Orient-Institut, pp.1800-1925.

previously held in manuscript format¹⁰. The new generation of *Tafkīkīs*, so to speak, also started producing a wide range of epistemological and ontological works reflecting their own interpretation of Mīrzā Mahdī's ideas, mainly in response to the massive criticism against the School. These recent works, unlike their predecessors, are mostly aimed at demonstrating the fundamental basis of the *revelatory* method such as, epistemic discourses on the function of intellect ('aql)¹¹, the notion of knowledge ('ilm), comparing the process of knowing between two juxtaposing systems, (i.e. Islamic philosophy and Tafkīkī ideology)¹², refuting the epistemic productivity of syllogism in theological fields¹³, in addition to some important hermeneutic works on Qur'ānīc exegesis¹⁴.

However, for Mīrzā's supporters, the appealing element of *Maktab-i Tafkīk* hinges on its expressive call for '*Originality and Continuity*'. For them, Mīrzā's epistemic system not only rejects the integration of Greek Philosophy¹⁵ into Shī'ī heritage, but also introduces an independent system – or, in Mīrzā's own words: *Divinity Knowledge System* (*nizām-i ma'ārif-i ilāhī*) – extracted from Shī'a Imams' sayings¹⁶. Based on this version, in spite of all resistant trends against philosophy in the course of Islamic history, this is the first time that an alternative independent system stands up to authoritative Shī'ī sources and calls philosophical argumentation into question. The School paves the way for the revival process of pure theological discourses, and establishes scriptural pedagogy, all (claimed to be) elicited from Shī'ī written heritage. Needless to say, this claim is challenging (and rather pejorative) enough to spark off heated debates among scholars from different hues and colours. From a *kalāmī* perspective, Ḥasan Anṣārī, for instance, openly rejects all their claims of independence. He traces every doctrinal segment of the School back to a scholarly predecessor, or pre-existing School of Thought in Shī'a intellectual history. Anṣārī introduces *Tafkīk* as an amalgamation of a variety of ideas: *New Platonian*; Abu al-Ḥasan Baṣrī/*Malāḥimī*; *Ash'arīs*; *Imamate Mu'tazilīs*; *Ismā'ilīs*; and even Ibn 'Arabī's

10 In recent years, both his advocates and opponents have published some of his magnum works. Namely, *Miṣbāḥ al-Hudā*, in *uṣūl al-fiqh*, *Abwāb al-Hudā* in theology, and *rasā'il-i 'ijāz-i Qur'ān* in hermeneutic of Qur'ān. Many of his works are under publication in Ma'ārif institute in Qum. The institute is an organized contribution to Mīrzā Mahdī's works; to teach, publish, and publicize them.

11 See Jahānbīn A.M. (1385 SH). *Kitāb-i 'Aql*, Tīhrān: Naba'; Banī-Hashimī, S.M. and 'ahmadī, M. and Birinj-kār, R. and Bīyābānī-uskūyī, M. and Rahīmīyān, S. (and other authors) (1389 SH). *Sarchishi-yi Hikmat: Justār-hā-yī dar Bāb-i 'Aql*, Tehran: Naba'.

12 See Rahīmīyān, A. (1385 SH). *Mas'liyi 'Ilm*, Tīhrānn: Munīr.

13 See Rahīmīyān, A. (1385 SH). *Mas'liyi Qiās*, Tīhrānn: Munīr.

14 See 'Isfahānī, M.M. (1388 SH). *Rasā'il-i Shinākht-i Qur'ān*, Tīhrānn: Munīr.

15 See Burnet, J. (1920). *Greek Philosophy: Thales to Plato*. London: A & C Black Ltd, pp. 3–16; Griffin, J; Boardman, J; Murray, O. (2001). *The Oxford history of Greece and the Hellenistic world*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. p. 140.

16 Muḥammad Bīyābānī 'Uskū'ī, for instance, has made very much effort to prove that many of Mīrzā Mahdī's fundamental insights have not been presented in any preceding works of Shī'ī scholars. See *Safīnah* magazine where many of his articles are regularly published in this issue. Namely on 'Scholars on the idea of knowing Allah' (ma'rifat Allāh): Bīyābānī 'Uskū'ī, M. (1384 SH) 'Murūrī bar 'Ahādīth-I Ma'rifat-I Khudā (3)', *Journal of Safīnih*, 9.

and on 'Shī'ī scholars on the innate dispossession (fitrī) essence of knowing Allah: Bīyābānī 'Uskū'ī, M. (1385 SH) 'Ma'rifat-u-llah Fitrī 'Ast: 'Āyāt wa Rawāyāt', *Journal of Safīnih*, 13. Also about previous worlds ('ālam al-azillah wa 'l-ashbāh), Bīyābānī 'Uskū'ī, M. (1387 SH) 'Insān dar 'Ālam-I 'Azillih wa 'Arwāh', *Journal of Safīnih*, 18. Another example can be found here: Ḥakīmī, M.R. (1380 SH) 'Aql-i Khud-Bunyād-i Dīnī', *Journal of Bāztab-I 'Andīshi*, 21.

Mysticism.¹⁷ He also recognizes the role of Mīrzā Mahdī Ḥṣfahānī among *Tafkīkīs* as similar to the role of ‘the Fourth Pillar’ (*al-Rukn al-Rābi’*) in the *Sheikhīyya* School¹⁸. From a philosophical background, Dīnānī¹⁹, for example, disparagingly describes *Tafkīk* as *neo-akhbārī*²⁰. The attack against the *Tafkīkīs* is not confined to academia; to the contrary, it is intensified within the *Hawza*. Mīrzā Mahdī has been described as a ‘fraud mystic’ (‘ārif-i farībkār), who re-formed mystical terminologies and re-presented them in a dubious format²¹. Some other *Hawzawī* opponents attempt to cut down the debate to a political ground by focusing on the links between the School and Anjuman Ḥujjatīyya²², the anti-Bahā’ī association established by Sheikh Maḥmūd Ḥalabī (1279 SH /1900 – 1376 SH /1998). Ḥalabī is one of the most influential pupils of Mīrzā Mahdī, who fell out of favour with Ayatollah Khomeini (d. 1989) because of his anti-revolutionary tendencies. The Association was later closed down by force in 1362 SH /1983.²³

Nonetheless, the main problem with all these critiques is that they do not refer to Mīrzā Mahdī’s own works. They generally evaluate the *Maktab-i Tafkīk* as a whole and refer rather to Mīrzā Mahdī’s followers. Anṣārī, for instance, mentions that his assessment (of the School) is completely based on Ḥalabī’s *taqrīrāt*.²⁴ And there is no surprise that

17 Ibn ‘Arabī, M. (1946). *Futūḥat Makkīyyah*, Beirut: dār al-ṣādir, V. 2, p517,519,272,475.

18 Anṣārī, H. (1392). “Maktab-i Tafkīk: Taḥlīl-i Guftimānī”. [See bibliography for online source]. It is worthy to mention that according to his words, his assessment is based on Ḥalabī’s literature.

19 ’Ibrāhīmī Dīnānī, G.H. (1376 SH). *Mājārāh-yi Fikr-i Falsafī dar Jahān-i Islām*. Tīhrān: Ṭarh-i naw. pp. 442,442,446,447,435-438.

20 ’Ibrāhīmī Dīnānī, G.H. (1376 SH). *Mājārāh-yi Fikr-I Falsafī dar Jahān-i Islām*. Tīhrān: Ḥarh-i naw, pp. 425-426. He also addresses a list of critics to *Tafkīkīs*. For another critic from Islamic philosophy perspective see Mūsawī, S.M. (1382 SH). *Ā’īn wa ’Andīshihī*. Tīhrān: Ḥikmat. He is one the Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn ’Āshṭīyānī’s Pupils. ’Āshṭīyānī is famous for his pro-philosophy positions. For the ideas of some other Scholars about *Tafkīk* see Mīr’abdullāhī, S.B. and Pūrmuḥammadī, ’A. (1384 SH). *Nigāhī bi Maktab-i Tafkīk*. Tīhrān: Hamshahrī.

21 Sheikh Hasan Milānī can be named as the most prolific critic on *Tafkīk* within seminaries. In addition to his weblog, books, and lesson, he has attained many debates with them. In his works, he promotes the idea that Mīrzā is more dangerous than other mystics are. From history of idea point of view, what makes his approach more interesting is his claims for a pure apologetic system (*kalāmī*) based on *riwāyāt*, which he finds against *Tafkīkī*, mysticism, and philosophy all together. Milānī, H. (2011) “Kudāmīn Tafkīk?”. [See bibliography for online source]. Milānī refers to *Tafkīk* in almost all his works. To see more look Milānī, H. (1387 SH). *Farātar az ’Irfān*. Tīhrān: ’Ahd; Milānī, H. (1394 SH). *Ma ’rifah Allah Ta ’ālā bi-llah lā bil-’Awhām-i al-Falsafīyyah wa al-’Irfānīyyah*. Mashhad: ’I’tiqād-i Mā; Milānī, H. (1381 SH). *Sarāb-I ’Irfān*, Qum: Mawhūd-I Ka’bih; Milānī, H. (1391 SH). *Shinākhti ’Ijmālī-yi Kalām Falsafah ’Irfān*, Qum: Dār al-Hudā. For more moderate critics on *Tafkīk* see ’Islāmī, S.H. (1383 SH). *Ru ’yā-yi khulūṣ: bāz-khānī-yi Maktab-i Tafkīk*. Qum: Būstān-i Kitāb; Murtadāwī, S.’A. (1381 SH). *’Ilm u ’Aql az Didgāh-i Maktab-i Tafkīk*. Qum: Markaz-i Jahānī-yi ’Ulūm-i Islāmī. For socio-politically accounts see ’Irshādīnīyā, M. (1386 SH). *Az Madrīsi-yi Ma ’ārif tā Anjuman-i Ḥujjatīyi wa Maktab-i Tafkīk*, Qum: Bustān-i Kitāb.

The ties between the ideology of the School and Anjuman-i Ḥujjatīyya has made this work attractive. He also has another book on *Tafkīk* called *Naqd u barrisī-yi Nadharīyyi-yi Tafkīk*. This one is more to the concept and epistemology of the school.

22 For political accounts, see ’Irshādīnīyā, M. (1386 SH). *Az Madrīsi-yi Ma ’ārif tā Anjuman-i Ḥujjatīyi wa Maktab-i Tafkīk*, Qum: Bustān-i Kitāb.

23 Gleave, R. (2010). ‘Continuity and Originality in Shi’i Thought: The Relationship between the Akhbariyya and the Maktab-i Tafkīk’, in Mervin, S. and Hermann, D. (ed.) *Shiite Streams and Dynamics*. Beirut: Orient-Institut, pp.1800-1925.

24 Anṣārī, H. (1392). “Maktab-i Tafkīk: Taḥlīl-i Guftimānī”. [See bibliography for online source].

Halabī's *taqrīrāt* is subject to criticism by other *Tafkīkīs* for transmuting some of Mīrzā Mahdī's ideas, whereas Halabī's students believe that his *taqrīrāt* is the one most accurate, reflecting the kernel truth of Mīrzā Mahdī's thought. Likewise, Ḥakīmī, to whom the majority of critical references have been made, is not considered a profound *Tafkīkī* ideologist, but rather a vanguard and public apologist for the School²⁵. Even a cursory look at many anti-*Tafkīkī* works makes it clear that they suffer from a lack of referencing of Mīrzā Mahdī's literature at fundamental points. As Peter Gordon simplifies, 'Marxism grew into the everyday texture of European life; but Karl Marx famously declared he was not a Marxist'²⁶. Taking everything into account, it can be said that there is a big gap in research on Mīrzā's epistemology, as the central theme in his intellectual system, which needs to be carried out based on his own works, a task which this thesis envisages. **This work is aimed at illustrating intellect (al-'aql) as the major epistemic mean in Mīrzā Mahdī's thought based on his own words, and finding the precise position where his ideology (and not of his devotees) stands between intellectualism and scripturalism.**

Research Questions

The main question is that what is the difference between Mīrzā's basic fundamental and his predecessor and what makes it new and original.

The assumptions are:

The intellect (al-'aql), as Mīrzā reads, plays the key role in Mīrzā Mahdī's epistemology.

Mīrzā follows the same reading of intellect in his all heritage including jurisprudence (*al-fiqh*), its principles (*uṣūl al-fiqh*), commentary (*al-Tafsīr*), and theology (*al-kalām*, *al-'aqā'id*)

Mīrzā tries to infer his own perception from early scriptures (*Qur'ān* and *Hadīths*).

He restructures all Islamic subjects on this new and original definition of 'aql in order to come up with a coherent revelatory method.

So, this work is aimed at illustrating intellect (al-'aql) as the major epistemic mean in Mīrzā Mahdī's thought based on his own words, and finding the precise position where his ideology (and not of his devotees) stands between intellectualism and scripturalism. Hence, the thesis traces his definition by examining his key works in theology and jurisprudence.

In order to substantiate four assumptions above, the thesis is designed in four chapters; including an introduction and three main chapters.

Chapter two has a more historical remit and deals with Mīrzā's *intellectual biography*. The major undertakings in this chapter are:

25 For more detailed information about him, see the last chapter of this thesis. Ḥakīmī acknowledges that he has not still started discussing demonstrable issues of the School.

26 Gordon, P.E. (2013). *What is Intellectual History? A Frankly Partisan Introduction to a Frequently Misunderstood Field*. [pdf] p. 11. [See bibliography for online source].

(In Najaf) To find any plausible influence on Mīrzā Mahdī of a scholar or School of thought during his stay in Iraq. There is an attempt by some new *Tafkīks* to amplify the ‘originality and continuity’ of the School by characterizing a sense of anti-mystical leanings among Mīrzā Mahdī’s teachers in Najaf, namely *the School of Sāmirrā*. This communicates as a quest for a true line of a tacit anti-mystical tendency (original and continuing) within Shi‘ī scholarship which was eventually verbalized and echoed very well in Mīrzā Mahdī’s literature. The role of *the School of Sāmirrā* has been scrutinized according both to historical accounts and *Tafkīkī* reports. The chief question of Mīrzā Mahdī’s intellectual personality can be subdivided into these secondary questions: What were the main contemporaneous trends in Najaf? Is it possible to identify any anti-mystical inclination with the members of *the School of Sāmirrā*? Why and how was Mīrzā sent to be taught by the members of the School? Who were the most influential figures for Mīrzā Mahdī whilst he studied in Iraq? To what extent was he linked to, or affected by great mystics in Najaf? How and under which circumstances did his turning point take place? How effective was that upheaval in his intellectual life?

(In Mashhad) To illuminate the process by which Mīrzā Mahdī developed his ideas and disseminated them among seminary circles. How he circulated his ideas and eventually, if true, altered the philosophical face of the *Hawza* of Mashhad into an anti-philosophical façade, and thence in all seminaries in Iran, has never been brought to light. These issues are subject to inquiry: How did he rise to fame in Mashhad? How did he form and increase his social academic network and gradually affect the circle of ‘ulamā? What was the core truth in his early debates? Who were the first attendees at his lessons? What are the first lessons he taught: are they *uṣūlī* or theological? How did he develop his ideas over the course of time?

Chapter three stands at the heart of the thesis. It goes straight to the epistemology of Mīrzā Mahdī and tries to find out his answers to a set of fundamental epistemic questions²⁷: Under what conditions does one know? The analysis of knowledge, what do we know; skepticism, Internalism and externalism; the structure of knowledge: foundationalism and coherentism. Some of these questions directly pertain to ontology and some rather to epistemology, for these two are inextricably linked to each other. This chapter aspires to expound the epistemological function of ‘aqīl mostly in regards to faith. It also aims to discover what platform Mīrzā Mahdī Ḥṣfahānī gives to ‘aqīl when it comes to faith.

To be loyal to Mīrzā’s method, the chapter starts with some of his open critiques on the concept of intellect in philosophy, and continues in drawing an epistemic dichotomy between his specific interpretation of Scriptures in the light of ‘aqīl and Muslim philosophers. It will explain how, in his opinion, the light of ‘aqīl is kindled, fortified and then fades. Mīrzā goes to great lengths to show the incapability of ‘aqīl in the knowing of Allah, and consequently, the infertility of philosophical argumentations (*burhān*) in the theological domain. For Mīrzā Mahdī, logical syllogisms (*barāhīn-i ‘aqīlī*) are intrinsically equivalent to their jurisprudential peers – analogical reasoning in jurisprudence (*qīyās*) –

27 See DeRose, K. (Last modified 23 November 2005). What Is Epistemology? A Brief Introduction to the Topic. Yale University, Dept. of Philosophy. [See bibliography for online source].

and, therefore, are not only barren, but also deceptive and forbidden. Mīrzā brings new insight into the concept of *ma'rifat Allāh bi Allāh* (Knowing Allah by Allah) by highlighting the passive role of 'aql. A philosophical epistemic system is refused alongside all other exterior interfering means. The definition, and the role, of 'aql has been modified and controlled in knowing God (*ma'rifah*), and alternatively, an effective role is attributed to it in the process of belief (*īmān*). **He tries to explain how a true believer knows his/her God without falling into the abyss of irrationalism.**

Chapter four raises the same question about the role of 'aql, but in the realm of *uṣūl al-fiqh*. The chapter is designed, for the first time, to work out the effects of Mirzā Mahdī's anti-philosophical methodology on his *uṣūl al-fiqh*. The chapter can be condensed into three questions: (1) is it possible to identify a distinguished *Tafkīkī School* of *uṣūl al-fiqh* established by Mīrzā Mahdī Isfahānī? (2) If yes, what are the main characteristics of this School? And, (3) how similar is this *Tafkīk uṣūlī School* to the ideological *Tafkīk* (particularly in terms of the role of the intellect)? A focus is given to the function of 'aql in *uṣūlī* principles established by Mīrzā and how they evolved into his opinions on fundamental *uṣūlī* issues such as *the essential goodness and badness* (*al-ḥusn wa al-qubḥ al-zātīyyan*), or, *mulāzima regulation* which manifest in the role of the intellect. His *fiqhī* terminology is also examined; *common-sense discourses* (*al-'urfi*), shifting from *intellectual arguments* (*al-'aqlānī*) to the *reasonable Paradigm* (*al-'uqalā'ī*), *narration of a reliable narrator* (*khabar al-thiqā*), and *the authenticity of one-narrated hadiths in beliefs* (*Hujīyyat akhabār al-āḥād fi al-i'tiqādāt*). Finally, two specific *fiqhī* ideas are examined as a case study of the result of his *uṣūlī* system: (a) *imitating the best knower* (*taqlīd al-a'lam*) and (b) *imitating the dead scholar* (*taqlīd al-mayyit*).

There could be a fifth chapter to delve into the legacy of Mīrzā Mahdī and the development of his idea in the course of the *Maktab-i Tafkīk*. As is typical in the history of ideas, the legacy of Mīrzā Mahdī started undergoing intra-debates just before his death. Because of the depth of this issue and the length of the thesis, this has been left for an independent research to be done elsewhere. The main question in such research could be how Mīrzā Mahdī's personal ideas have been developed and formed as a distinctive School of thought. It is interesting that the same crux, which segregated Mīrzā from other Shī'ī scholars, once more, separates his followers into subdivisions: from *Intellectual Tafkīk* to *Scriptural Tafkīk*. Seemingly, as Sajjad Rizvi predicted, the battle for finding the balance between the intellect, scripture, and personal experience continues to be continuous.²⁸

Methodology; The history of Idea and Textual Criticism

The conflict over the originality is interesting. Other sects and branches are always contaminated, or totally forged by socio-political factors, but

28 Rizvi, Sajjad H. (2012) "Only the 'Imam Knows Best' The Maktab-e Tafkīk's Attack on the Legitimacy of Philosophy in Iran', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 22.

when it comes to one's own religion or tradition, it should stand far from any probable vicissitudes.

Gordon says:

*'Most intellectuals do not live out their lives in complete solitude; they live and think in the midst of other intellectuals, engage in frequent and passionate debate, and to do so they often forge informal groups for conversation (such as the salons of the later eighteenth and early nineteenth century), or they help to establish institutional settings devoted chiefly to the life of the mind'*²⁹.

This statement is true, but when it comes to religion declarations like this, no matter how constructive and fundamental, are starkly rejected by traditionalists. A good example of a recent conflict can be taken from Ayatollah Ṣāfi Gulpāyigānī's response to Abdulaziz Sashedina's Islamic Messianism³⁰:

'The problem with these analyses rises when Shī'īsm is not looked at as a true religious matter, but rather as a political issue... the emergence of Shī'īsm is not related to the historical affairs and by no means caused by them, as the emergence of Islam does not pertain to any of these issues'.³¹

Ayatollah Ṣafī goes on:

*'This book, unfortunately, equates the formation of Shī'a doctrines to the Sunnī School which was germinated under the historical accounts...'*³²

Undoubtedly, all histories of religious ideas have failed to reach their final destinations safely and securely, but 'in fact, a proper understanding of the thought of any period will depend on knowing about all ideas that were current, from the popular to the erudite'³³. **Having this in mind, for the first time, my contribution to the history of Mīrzā**

29 Gordon, P.E. (2013). What is Intellectual History? A Frankly Partisan Introduction to a Frequently Misunderstood Field. [pdf] p.12. [See bibliography for online source].

30 Sachedina, A.A. (1981). *Islamic Messianism: The Idea of Mahdī in Twelver Shi'ism*. Albany: State University of New York Press, p.153.

31 Saafi, L. (1381 SH). Explanations to the Belief of Mahdism in Mhia Imamia. Tihrān: Naba'.

32 Ibid

33 Collini, S. (1985) 'What is Intellectual History?', *Journal of History Today*, 35(10), p.16.

Mahdī's ideology is to initiate a puzzle, or help make it more complete. For this reason, this thesis commences with an 'Intellectual Biography' of Mīrzā Mahdī Isfahānī and concludes with his legacy. The methodical purpose behind this order is to provide the reader with Mīrzā Mahdī's ideas about '*aql*', and, to explain how those theories developed out of his experiences in Najaf and disseminated later under socio-religious influences in Mashhad. Furthermore, it looks at the large-scale epistemic concept of the focal epistemic mean ('*aql*) as it appears and transforms before and after his death. The result, hopefully, combines several different approaches at once: a collective biography, an institutional history, and, an expository study of his epistemic ideas.

Although, as Gordon states, 'the boundary-line between philosophy and intellectual history remains highly flexible'³⁴, these chapters – at their best – will 'understand the formation and transformation' of ideas rather than evaluate them. It seems more helpful to describe ideas and institutions in parallel. 'The best approach [in intellectual history] is to begin with what might be considered the inner sanctum of the subject and to work outwards from there'³⁵. Therefore, chapter four, more specifically, tends to organize the historical narrative around the concept of '*aql*' and will then follow the development or metamorphosis of it as it manifests itself in different contexts and times. It is important to understand why some of Mīrzā Mahdī's pupils thought differently about the role of '*aql*' while others may not agree, and even believe that Mīrzā would not either. The story of institutionalization is better exemplified in Gordon's words: "Positivism" became something far greater though less precise than the doctrine formulated by August Comte and 'Nietzscheanism' became culturally fashionable in the fin-de-siècle and, for young soldiers in World War One, it became almost a religion— something Nietzsche himself would have despised"³⁶.

Chapters three and four deal with epistemic means, and are expected to be rather expository instead of being judgmental or evaluative³⁷. However, a set of questions has been added to highlight the epistemic pinnacle of each subject besides covering main the critiques on Mīrzā Mahdī's thought.

There are several replicas of every treaty or book by Mīrzā Mahdī, his lessons written by various students as well. Choosing the more credible script was crucial, because many of the later intra-debates are based on this diversity. To avoid this problem – as much as possible – published works have been given priority. Moreover, in terms of textual method, *eclecticism* has been applied to help give the analysis a more critical method. Although the result is not a copy of any particular book or treaty, some of Mīrzā's latest works, like *Abwāb al-Hudā* (in theology) and *Miṣbāḥ al-Hudā* (in jurisprudence) which helpfully provide a published list of his latest ideas, are placed at the centre of the research. Other works by Mīrzā are added as supplementary sources to help the thesis

34 Gordon, P.E. (2013). What is Intellectual History? A Frankly Partisan Introduction to a Frequently Misunderstood Field. [pdf] p. 4. [See bibliography for online source]

35 Collini, S. (1985) 'What is Intellectual History?', *Journal of History Today*, 35(10), p.14.

36 Gordon, P.E. (2013). What is Intellectual History? A Frankly Partisan Introduction to a Frequently Misunderstood Field. [pdf] p.11. [See bibliography for online source].

37 As 'Amīr Mu'izzī states 'the truth is beyond our access and we just may have access to part of the reality', 'Amīr Mu'izzī, M.'A. (1398 SH). *The divine guide in early Shī'ism*. Tīhrān: Nāmak. pp.312.

reach a comprehensive and hopefully conclusive result on his opinion in each subject. The reason behind selecting specific works is discussed in detail in following chapters.

As an insider³⁸, of course, one cannot ignore one's own moral or intellectual commitments entirely and it would be unwise to believe one could do so. However, as the text should make clear, I have, as much as is possible, tried to shift my position from that of an insider to that of an outsider. Attending *Tafkīkīs* classes for roughly 20 years has furnished this research with complete access to all unpublished sources of the School, therefore, being unbiased remains challenging on such an occasion. Studying under diverse scholars of different *Tafkīkīs* tendencies may eventually be of little help in writing a fair academic assessment of their master.

Mīrzā Mahdī's Extant Corpus

Having followed the common tradition in seminaries, Mīrzā's pupils started writing his lessons (*taqrīr*, to write) and duplicating his works (*istinsākh*). According to the seminary tradition, writing the teacher's lessons is vital, both for the teacher and for the prospect of the pupil. It preserves the teacher's literature, and also works as a practical system to evaluate the pupils' understanding. Thus, prominent students were normally known by their comprehensive and accurate *taqrīrāt*³⁹. One *taqrīr* will usually be more significant when it is read and corrected (usually annotated) by the teacher. With regards to Mīrzā Mahdī's legacy, our access to his ideas is confined to his students' efforts. The main pupils who wrote Mirzā's lessons or duplicated his works are listed and abbreviated below:

- Muḥammad Rīḍā Dāmghānī (Dam);
- ‘Alī Akbar Ṣadrzādih (Sad);
- Ghulām ‘Alī Fā`iqī, (fa);
- Muḥammad Bāqir Malikī Mīyānajī (Mal);
- ‘Adb Allah Wā‘iz Yazdī (Yaz);
- Sayyid Muḥammad Bāqir Najafī (Naj);

38 What do I exactly mean by using the term *insider*? I was 14 when I first joined *Tafkīkī* classes in Tehran and from then on, I have been attending different classes of a master to one and another of which belong to different approaches of the School. Even in the UK, during my PHD course I had attended advanced classes online on the daily basis. As a result, my mind has been feeded by *Tafkīkī* ideology. Writing a PHD thesis in the academia was a drastic exercise to finding an unbiased sight as it is expected from an outsider. I have chosen this field for my PHD because I see PHD degree as a true personal academic-mind-training. I can hopefully call myself an academic scholar only when I be able to look at Mīrzā and his thought from an outsider perspective, not as a member of the School. This is my major task.

39 This tradition is a common trend in seminaries and can be seen in many cases; Ayatollah Sayyid Abu al-Qāsim Khuyī was known for his *taqrīrāt* of Nā’īnī, and Khuyī's students rose fame by writing *taqrīrāt* of his lessons. Khuyī, ’A. (1368 SH). *Ajvad al-Taqrīrāt*. Qum: Muṣṭafawī.

- Ḥasan Rabbānī Mīyānajī (Rab);
- Muḥammad Ḥafīzī (Haf);
- Muḥammad Ḥasan Burūjirdī (Bur);
- Sayyid Murtadā Ṭabāṭabā’ī Askarī (Ask);
- ‘Alī Namāzī Shahrūdī (Sha);
- Shiyykh Maḥmūd Ḥalabī (Hal).

Thanks to these scholars, an inclusive bibliographical list of Mīrzā’s works is now available which consists of two major groups: (a) books and treaties, (b) lessons (*taqrīrāt*). The information about this bibliographical list is based on the latest updates of the *Ma’ārif* Institute. The complete name of the institute is *Mu’assisi-yi Ma’ārif-i Ahl Bayt* (*The Institute of the Knowledge of Ahl Bayt*). It is an organized contribution by *Tafkīkīs* to Mīrzā Mahdī’s heritage, established in the center of Shī‘ī seminary studies in Qum.

- Books and Treaties
- *Ma’ārif al-Qur’ān* [Arabic, unpublished], 5 volumes, 2253 folios.

This is Mīrzā’s most voluminous work in theology in which he has expounded on many doctrinal issues. It is to be published soon by the Institute; however, hard copies of the book are available. It holds considerable importance due to being one of Mīrzā’s last works.

There are nine manuscripts of this book available:

- Haf, 901 pages, incomplete, 20 first pages are lost;
- Bur, 586 pages, incomplete;
- Dam, 338 pages, incomplete; hold in Qamar-i Banī Hāshim Library in Dāmghān;
- Sad, 860 pages;
- Ask, 322 pages, incomplete;
- Fa, 104 pages, incomplete;
- Mal, 1094 pages, complete;
- Sha, 964 pages, complete;
- Unknown, 287 pages, incomplete.
- *Abwāb al-Hudā* [Arabic, published]

This is the most famous of Mīrzā Mahdī's published works. It consists of an introduction and 52 chapters. As evident from its name, the book is concerned with the epistemic dichotomies between three different doctrinal approaches: philosophy, mysticism, and revelation. This compendium also holds an important historical prologue on the integration of Greek Philosophy into Islamic texture. In the next chapter, the content of the book is introduced and discussed in detail, because among all Mīrzā's works, *Abwāb al-Hudā* plays the key role in referencing for this research.

There are four versions of the book available:

- *Abwāb al-Hudā fī bayān ṭarīq al-hidāyat-i al-’lāhīyya wa mukhālifati-hī ma’ā al-’ulūm al-yūnānīyya*, Sayyid Muhammad Bāqir Yazdī, Sa’īd, 1363 SH, Mashhad, 128 pages;
- *Abwāb al-Hudā wa Kitāb-i Mīsbāḥ al-Hudā*, Sayyid Muhammad Bāqir Yazdī, Sa’īd, 1364 SH, Sa’īd, Mashhad, 55 pages;
- *Abwāb al-Hudā bi riwāyat-i nuskhīh-yi Fā’iqī*, Jamshīdī, Qom, Būstān-i Kitāb, 1385 SH, 210 pages;
- *Abwāb al-Hudā*, Mufīd, Thran, Munīr, 1387 SH, 733 pages.

There are also six available manuscripts of this book:

- Sad, completer, 89 pages, edited and duplicated of the corrected version by Mīrzā Mahdī in 5th Jumādī al-ūlā, 1363;
 - Fa, complete, 28 pages, Āstān-i Quds-i Raḍawī, No. 8473;
 - Mal, complete, 39 pages;
 - Naj, complete, 128 pages;
 - Yaz, complete, 39 pages;
 - Āstān-i Quds-i Raḍawī, complete, 66 pages, it contains Mīrzā's annotations and corrections.
-
- *Anwār al-Hidāya* [Arabic, unpublished]

There is only one manuscript of this work which is in Mīrzā's handwriting, held in the Faculty of Theology and Islam of the University of Firðausī in Mashhad. Extant are 112 folios and incomplete, No. 1779. Subjects like the Miracle of Qur’ān, knowledge, ‘*aql*, Knowing Allah, and *badā’* are discussed in this book, with the latter occupying most of the content of the book.

- al-Şawārim al-‘aqlīyya ‘alā ta’wīl al-ahādīth al-marwīyya wa al-maqāmi‘ al-‘amalīyya ‘alā al-mafāriq al-Şaykhīyya, [Arabic, unpublished]

This work is dedicated to refuting Sheikh Aḥmad Aḥsā’ī and his ideas. There are four manuscripts available of the book:

- Āstān-i Quds-i Raḍawī, complete, 20 p., No. 12412, given by Mīrzā’s elder son, ‘Alī Ṙedā Gharawī;
- Dam, complete, 23 p.
- Sad, complete, 66 p.
- Mal, complete, 22 p.
- Miṣbāḥ al-Hudā [Arabic, published]

An important *uṣūlī*⁴⁰ book, this consists of one introduction and 8 chapters. This work is of great significance for being concise and written later in Mīrzā’s life, and also providing an index of Imamate *uṣūlī* principles according to his understanding. There are six manuscripts and one published version of the book to hand:

- Mīṣbāḥ al-Hudā, bi ḥamīmih-yi i‘jāz-i Qur’ān, Ḥasan Jamshīdī, Būstān-i Kitāb, Qom, 1387 SH;
- Dam, complete, 72 p.
- Rab, complete, 102 p.
- Sad, complete, 69 p.
- Fa, complete, 40 p. hold in Āstān-i Quds-i Raḍawī Library.
- Mal, complete, 33 p.
- Unknown, Āstān-i Quds-i Raḍawī, complete, 87 p., with Mīrzā’s corrections and annotations.
- al-Āyāt wa al-akhbār al-rāji‘a-t-i ila al-‘aql [Arabic, unpublished]

There is only one manuscript available of this work

40 The term *uṣūlī* refers to the books which contain principles and fundamental basis by which jurists infer jurisprudential rules and verdicts. *uṣūl al-fiqh* books include chapters such as linguistic discourses (*mabāḥith al-alfāz*), intellectual discourses (*mabāḥith al-aqlīyyah*), authenticity of narrations (*ḥujjīyat al-riwāyāt*) and so far so on.

- Dam, 28 p. hold in Qamar-i Banī Hāshim Library in Dāmghān, Microfilm No. 1971 in Markaz-i ‘ihyā’-i mīrāth-i Islāmī in Qom,
- Ghāyat al-munā fī mi‘rāj-i al-qurb wa al-liqā’ [Arabic, published]

This book investigates Prayer and its role in knowing Allah. It has been translated into Persian and published in Tehran. The new published version has a commentary by Mīrzā Mahdī’s son.

- *Ghāyat al-munā fī mi‘rāj-i al-qurb wa al-liqā’*, Mīrzā Muḥammad Mahdī Gharawī Isfahānī, Mahdī Khātamī, Āfāq, Tehran, 1391 SH,
- *Wajh-i i‘lāz-i Qur’ān*; [Arabic, Published]

Hermeneutic subjects around Qur’ān are dealt with in this book which manifests many of Mīrzā Mahdī’s linguistic views that are notable in the field. It was published recently in Tehran.

- *al-Ma‘ārif wa al-tawrīya*; [Arabic, Unpublished]

This book brings many insights to *uṣūlī* discourse. From a new perspective, Mīrzā Mahdī looks at the role of the concept of Imamate in *uṣūlī* principles, and tries to re-interpret Imams’ sayings under this new vision. What Mīrzā focuses on is the role of the Imam as a teacher. He digs into this concept, and providing numerous examples from the Imams, tries to prove that their sayings have been articulated according to the level of different addressees and should be contextualized and understood within that context. He concludes that according to Imams’ dictums, only those who reach the level of understanding of their sayings are true jurists (*faqīh*).

- *al-Iftā’ wa al-taqlīd*; [Arabic, unpublished]

Another jurisprudential work in which Mīrzā discusses the issue of *taqlīd* (following the opinion of a jurist). He touches upon many related issues that are important in terms of Mīrzā’s differences with the *akhbāris*. The treaty is significant in order to identify Mīrzā Mahdī’s position on the role of *aql* in the jurisprudential realm.

The following works are in jurisprudence and its principles (*fiqh* and *uṣūl al-fiqh*). They all are in Arabic and unpublished:

- *al-Uṣūl al-wasīt*; [Arabic, unpublished]
- *Risālah fi al-badā’*;
- *Jannat al-Raḍawīyyah*,
- *al-Mawāhib al-sanīyyah wa al-‘ināyāt al-Raḍawīyyah*,

- Uṣūl al-fiqh,
- Risāla-tun fi al-kur
- Uṣūl Āl-i al-Rasūl
- Khātimat al-uṣūl,

- taqrīrāt

In addition to his books and treaties, Mīrzā Mahdī's lessons also form another extensive corpus, both in ideology and jurisprudence: these are *uṣūlī taqrīrāt* by Sheikh Mahmūd Ḥalabī, Sheikh Mujtabā Qazwīnī, Sheikh Hāshim Qazwīnī, Sheikh Kādhim Dāmghānī, Malikī Mīyānajī and Hasan ‘Alī Murwārīd.

Sources of This Research

This research is supported by various sources of the following types:

- Historical sources, including the histories of cities of Najaf and Mashhad, biographies and autobiographies of scholars, *Tafkīkī* biographies of Mīrzā, and other figures of the School.
- Tafkīkī* works; vice versa critiques on *Tafkīk*;

As it was discussed earlier, there are scant critiques focused on Mīrzā Mahdī's own works from both sides. This negligence has been treated in this research. Moreover, in regard with the *Tafkīkīs*, this thesis has sifted through historical accounts, compared doctrinal debates in an intra-debate scope, and has not structured any discussion based on one-sided sources. Later *Tafkīkī* works in this thesis are only discussed in the last chapter, where intra-debates of *Tafkīkīs* are discussed.

Transliteration Notes

System of Transliteration of Arabic Characters				Short Vowels	
ء	'	ف	f	'	u
ب	b	ق	q	'	a
ت	t	ك	k	'	i
ث	th	ل	l		
ج	j	م	m	Long Vowels	
هـ	h	نـ	n	اـيـ	aa
خـ	kh	هـ	h	وـ	uu
دـ	d	وـ	w	يـ	ii
ذـ	dh	يـ	y		
رـ	r			Diphthongs	
زـ	z			أـوـ	aw
سـ	s			أـيـ	ay
شـ	sh			يـيـ	iyy
صـ	š			أـوـوـ	uww
ضـ	d̤				
طـ	t̤			N.B. Please use the following:	
ظـ	z̤			قـ instead ofـ kـ	
عـ	'			ـchـ instead ofـ cـ	
غـ	gh			jـ instead ofـ djـ	

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42 Madelung, W & Daftari, F 2021, 'System of Transliteration of Arabic and Persian Characters'. [See bibliography for online source]

Chronology

Date	Historical Events
1303/1886	Born in Isfahan
1312/1894	Death of his father
1315/1897	Moving to Iraq
1338/1920	Diligence permission form Nā'īnī
1340/1922	Returning to Iran/ Mashhad
Ca. 1340/ 1922	First <i>Uṣūl</i> class
Ca. 1350 /1931	Second <i>Uṣūl</i> class
Ca. 1360/1940	Third <i>Uṣūl</i> class

Chapter Two

Intellectual Biography

Methodological notes

As this thesis approached its final deadline, a comprehensive biography of Mīrzā was published in Tehran by the *Tafkīkīs*. *Iḥyāgar-i ḥawzi-yi khurāsān* is the first, complete biography of him published so far. It includes extensive interviews, stories and articles around his personality, life and literature in roughly one thousand pages. This work has been put together under the auspices of Mīrzā's son, Muḥammad Isma'īl (famous as Mudarris-i Gharawī) and he, himself, has written the introduction. The work is mentioned in this thesis as "biography". I was fortunate to have a chance to comment on this valuable work during my PhD research, but yet again my approach towards it is critical. As will be seen, no part has been referred to without critical thinking, mainly because the work is done by the *Tafkīkīs* themselves and has a definite pro-Mīrzā bias.

It is important to mention here the contextualization method of this thesis. Almost all Tafkīkī literatures around Mīrzā's intellectual personality and life suffer from the lack of a critical method.⁴³ There is no critical Tafkīkī source within the School written by Tafkīkīs, the all are demonstrative neither the old ones or the moderns. It is most likely because of their sacred view to their masters and their belief. Pieces written by Mīrzā's pupils and their pupils follow the same pattern. Its very rare to find a critic against Mīrzā -even a sentence- in massive litriture of Ḥalabī (his most famous pupil), Ḥakīmī and others. Mīrzā's personality and idea discovers and expose the true revelation; its to them to conceive it, interpret it and admit it. It can be seen in taqrīrāt of Ḥalabī, Maktab-I Tafkīk by Ḥakīmī and recent works such as ones by Rahīmīān: *Mas`li-yi `ilm*. They are all pro-school. You can see also bani hashemi's works or even biabani as they stand for demonstrating the idea. It should be said that their work compared to the classical seminary works is not weird or uncommon as the are his pupils and advocates. The mentioned names have -for sure- criticts for idea and the School in their class but not in their published works. This is the first time that his life is being investigated and scrutinized in a PhD thesis form using a contextualization method. For example, his childhood, his relationship with the masters, mystics and other effective figures in his life have been looked at with critical eyes.

Signposting

43 For this see the most important biographical work: 'Arabshāhī, M, Ṭālibīyān-Sharīf. H, Mofid, H, 'Arabshāhī, R & Mudarris-Gharawī, M.I (1394 SH) 'Iḥyāgar-i ḥawzi-yi Khurāsān. Tīhrān: Āfāq. On him which does not include any critical chapter. The same can be seen vividly in Ḥakīmī, M.R. (1383 SH). *Maktab-i Tafkīk*. Qum: Da'līl-i Mā, Rahīmīyān, A. (1385 SH). *Mas`alih-yi `ilm*. Tīhrān: Munīr and Rahīmīyān, A. (1385 SH). *Mas`alih-yi Qiās*, Tīhrān: Munīr, Jahān-bīn, A.M. (1385 SH). *Kitāb-i 'Aql*. Tīhrān: Naba'. For Bīyābānīs works see his article in *safīnih*, he has 29 articles on different related articles on *tafkīk* and Mīrzā: Bīyābānī 'Uskūyi, M. (1394 SH) 'Mabānī-yi Ḥujjīyyat-I Qurān-I Karīm az Nadhar-I Ḥīzā Mahdī 'Isfahanī: Marifat, 'Irāfān wa 'Ilm', *Journal of Safīnih*, 46, pp.122. Also, his books on main theological issues such as Bīyābānī 'Uskū'ī, M. (1391 SH). 'Adl-I 'Ilāhī. Tīhrān: Naba'; Bīyābānī 'Uskū'ī, M. (1392 SH). *Ma'rīfat-I Nabī wa 'Imām*. Tīhrān: Naba'; Bīyābānī 'Uskū'ī, M. (1390 SH). *'Imāmat*. Tīhrān: Naba'; Bīyābānī 'Uskū'ī, M. (1391 SH). *Tawḥīd wa 'Asmā' wa Ṣifāt*. Tīhrān: Naba'; Bīyābānī 'Uskū'ī, M. (1391 SH). *'Akhlāq-I Fīṭrī*. Tīhrān: Naba'.

The idea of ‘continuity and originality’ as Robert Gleave⁴⁴ has highlighted first, should be considered as the most important mission for Tafkīkīs, in order to articulate an independent, scriptural, and sacred school of thought. Developing this idea has two parts: the history of the School, and its content; including: methodology, epistemology, ontology and the other parts like pedagogy⁴⁵.

In terms of history, close attention to the timing of events holds great importance in reading Mīrzā Mahdī Ḥisfahānī’s intellectual biography. It is vital that his life is examined as a whole, and then divided into separate parts, as each plays a distinctive role in his development. Also, it is essential to consider the length of each period in his life span, specifically when it comes to the controversial shifting period in Najaf. This period is important even in Mashhad where he starts publicizing his ideas in the Hawza. Ḥakīmī⁴⁶ has divided Mīrzā Mahdī’s life into three main sections: the first entails ‘his studies’ for 18 years, the second period is his ‘rejecting philosophy’ for 7 years, and the third is his 25 years ‘in Mashhad’. The main problem with this split is the 7 years allocated to the shifting period.

Ḥakīmī mentions this very significant point without providing any reason as to why and how he recognized this shifting period as being as long as 7 years. Why did it not happen suddenly to Mīrzā, or at least in a shorter time? Ḥakīmī’s division, which is not accepted unanimously by other exponents of the School⁴⁷, resolutely asserts a gradual shift in Mīrzā’s ideology and implicitly undermines any alternative theory regarding a sudden change in Mīrzā’s life. His idea may appear like an attractive historical theory, but it is not verified by historical evidence. Slightly different from what Ḥakīmī and other Tafkīkīs like Mufīd suggested, I have divided Mīrzā’s life chronologically into three vital periods, mainly because the main target of this chapter is that examine the Tafkīkīs contentions about Mīrzā’s intellectual background; an assertion which denotes a profound effect on ‘originality and continuity’ of the School. These periods took place in three succeeding geographic places: (1) Ḥisfahān, (2) Najaf and (3) Mashhad. Studying the history of his ideas through socio-religious trends prevalent in these three different places helps us to grasp a better understanding of Mīrzā’s intellectual background.

The **argument** is that historical facts about the life of Mīrzā in these three places (three periods above), besides the historical facts on the key figures who are essentially needed to create the connection role in forming the idea of ‘continuity and originality’ are not sufficient. This connection is made through a famous fiqhī and uṣūlī school called the School of Sāmirrā which holds great deal of eminent names of Shia scholars. The School is needed to play a representative role of the ideas that Mīrzā articulates and intensifies

44 Gleave, R. (2010). ‘Continuity and Originality in Shi'i Thought: The Relationship between the Akhbariyya and the Maktab-i Tafkik’, in Mervin, S. and Hermann, D. (ed.) *Shiite Streams and Dynamics*. Beirut: Orient-Institut.

45 These parts will be discussed in next chapter.

46 Ḥakīmī (1935-2021) is almost most famous name among Tafkīkīs because of raising the slogan and naming the School as tafkīk. He is indeed one of the key figures when it comes to numerating the scholars of the School. His first and famed book can be considered as a general introduction to the School: Ḥakīmī, M.R. (1383 SH). *Maktab-i Tafkik*. Qum: Dalīl-i Mā. Ḥakīmī was pupil of Sheikh Mujtabā Qazwīnī who was pupil of Mīrzā as it will be discussed further in the thesis his perception of Tafkīk is subject to dispute later by other scholars of the School.

47 Specifically see ‘Iḥyāgar-i Hawzih-yi Khurāsān’.

later on. This shows that Mīrzā was not someone out of the mainstream, neither was his ideas something as wired, and unprecedented in Shia history without any background.

The first **claim** of the chapter is that, in Isfahan (first period), Hāj Āqā Rahīm Arbāb as the first ring of the connection chain cannot be posited in the right place in order to make the connection between Mīrzā and the next figure Sayyid Ismā’īl Ṣadr. And then, I have **re-examined** the validation of the idea of ‘originality and continuity’ within the figures of the School of Sāmirrā per-se, starting with Hāj Āqā Rahīm Arbāb, by focusing on his clear tendency towards Islamic philosophy and teaching different philosophical textbooks in his whole-life-period. I have, also, tried to **shed light** on the formative structure of the School of Sāmirrā to see whether or not it follows a specific manifesto, which is, on the next level, similar to what Mīrzā accentuates. The next **goal**, is to consider the connections between Mīrzā and Nā’īnī, which has not been looked through so far despite its high significance. This way, I try to show that the raise of Mīrzā’s name and ideas in Mashhad (third period) owes a great deal to his teaching Nā’īnī’s lessons in Mashhad and, consequently, considering this connection changes, the reading of Mīrzā’s intellectual history from a sacred and mysterious one to a normal touchable story. Other **argument** on Mashhad, is that the growth of his ideas amongst his pupils is not as united and coherent as Tafkīkīs claim. I have shown that Mīrzā’s pupils – specifically the first round - like Shiykh Hāshim Qazwīnī had their own intellectual personality, this characteristic, however, fizzles out gradually.

2.1 Isfahān; Early life and Hāj Āqā Rahīm Arbāb

This is a period of 12 years which covers the time from when Mīrzā was born in 1303/1885 to 1315/1897 when he moved to Iraq. To scrutinize any possible relationship between his educational tutelage, Hāj Āqā Rahīm Arbāb Isfahānī (d. 1396/1976.), and the *School of Sāmirrā*⁵¹ in Iraq are at the centre of this research.

Present works, even the recent voluminous work by Mīrzā’s son, Muḥammad ’Ismā’īl Gharawī Isfahānī⁵², fail to reach presenting conclusive information about Mīrzā’s early life. All we know is that he was born into a wealthy religious family in Isfahān in 1303/1885⁵³. His father was a farmer and a clergy. He had two siblings: one sister and one brother⁵⁴. The only notable information from his childhood is his relationship with Hāj

51 See Sīḥattī Sardurūdī, M. (1388 SH). Guzīdih-yi Sīmāy-I Sāmirā Sīnāy-I Sih Mūsā. Tīr: Mash’ar; Dārābī, B. (1392 SH) ‘Hawzih-yi ’Ilmīyah-yi Taqrībgarāy-I Sāmirā wa Naqsh-I Mīrzāy-I Shīrāzī’, Journal of Furūgh-I Waḥdat, 31, pp.39-49; Group of authors. (1371 SH) ‘Nigarishī bih Maktab-I Sāmirā’, Journal of Hawzih, 50 & 51.vr

52 He is the third son of Mīrzā. He started his formal seminaries in Mashhad with many scholars including his father’s pupils Shiykh Hāshim Qazwīnī. He studied Theology with other pupils of his father Shiykh Mujtābā Qazwīnī and Mīrzā Jawād Āqā Ṭīhrānī. He also studied in Qum with Āyatullah Ilāh Burūjirdī, Khomeini, and great philosopher Muḥammad Husayn Ṭabāṭabā’ī. He is one of the early students of Ḥalabī and owes his *tafkīkī* knowledge to him. I have attended his lessons in Tehran where he teaches different works of his father and Ḥalabī in regular bases session.

53 *Iḥyāgar-i Hawzih-yi Khurāsān*, pp.111.

54 Ibid

Āqā Rahīm Arbāb (d. 1396/1976)⁵⁵, who later becomes one of the most famous and influential scholars in Isfahān. As Mīrzā ’Ismā’īl Gharawī reports, in 1312/1894 when Mīrzā’s father died, Mīrzā’s uncle, who held the guardianship of the family, took the inheritance and left the family in abject poverty. This event had such a severe impact on Mīrzā that he never returned to Isfahān⁵⁶. The nine-year old Mīrzā was put under Arbāb’s educational tutelage. Mīrzā’s son introduces Arbāb as a family friend⁵⁷. Three years later in 1315/1897 Arbāb encouraged Mīrzā to travel to Iraq, to continue his seminary studies under Sayyid ’Ismā’īl Ṣadr (1258/1842 -1338/1920)⁵⁸, one of the key figures of the *School of Sāmirrā*⁵⁹. In latest *Tafkīkī*’s biography of Mīrzā, a higher prominence is given to the influence of Sayyid ’Ismā’īl Ṣadr in Mīrzā Mahdi’s intellectual background⁶⁰. Ṣadr, in addition to having a tutorial role for young Mīrzā, plays a connecting role in putting him in touch with other prominent scholars of the *School of Sāmirrā*⁶¹, mainly Mullā Fathī Alī Arākī Sultānābādi (Circa. 1235(40)/1820-1318/1900) who was the representative of the anti-mystical approach in Najaf. There is an attempt by some *Tafkīkīs* to identify and introduce the *School of Sāmirrā* as representative of the exact and absolute spiritual line of Shī’ī scholars and hold it in contrast to the mainstream trend of mystic Shī’ī scholars (‘urafā’). This historical background potentially enables them to trace an authentic line of origin for their anti-philosophical tendency within the central circles of Shī’ī leadership⁶².

The connection – if any – between Mīrzā and the *School of Sāmirrā* goes back to Arbāb; yet, as will be shown, it is not easy to find a clear connection between Arbāb and the *School of Sāmirrā*. Arbāb was born in 1297/1880 and at the time that Mīrzā was brought to his tutelage he was roughly 15 years’ old, which is not an appropriate - or rather, acceptable – age for granting the term ‘*educational tutor*’⁶³. There is no direct seminary connection between Arbāb and the members of the *School*. Arbāb travelled to Iraq only once as a child. However, Ṣadr was born in Isfahan and studied there until he was 23;

55 Rāzī, M.SH. (1352 SH). *Ganjīni-yi Dānishmandān*. Tīhrān: ’Islāmīyah, v.3, p.86.

56 ’Arabshāhī, M., Tālibīyān-Sharīf. H., Mofid, H., ’Arabshāhī, R. and Mudarris-Gharawī, M.I. (1394 SH). *Iḥyāgar-i Hawzih-yi khurāsān*. Tīhrān: Āfāq, p.108.

57 Ibid

58 ’Āghā Buzurg-i al-Tīhrānī, M.M. (1404 AH). *Nuqabā’ al-Bashar fī al-Qarn al-Thānī* ’Ashar. Mashhad: Nashr-i Dār al-Murtadā; ’Amin, S.M. (1403 AH). *A’yān al-shī’i*. Beirut: Dār al-Ta’ārif līl-Matbū’āt, v.5, p.219; Hirzuddin, M. (1405 AH). *Ma’ārif-u Al-Rijāl*. Qum: Manshūrāt Maktabah ’Āyatullāh al-’Uzmā al-Mar’ashī al-Najafī, 1, pp.111&115.

59 Sharaf al-Dīn, ’A. (1991). *Bughyat al-Rāghibīn*, Beirut: al-Dār al-’Islāmīyyah, p.203; Hirzuddin, M. (1405 AH). *Ma’ārif-u Al-Rijāl*. Qum: Manshūrāt Maktabah ’Āyatullāh al-’Uzmā al-Mar’ashī al-Najafī, v.1, p.116; *Iḥyāgar-i Hawzih-yi Khurāsān*, p.11; Rāzī, M.SH. (1352 SH). *Ganjīni-yi Dānishmandān*. Tīhrān: ’Islāmīyah, .7, p.114; Hakīmī, M.R. (1383 SH). *Maktab-i Tafkīk*. Qum: Dalīl-i Mā, p.212.

60 *Iḥyāgar-i Hawzih-yi Khurāsān*, pp.118-148.

61 For more information on the School see 2.2.1 on a Quest for ‘Continuity and Originality’ and Mufid, H. Bāwardāsh-ti Mahdawīyyat-Imamat dar Maktab-i Sāmirrā.

62 Mufid, H. (1385 SH) Bāwardāsh-ti Mahdawīyyat-Imamat dar Maktab-i Sāmirrā, *Journal of Safīnīh*, 11. where he tries to distinguish between two rival Schools and then to illuminate confronting lines between them such as prominent scholars, distinct ideological differentiations and finally, and more importantly, different methods in asceticism and mortification. Mufid highlights, for instance, focusing on the importance and personality of the twelfth Imam as one of the key figures of the literature of the scholar School of Sāmirrā.

63 This term is used by his son, see Muntadhir al-Qā’im, ’A. (1392 SH). *Danishnāmi-yi Takht-i Fūlād-I Isfahān*. Isfahān: Sāzmān-I Farhangī Tafrīhī-yi Shahrdārī-yi Isfahān, v.1.

he was *mujtahid* in 1281/1864 when he went to Najaf, 15 years before Arbāb was born. Therefore, it is justifiable that Arbāb knew Şadr very well, because by 1315/1897, when he sent Mīrzā to him, Şadr was in his highest scholarly and public position in Najaf. Şadr was an absolute nominee for *Marja’iyā* after Grand Āyatullāh Mīrzā-yi Shīrāzī⁶⁴.

In addition, from a theological point of view, it is not easy to find a lucid anti-philosophical tendency for Arbāb, even in his elderly age. He is described, on the contrary, as the last figure of the old *Philosophical School of Isfahan*⁶⁵. He had studied major philosophical works such as *Ishārāt*, *Shifā*, *Sharh-i manzūma*, and *Asfār* with famous scholars; namely, Akhūnd Mullā Muḥammad Kāshī (d. 1333/1915) and Jahāngīr Khān Qashqā’ī (d. 1328/1910). Some reports even suggest that he believed in the *Şadrā’iyan* doctrine (*Hikmat-i Muta’āliyya*)⁶⁶. However, other reports propose that Arbāb’s philosophy lessons were private, and, in addition, there are indications of his reluctance to teach Philosophy as he advanced in years⁶⁷. It is said that he was concerned about the consequences of teaching philosophy⁶⁸. In terms of jurisprudence, however, his modest approach toward *uṣūl al-fiqh* seems to be in line with the *fiqhī*-oriented principles of the *School of Sāmirrā’*⁶⁹. Arbāb is also described as having a *hadīthī* tendency (*akhbār-girā’ī*)⁷⁰. Furthermore, there are some reflections and thoughts about his complaints regarding the inapplicable amplification of *uṣūl al-fiqh*⁷¹.

Overall, although there are obvious similarities between his jurisprudential approach and the *School of Sāmirrā’*, it is not clear why 18-year-old Arbāb sent 12-year-old Mīrzā Mahdī to study with Şadr. This highlights that the material for building an ideological bridge between Arbāb and the *School of Sāmirrā’* through their relationship with Sayyid ’Ismā’īl Şadr is still insufficient.

2.2 Najaf; the School of Sāmirrā’ and Epistemic Crises

64 Sharaf al-Dīn, ’A. (1991). *Bughyat al-Rāghibīn*. Beirut: al-Dār al-’Islāmīyah, pp.199&200; Şadr, H. Husiynī, ’A. and Mar’ashī, M. (1365 SH). *Takmila Amal al-Āmil*. Qum: ’Intishārāt-I Kitābkhānih-yi ’Umūmī-yi ’Āyatullah Mar’ashī-ye Najaft, v.5, p.219.

65 Humā’ī, J. (1356 SH). *Jāvīdān-i Khirad*. Tīhrān: Anjuman-i Ḥikmat wa Falsafih, v.1, p.77.

66 Gharawī, S.M.J. (1375 SH) ’Āyatullāh Hāj ’Āqā Rahīm Arbāb’, *Journal of Masjid*, 25, p.94; Dīyā’ Nūr, F.A. (1355 SH) ’Āyatullāh Hāj ’Āqā Rahīm Arbāb 2’, *Journal of Dānishgāh ’Isfahan*, 13&14; Rīyāhī, M.H. (no date) ’Yadnāmi-yi ’Āyatullāh Hāj ’Āqā Rahīm Arbāb’, *Majmū’i-yi arbāb-i ma’rifat*, Idāri-yi kull-i farhang va irshad-i Islāmī , p.110.

67 Dīyā’ Nūr, F.A. (1355 SH) ’Āyatullāh Hāj ’Āqā Rahīm Arbāb 2’, *Journal of Dānishgāh ’Isfahan*, 13&14, p.111.

68 Gharawī, S.M.J. (1375 SH) ’Āyatullāh Hāj ’Āqā Rahīm Arbāb’, *Journal of Masjid*, 25, p.94.

69 Rīyāhī, M.H. (no date) ’Yadnāmi-yi ’Āyatullāh Hāj ’Āqā Rahīm Arbāb’, *Majmū’i-yi Arbāb-i Ma’rifat*, Idāri-yi Kull-i Farhang wa Irshad-i Islāmī. For the *School* 187311 of Sāmirrā’ see section 2.2.

70 Humā’ī, J. (1356 SH). *Jāvīdān-i Khirad*. Tīhrān: Anjuman-i Ḥikmat wa Falsafih, v.1, p.8; Dīyā’ Nūr, F.A. (1355 SH) ’Āyatullāh Hāj ’Āqā Rahīm Arbāb 2’, *Journal of Dānishgāh ’Isfahan*, 13&14, p.110.

71 Gharawī, S.M.J. (1375 SH) ’Āyatullāh Hāj ’Āqā Rahīm Arbāb’, *Journal of Masjid*, 25.

Outline

This is a period of nearly 25 years of Mīrzā Mahdī's studies in Iraq from 1315/1897 to 1340/1922. Here he joins a circle of prominent scholars, receiving his main *uṣūlī* and *fiqhī* lessons. He eventually achieves the qualification of diligence (*ijāzi-yi ijtihād*) from Grand Āyatullāh Sayyid Muḥammad Husayn Nā'īnī (d. 1936). He is associated with several members of the *School of Sāmirrā'*; in particular Sayyid 'Ismā'īl Ṣadr, in terms of self-edification (*Riyāḍat al-Sharīyya*).⁷² He is also in touch with scholars from the mainstream mystical trend, '*urafā'*. Consequently, he achieves the highest ascetic qualification of 'self-gnosis' (*ma'rifa al-nafs*).

This period is crucial as it ends with Mīrzā's perplexity and eventually his rejection of all philosophical and mystical amalgamations. This bewilderment is the epicentre of his fundamental upheaval. The distinction between Mīrzā Mahdī before and after this refusal is the focal part of this section of the research. Soon after, he goes back to Iran and starts disseminating his lessons and his new ideology which was, according to him, no longer philosophy or mysticism. His intellectual characteristics can be examined through his development, namely in: (1) traditional seminary instructions mainly influenced by Nā'īnī, (2) self-edification and ascetic practices infused from two (seemingly) different schools (Najaf and Sāmirrā'), and finally (3) his spiritual epistemic revulsion.

2.2.1 on a Quest for 'Continuity and Originality'

The *School of Sāmirrā'*, or more famously, *Maktab-i Sāmirrā'*, is an *uṣūlī* Shī'ī School which was formed mainly around Grand Āyatullāh Mīrzā Ḥasan Shīrāzī, famous as Mīrzā-yi Buzurg (Great Mīrzā) or Mīrzā-yi Shīrāzī (1230/1815 - 1312/1895). However, the sparkle of its *fiqhī* method fizzled out soon after its two last figures died: Shīykh 'Abd al-Karīm Hā'irī, the founder of the *Hawza* of Qum in 1301 SH /1922, and Grand Āyatullāh Sayyid Husayn Tabāṭabā'ī Burjirdī in 1340 SH /1922. The School's characteristics are usually better portrayed in contrast with the famous *uṣūlī* *School of Najaf* which started with Akhūnd Khurāsānī (d. 1255/1911), but flourished more in the hands of his outstanding students Nā'īnī (d. 1355/1936), and later Āqā Ḏīā' Arāqī (d. 1361/1942). Broadly speaking, the *School of Sāmirrā'* is distinguished by some methodological characteristics in *uṣūl*, *fiqh*, and pedagogy within seminary circles, some of which are listed below:

- Interactive method of teaching; there is a focus on debating the presented lessons, both between the teacher and the students in the class, and between the students themselves. This method is very much famous as the method of Mīrzā-yi Shīrāzī.
- *Fiqhī-oriented* method; *uṣūlī* topics are often discussed under a *fiqhī* issue, and as a result *uṣūlī* subjects are less developed in purely conceptual

72 Other word for *Riyāḍat* can be self-mortification, ascesis.

dimensions, which is one of the negative characteristics of the *uṣūl al-fiqh* for many scholars.

- The essential indication of the words (*dilālat al-dhātī li alfāz*).
- Finally, and more significantly: avoiding philosophical terminologies in *uṣūl al-fiqh* discourses⁷³. This element is essential, because (1) it proves the existence of an anti-philosophical trend within the School, and (2) echoes that the depth and magnitude that this trend has fathomed in order to clearly penetrate *uṣūlī* ideas.

The jurisprudential characteristics of the *School of Sāmirrā* are more often discussed in seminaries, but in terms of any certain doctrinal feature – if any – remain ambiguous. There is a wide gap for research in this field, mainly due to the scholars of the School not leaving ideological works reflecting their particular theological doctrines. However, certain tendencies can be elicited, not only from their *fiqh* and *uṣūl* literature, but also from their various *hadīthī* works. As one of the latest examples, one can take the anti-philosophical approach of Grand Āyatullāh Burūjirdī and its effects on his *fiqhī*-oriented method. The oft-quoted anecdote about Burūjirdī's severe resistance to teaching philosophy in Qum, by great contemporary philosopher Āyatullāh 'Allāma Ṭabāṭabā'ī (d. 1981), is another obvious socio-seminary conflict between the two approaches⁷⁴.

Mīrzā Mahdī Isfahānī was in contact with both sides during his studies in Najaf and Karbalā. This connection is verified by available sources, even from the *Tafkīkī* side⁷⁵. Nonetheless, they still attempted to keep Mīrzā on the safe side (the non-philosophical or even anti-philosophical one). For instance, the relationship between Mīrzā Mahdī and Āyatullāh Burūjirdī is emphasized in their account. They narrate stories to build up the ideological link between Burūjirdī and Mīrzā Mahdī, and also later between Burūjirdī and Mīrzā Mahdī's adherent student Shiykh Maḥmūd Ḥalabī (1279 SH/1900 – 1376 SH /1998)⁷⁶. Likewise, the same effort is made for the connection between Mīrzā and sheikh 'Abd al-Karīm Hā'irī, another prominent figure of the *School of Sāmirrā*⁷⁷.

To make these recent connections historically closer, Ḥusayn Muftī, a prolific young advocate of Mīrzā Mahdī, provides a list of prominent early scholars of the School. The list contains scholars who are direct students of Mīrzā-yi Shīrāzī and shaped the first

73 A speech about the School of Sāmirrā by Muhammad 'Abdullāhī ,

74 Rizvi, Sajjad H. (2012) "Only the Imam Knows Best" The Maktab-e Tafkīk's Attack on the Legitimacy of Philosophy in Iran', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 22, issue 3-4, pp.478-503.

75 See the introduction of the first draft in offset of Abwāb al-Hudā by Burūjirdī, p.44, he narrates from Mīrzā that he said that we were studying philosophy and mysticism in Najaf secretly and Āyatullāh Muḥammad Kāẓim Ṭabāṭabā'ī had issued a *fatwā* prohibiting studying these lessons.

76 'Iḥyāgar-i Hawzih-yi khurāsān, pp.199-201.

77 Ibid, p.202. This can be seen in 'Isfahānī, M.M. (1398 SH). *Al-Qurān wa al-Furqān fī Wajhi 'Ijāz al-Qurān al-Majid* 'Ijāznāmīh. Qum: Mu'assisah-yi Ma'ārif-I 'Ahl al-Bayt. which is signed by Shiykh 'Abd al-Karīm Hā'irī, this happened when, in his way from Najaf to Mashhad, Mīrzā stayed for two months in Arāk and attended Shiykh 'Abd al-Karīm Hā'irī's classes in Arāk.

circle of the School around him. It is important to note that Mīrzā Mahdī Isfahānī is also included towards the end of Mufīd's list, as the last figure of the first generation of the School, although, he had not been a direct student of Mīrzā-yi Shīrāzī. It should be emphasized that Mīrzā Mahdī is not included in the list of scholars of the *School of Sāmirrā* when it is provided by non-*Tafkīkīs*.

Mūfīd's list reads as follows⁷⁸:

Mīrzā Ḥasan Shīrāzī (1230/1815 - 1312/1895)

Akhūnd Mullā Fathī ‘Alī Sultānābādī (Circa. 1235(40)/1820 - 1318/1900)

Sayyid Ismā’īl Ṣadr (1258/1842 - 1338/1920)

Mīrzā Ḫusayn Nūrī Ṭabrisī

Shiyykh Muḥammad Bāqir Birjandī

Shiyykh Faḍl Allah Nūrī

Sayyid Abu ’l-Qāsim Dihkurdī

Sayyid Muḥammad Taqī Mūsavī Isfahānī

Ṣadr al-’Islām Hamadānī

Mīrzā Mahdī Isfahānī

Mufīd then tries to find some ideological and methodical characteristics among these scholars in order to form a distinctive doctrinal structure. The collected elements are very much in line with Mīrzā Mahdī's ideological heritage:

- The migration from Najaf to Sāmirrā' as the Twelfth Imam's hometown and the most attributed city to him. This migration added a significant prospect to the city and highlights the attention of the School to the Twelfth Imam.
- The explicit referencing to the Twelfth Imam and his instruction in the historical *fatwā* about prohibiting the use of tobacco issued by Mīrzā-yi Shīrāzī. The stories circulated behind issuing this *fatwā* are also important, as they hint at Mīrzā-yi Shīrāzī's relationship with the Imam.
- Plenty of well-known works done by the scholars of the School regarding the Twelfth Imam, such as *Mikyāl al-makārim* by Mūsavī Isfahānī, *Takālīf*

78 Mūfīd, H. (1385 SH) Bāwardāsht-i Mahdawīyyat-’Imamat dar Maktab-i Sāmirrā, *Journal of Safīnīh*, 11.

al-anām by Hamadānī, and *Najm al-thāqib* or *Kalimat al-tayyiba* by Muḥaddith Nūrī.

For Mufīd and some other *Tafkīkīs*, the emphasis on the role of the Twelfth Imam as the true Divine Leader, and the main reference for Shī'a during the Occultation period, is one of the central segments of the School⁷⁹. This Imam-centred attitude connotes the rejection of any inevitable role of other individuals (*murshid*) in the Divine leadership⁸⁰. This sarcasm implies that rival methods of mystics have deviated from the true self-modification within the Imams' instructions. After tracing these dividing boundaries, *Tafkīkīs* turn to elaborate theological and practical differences among Shī'a scholars, and discern confronting tendencies within seminary circles⁸¹. They report some conflicts between affiliates of the two Schools, such as one between Mullā Ḥusayn-Qulī Hamadānī (*the School of Najaf*) and Mullā Fath Ḥalī Sultānābādī (*the School of Sāmirrā*)⁸².

Although in terms of self-edification and asceticism a methodological divergence between Shī'a 'ulamā' is discernible⁸³, so it is not easy to catch a clear ideological chasm, or a distinguished school of thought standing against mainstream mysticism with certain epistemological boundaries⁸⁴. In fact, this claim calls for an entirely exclusive research about the history and ideology of the *School of Sāmirrā*, or more precisely, the history of different ideological paradigms in contemporary Najaf, which is definitely beyond the scope of this research. Therefore, this chapter focuses only on examining the hypothesis proposed by some *Tafkīkīs* about the doctrinal connection between the *School of*

79 Mufīd, H. (1385 SH) Bāwardāsh-i Mahdawīyyat-'Imamat dar Maktab-i Sāmirrā, *Journal of Safīnīh*, 11. He starts with this role of the Imam and tries to keep it at the centre of characteristics of the School of Sāmirrā; see also 'Ihyāgar-i Hawzih-yi Khurāsān, p.124.

80 Ibid, p.125.

81 Ibid, pp.123-4.

82 For this I refer to some evidences:

Şadūqī Sahā, M. (1381 SH). *Tārikh-I Ḥukamā wa 'Urafā-yi Muta'ākhkhir*. Tehran: Ḥikmat, p.239; Shubiyrī-i Zanjānī, S.M. (1390 SH). *Jur'i-yi az Daryā*. Qum: Kitāb Shināsī-yi Shī'ih, vol.2, p.397; Balāghī, S.A.H. (no date). *Tadhkirah-yi 'Urafā*. Tīhrān: Mazāhirī, pp.198-199.

It is emphasized in the Mīrzā Mahdī's Biography (*the 'Ihyāgar-i ḥuzi-yi Khurāsān*) that Muḥaddith Nūrī uses the word pious (*zāhid*) instead of mystic (*'ārif*), to describe Sultānābādī. The term *zāhid* refers to a more scriptural context whereas the term *'ārif* which stands for common mystical atmosphere from which they tent to avoid. For more information on the contrast between *'ārif* you can easily refer to mystical trend in whole Persian literature and poetry. In literature of Hafiz, Rūmī, Attār, Sa'dī, their literature is full of examples of confronting these two terms (*zāhid* and *'ārif*) as the two key elements of the two different trends. It is also important that Nūrī emphasizes on his personality by describing him as the closest personage they have ever seen to the right path of Imams (→ Mīrzā Mahdī's Biography, p.132, referring to Nūrī Ṭabarsī, H. (1338 SH), *Dār al-Salām fīmā Yata'alliq bi-RRu'yā wa al-Manām*. Qum: Ma'ārif al-'Islāmīyyah, vol.2, p.266)

83 Mufīd, H. (1385 SH) Bāwardāsh-i Mahdawīyyat-'Imamat dar Maktab-i Sāmirrā, *Journal of Safīnīh*, 11.

84 Although there are many reasons given by Mufīd in terms of common characteristics of a bunch of ulama circling mainly around Mīrzāyi Shirazi, separated from mystics and philosophers, having them under an umbrella of a particular school is rather a modern attend. However, this issue is a subject of a further enquiries. I would prefer to see this circle of ulama as a discernable trend in their usul tendency, feqhī method, and imamat-oriented system of thought. All in all, when the term School is used in my text, it refers to which is used by those who believe in it.

Sāmirrā' and Mīrzā Mahdī's intellectual background. Identifying a robust connection is not an easy task, for several reasons:

Dissimilar to Mīrzā Mahdī, the scholars of the *School of Sāmirrā'* did not produce *kalāmī* works. Their heritage is totally *riwā'ī* with an *akhbār-girā* tendency, but none of them deals with theological issues directly. Therefore, one should infer their ideology through indirect sources, which is obviously insecure.

Reports about Mīrzā Mahdī's life in Najaf are scattered around, and, almost all of them are narrated by *Tafkīkīs* themselves.

Clear conflict between the two sets of scholars is blurred, due to the shortage of information about exact doctrinal issues.

A distinctive ascetic method among scholars of the *School of Sāmirrā'* has not been identified so far, a method with clear boundaries dividing the School from rival mystical methods.

As a result, to conclude regarding (a) the doctrine of the *School of Sāmirrā'*, and (b) its influence on Mīrzā's ideology, two sets of historical-intellectual questions should be considered respectively:

- Is it possible to identify any anti-mystical ideology amongst the members of the *School of Sāmirrā'*?
- Is it possible to trace back any of Mīrzā Mahdī's ideologies to those members?

As discussed above, the approach of this research is to leave the first question (suppose it to be true) and focus on the second question. Therefore, even if there was a systematic anti-mystical trend within the *School of Sāmirrā'*, though it is really difficult to say that, this thesis tries to show that Mīrzā Mahdī's ideology could not have been influenced directly by that system, or at least, that impact cannot be proved.

2.2.2 Seminary Backgrounds; The influences of Şadr and Nā'īnī

As discussed earlier, following Arbāb's advice, 12 year-old Mīrzā Mahdī moved from Isfahān to study under Sayyid 'Ismā'īl Şadr in 1315/1897. Ḥalabī reports that Arbāb wrote a reference letter for him asking Şadr to 'take this child (Mīrzā Mahdī) under your guardianship'⁸⁵. Şadr plays a significant role in Mīrzā's education. It is worth mentioning that later the second son of Şadr, Sayyid Şadr al-Dīn Şadr, is amongst the first students of Mīrzā Mahdī in Mashhad. This is based on Şadr's advice to Mīrzā to attend the most advanced classes of the famous scholars of the time, namely Muḥammad Kādhim

85 In *'Ihyāgar-i Hawzih-yi Khurāsān*, p.111, the exact narrated sentence is 'I sent this child to you, in order that you undertake his bail (man īn bachchih rā firistādam tā kifālatash rā bi 'uhdih bigīrīd).

Khurāsānī (the author of *kifāya-tu 'l-uṣūl*) in *uṣūl al-fiqh*, and Muḥammad Kādhīm Yazdī (the author of *al-'urwa-tu 'l-wuthqā*) in *fiqh*. Then Mīrzā approaches Nā'īnī. The relationship between Mīrzā and Nā'īnī is also noteworthy. He is the first student who attended Nā'īnī's private *dars al-khārij*⁸⁶. Mīrzā continued with him for fourteen years, of which most the first five must have been very private between him and Nā'īnī⁸⁷. Nā'īnī granted a special extra scholarship (*shahīyya*) for Mīrzā⁸⁸. This close connection resulted in Mīrzā achieving the highest qualification of 'diligence permission' (*ijāza al-ijtihād*), a qualification later signed (confirmed and re-authorized) by other Grand Āyatullahs, namely Āqā Dīyā 'Arāqī, Sayyid Abu 'l-Hasan Isfahānī, and Shiykh 'Abd al-Karīm Ḥā'irī⁸⁹. This certainly shows that Nā'īnī believed absolutely in his student as a fully qualified jurist⁹⁰ (*mujtahid-i muṭlaq*). Their relationship continued even when Mīrzā moved to Mashhad following Nā'īnī's advice⁹¹.

The tight scholarly connection with Nā'īnī, for such a long time, is highly significant in Mīrzā Mahdī's intellectual biography from two aspects. (1) This connection paved the way through seminary circles soon after Mīrzā entered Mashhad, both in terms of having sufficient knowledge, and credible authority. (2) More significantly, from an *uṣūlī* perspective, this connection fuelled Mīrzā with (at least) a non-philosophical tendency towards *uṣūl al-fiqh*. For nearly one century, there have been two rival interpretations over the principles of Shiykh Murtadā al-Anṣārī, the most prominent *uṣūlī* scholar, and the founder of the new *uṣūl al-fiqh* in Shī'a seminaries. The first trend was led by Sayyid Muḥammad Kādhīm Khurāsānī, famous as Akhūnd-i Khurāsānī, and the second one by Nā'īnī. The historical challenge is still famous in seminaries. Different interpretations are rooted in different methodologies. Akhūnd Khurāsānī had studied philosophy under the famous philosopher Mullā Hādī Sabziwārī (d. 1289/1873) and his version of Anṣārī's *uṣūl* is well influenced by philosophical conceptions⁹². On the other hand, Nā'īnī's *uṣūl* is described as an attempt to purify Anṣārī's *uṣūl* from Khurāsānī's philosophical

86 The term refers to the higher level of seminary classes in which a qualified jurist begins to evaluate all different ideas and arguments around one issue in order to teach the procedure of issuing his personal verdict (*Fatwā*). The term *Khārij* (literally exterior) refers to a level that is beyond classical textbooks.

87 Ibid, pp.148-9

88 Ibid, p.155&150.

89 Ibid, pp.151-5.

90 A qualified jurist is a jurist who has reached the highest level of juristpuridential system. How should have permission of issuing his personal verdict after studying with masters.

91 Ibid, p.155. For more information about Nā'īnī and his relationship with Mīrzā Mahdī see 'Āghā Buzurg-i al-Tihrānī, M.M. (1404 AH). *Nuqabā' al-Bashar fī al-Qarn al-Thānī 'Ashar*. Mashhad: Nashr-i Dār al-Murtadā, v.5, pp.417,593&594; Namāzī Shahrūdī, 'A. (1395 SH). *Mustadrak-i Safināti al-Bihār*. Qum: Mu'assisah al-Nashr al-'Islāmī, v.1, p.10; Hirzuddin, M. (1405 AH). *Ma'ārif-u al-Rijāl*. Qum: Manshūrāt Maktabah 'Āyatullāh al-'Uzmā al-Mar'ashī al-Najafī, v.1, p.285; 'Imāmī Khuyī, M.'A. (1385 SH). *Mir'āt al-Sharq*. Qum: 'Intishārāt-I Kitābkhānih-yi 'Umūmī-yi 'Āyatullāh Mar'ashī-ye Najafī, vol.1, p.660; 'Amin, S.M. (1403 AH). *'A'yān al-shī'ihs*. Beirut: Dār al-Ta'āruf li'l-Matbū'āt, Vol.9, p.236; Sadr, H. Husiynī, 'A. and Mar'ashī, M. (1365 SH). *Takmila Amal al-Āmil*, Qum: 'Intishārāt-I Kitābkhānih-yi 'Umūmī-yi 'Āyatullāh Mar'ashī-ye Najafī, v.2, p.474.

92 Wā'izzādih Khurāsānī', H. (1378 SH) 'Naqd-i Maktab-i Tafkīk'. Interviewed by Haqpanāh, *Pajāūhish-hā-yi 'Ijtīmā' Islāmī*, 19, pp.131-161.

amalgamation.^{93,94} In addition, it becomes much more interesting when noting in Nā’īnī’s resume that he has studied with Mīrzā-yi Shīrāzī (the founder of the *School of Sāmirrā*), then with Ṣadr (Mīrzā Mahdī’s tutor and a key member of the School), and has also attended Sultānābādī’s sessions (an influential ascetic figure of the School). This information helps us to (a) have a measurable Mundane and tangible background behind Mīrzā Mahdī’s ideology, a kernel truth of which the *takfīkī* account is bereft; and (b) it also helps us to better understand of his *uṣūlī* ideas. It will be discussed in chapter four that Mīrzā follows the common *uṣūlī* pattern in almost all his works and many of his *uṣūlī* concepts do not stand far from those of Nā’īnī and other scholars.

2.2.3 Mystical and Philosophical Background; Epistemic Bewilderment

Mīrzā was not only studying formal seminary lessons, he was also making progress towards self-edification and introspection under Ṣadr’s tutelage. As Ḥalabī highlights, Mīrzā Mahdī reached the state of voluntary deprivation or incorporeity of the soul (*tajrīd* or *inkhilāf*) under Ṣadr’s induction⁹⁶. According to mystical instructions this is the state in which one can intentionally distance between body and his/her soul, it is even said that those who reach this level can die deliberately(*mut al-ikhtiyārī*). Ṣadr is one the three leading scholars who assisted Mīrzā-yi Shīrāzī in establishing the new *ḥawza* in Sāmirrā⁹⁷. Mīrzā-yi Shīrāzī invited Ṣadr to join his circle when he moved to Sāmirrā, shaping the School in 1291/1874⁹⁸. After Mīrzā-yi Shīrāzī’s death, he was again at the centre of the ‘*ulamā*’s attention for *marja’īyya*⁹⁹. As it is reported, Nā’īnī, for instance,

93 Fayyad, M. I. (1377 SH) ‘Nawāwarī-hā-yi ’Uṣūlī wa Fiqhī-yi ’Ātay-u-llāh Khuyī’, *Journal of Fiqh*, 17&18, pp. 319-343; Fayyad, M. I. (1377 SH) ‘Nawāwarī-hā-yi ’Uṣūlī wa Fiqhī-yi ’Ātay-u-llāh Khuyī’, *Journal of Fiqh*, 17&18, pp. 319-343;

94 For tracing the influence of philosophy on *uṣūl al-fiqh* see different sources written on this issue. For instance, Müsawī, S.M. (1388 SH) ‘Ta’āmul-I Mutiqābil-I Falsafih wa ’Uṣūl-I Fiqh az Manzar-I Shahīd Sayyid Bāqir Ṣadr’, *Journal of Ma’rifat*, 140; ’Ismā’īlī, M. A. (1393 SH) ‘Ta’thīrāt-I Falsafih-yi ’Islāmī bar ’Ilm-I Fiqh’, *Journal of Fiqh*, 21(80); Rahmānīfard Sabziwārī, ’A. (1397 SH) ‘Barrisī-yi Naqsh-I Ba’ḍī az ’Ulūm-I ’Aqlī dar ’Ijtihād-I Fiqhī’, *Journal of Muṭāli’āt-I ’Uṣūl-I Fiqh-I ’Imāmīyah*, 9, pp.7-36.

95 Ḥalabī, M. (no date). Ma’ārif-I ’Ilāhiyih, Lesson 13. Khurramshahr: Shams; ’Iḥyāgar-i Hawzih-yi Khurāsān, pp.134-5.

97 Ḥirzuddin, M. (1405 AH). *Ma’ārif-u Al-Rijāl*. Qum: Manshūrāt Maktabah ‘Āyatullāh al-’Uzmā al-Mar’ashī al-Najafī, v.1, p.11. For more information about him and his position see ’Amin, S.M. (1403 AH). ’A’yān al-Shī’ih. Beirut: Dār al-Ta’āruf lil-Maṭbū’āt, v.5, p.219; ’Āghā Buzurg-i al-Tihrānī, M.M. (1388 AH). *Hidiyyah al-Rāzī ’ilā al-’Imām al-Mujaddid al-Shīrāzī*. Najaf: Maṭba’ah al-’Ādāb; Riyhān, S. A.R. (1372 SH). *Ayinīh-yi Danishwarān*. Qum: ’Intishārāt-I Kitābkhānih-yi ’Umūmī-yi ’Āyatullah Mar’ashīye Najafī, p.167; Ṣadūqī Sahā, M. (1381 SH). *Tārikh-i Ḥukamā wa ’Urafā-yi Muta’akhkhir*. Tihrān: Ḥikmat.

98 Sharaf al-Dīn, ’A. (1991). *Bughyat al-Rāghibīn*. Beirut: al-Dār al-’Islāmīyyah, p.203.

99 Ibid, p.209; Ṣadr, H. Husaynī, ’A. and Mar’ashī, M. (1365 SH). *Takmalah Amal al-Āmil*. Qum: ’Intishārāt-I Kitābkhānih-yi ’Umūmī-yi ’Āyatullah Mar’ashīye Najafī, p.105; ’Imāmī Khuyī, M. A. (1385 SH). *Mir’āt al-Sharq*. Qum: ’Intishārāt-I Kitābkhānih-yi ’Umūmī-yi ’Āyatullah Mar’ashīye Najafī, v.1, p.79.

continued his lessons with Şadr after Mīrzā-yi Shīrazī's demise¹⁰⁰. Yet in terms of self-contemplation and introspection, Şadr was in close connection with another leading figure of the School, Ākhūnd Mullā Fath ‘Alī Sultānābādī (Circa 1240/1825 - 1318/1900), who is considered as one of the principal leaders of religious asceticism in the contemporary era¹⁰¹. Sultānābādī played a key role in the circle of scholars around Mīrzā-yi Shīrazī. A long list of famous ‘ulamā’ is reported to have attended his ethic classes including Şadr, Nā’īnī, Sayyid Ahmad Karbalā’ī, Mīrzā Husayn Nūrī, Shiyykh Faḍl Allah Nūrī, and Shiyykh ‘Abd al-Karīm Hā’irī¹⁰². Mīrzā-yi Shīrazī appointed Sultānābādī to lead the congregational prayer in Sāmirrā’, Mīrzā-yi Shīrazī himself used to attend the congregation prayer behind Sultānābādī¹⁰³. Sultānābādī did the burial prayer for Mīrzā-yi Shīrazī's funeral¹⁰⁴, which is an old tradition in seminaries that reveals his high status in the circle of ‘ulamā’. In Mīrzā Mahdī's intellectual biography, or in a more general terms, in *Tafkīkī* historiography, the significance of Sultānābādī as the key spiritual leader of the School lies in his different methodology compared with the mainstream of other famous mystics. He is praised as the representative of the legitimate ascetic approach, with a potential influence on anti-mystical ideology traced through his different self-edification methods¹⁰⁵. Sultānābādī died in 1318/1900 in Karbalā’. Based on my findings, there are no historical records of a direct connection between him and Mīrzā Mahdī. It is just presumed that Mīrzā Mahdī must have made contact with him through his close relationship with Şadr and being connected with other members of the circle¹⁰⁶. According what is mentioned above from tafkiki sources, all can be inferred is that Mīrzā Mahdī was closely associated with Şadr, and Şadr was influenced by Sultānābādī, not as much as tafkiki's claim.

Nonetheless, purifying Mīrzā Mahdī's intellectual background from dark spots of mysticism and philosophism and philosophical is still puzzling. As narrated by his advocates, Mīrzā studied philosophy and mysticism for 20 years and did a lot of work in

100 ’Āghā Buzurg-i al-Tihrānī, M.M. (1404 AH). *Nuqabā’ al-Bashar fī al-Qarn al-Thānī ‘Ashar*. Mashhad: Nashr-i Dār al-Murtaḍā, v.2, p.593; Sadr, H. Husiynī, ’A. and Mar’ashī, M. (1365 SH). *Takmalah Amal al-Āmil*, Qum: ’Intishārāt-I Kitābkhānīh-yi ’Umūmī-yi ’Āyatullah Mar’ashī-ye Najafī, v.2, p.474; ’Imāmī Khuyī, M.’A. (1385 SH). *Mir’āt al-Shaq*, Qum: ’Intishārāt-I Kitābkhānīh-yi ’Umūmī-yi ’Āyatullah Mar’ashī-ye Najafī, v.1, p.661; Ḥirzuddin, M. (1405 AH). *Ma’ārif-u Al-Rijāl*. Qum: Manshūrāt Maktabah ’Āyatullāh al-’Uzmā’ al-Mar’ashī al-Najafī, v.1, p.285.

101 Rāzī, M.SH. (1352 SH). *Ganjīni-yi Dānishmandān*. Tihrān: ’Islāmīyah, v.7, p.114. For more details on Sultānābādī, see Şadūqī Sahā, M. (1381 SH). *Tārīkh-i Ḥukamā’ wa ’Urafā’-yi Muta’akhkir*. Tihrān: Ḥikmat.

102 You can see some of these figures' identification in the appendix.

103 ’Amin, S.M. (1403 AH). *A’yān al-Shī’ih*. Beirut: Dār al-Ta’ārif lil-Maṭbū’āt, v.13, p.55.

104 ’Āzād-i Kishmīrī, M.A. (1387 SH). *Nujūm al-Samā’ fī Tarājim al-’Ulamā’*. Tihrān: Shirkat-i Chāp wa Nashr-i Biyān al-Milāl, v.2, p.151.

105 Şadūqī Sahā, M. (1381 SH). *Tārīkh-i Ḥukamā’ wa ’Urafā’-yi Muta’akhkir*. Tihrān: Ḥikmat, p.239; see also Nūrī Ṭabarī, H. (1338 SH), *Dār al-Salām fīmā Yata’alliq bi-RRu’yā’ wa al-Manām*. Qum: Ma’ārif al-’Islāmīyyah.

106 Muṣīd Ḥ. (1378 SH). Introduction. In: ’Isfahānī, M.M. *Abwāb al-Hudā*. Tihrān: Munīr. pp.24-26; *Iḥyāgar-i Hawzih-yi Khurāsān*, p.133; Shubiyrī-i Zanjānī, S.M. (1390 SH). *Jur’i-yi az Daryā*. Qum: Kitāb Shināsī-yi Shīl, v.2, p.397; Balāghī, S.A.Ḥ. (no date). *Tadhkirah-yi ’Urafā’*. Tihrān: Mazāhirī, pp.198-9. For more information on this issue see Şadūqī Sahā, M. (1381 SH). *Tārīkh-i Ḥukamā’ wa ’Urafā’-yi Muta’akhkir*. Tihrān: Ḥikmat.

the field¹⁰⁷. In terms of self-education, he studied with Shiykh Muhammad Bahārī (d. 1325/1907) and Sayyid Aḥmad Ṭihrānī, famous as Aḥmad Karbalā`ī (d. 1332/1914)¹⁰⁸. Needless to say, these two are the most famous disciples of Mullā Ḥusayn Qulī Hamadānī (d. 1892) who was the main disciple of Sayyid ‘Alī Shūshtarī (d. 1281/1864). In a continues sequence, Muhammad Bahārī and Aḥmad Karbalā`ī were the two main masters of Āyatullah Sayyid ‘Alī Qādī Ṭabāṭabā`ī (d. 1325 SH / 1947), who is the most influential mystic (‘ārif) over an extensive chain of prominent ‘ulamā’, namely Āyatullah ‘Allāma Ṭabāṭabā`ī, Āyatullah Bahjat, and Sayyid Hāshim Ḥaddād. Shiykh Aḥmad Bahārī enumerated, in a hand script, his students who reached the level of *ego gnosis* (*ma’rifah al-nafs*). There is an indication in that list of ‘a Mīrzā’, which has been interpreted by Ḥalabī as a reference to Mīrzā Mahdī¹⁰⁹. Some of Mīrzā Mahdī’s roommates in Najaf narrate that he was such an adherent to mysticism and philosophy that he could not envisage any truth beyond their principles¹¹⁰. This important report, which is also narrated by *Tafkīkīs*, takes us to Mīrzā’s last days before his dramatic turning point. There is also a small – but very important – hand script of Mīrzā disclosing a similar account of those days¹¹¹. This is generally accepted by all *Tafkīkīs* as indicating that he was not satisfied with Islamic philosophy and mysticism, and his thirst for the ultimate truth was still not quenched. They narrate inspiring stories about his desire and quest. To mention for example it is said that during his *chillī nishīnī* (secluding himself for forty days for purposes of mortification/devotion, etc) there wasn’t any gravel in the Sahli mosque that was not touched by his tears.¹¹² It is necessary to sift all these claims, but in this step, two important issues should be raised:

Mīrzā’s self-confession about being perplexed by mysticism and

Being totally engulfed by philosophy and mysticism, even after being in touch with scholars of the *School of Sāmīrā*¹¹³.

107 Najafī. S.M.H. Introduction to *Abwāb al-Hudā*, pp.47&48; ‘Iḥyāgar-i Hawzih-yi Khurāsān, pp.191-2.

108 Ibid, pp.161-170; Rabbānī Gulpāygānī, ‘A. (1380 SH). *Fitrat wa Dīn*, Tīhrān: Dānish wa ’Andīshi-yi Mu’āṣir, v.4; Namāzī Shahrūdī, ‘A. (1395 SH). *Mustadrak-i Safrināti al-Bihār*, Qum: Mu’assisah al-Nashr al-’Islāmī, vol.1, p.10; Rāzī, M.SH. (1352 SH). *Ganjīni-yi Dānishmandān*. Tīhrān: ’Islāmīyah, v.7, p.116; Ḥakīmī, M.R. (1383 SH). *Maktab-i Tafkīk*. Qum: Daīl-i Mā, p.214.

109 ‘Iḥyāgar-i Hawzih-yi Khurāsān, p.167; Bahārī Hamidānī, M. (1361 SH). *Tadhkirah al-Muttaqīn*. Tīhrān: Nūr-I Fātimih, p.186.

110 ‘Iḥyāgar-i Hawzih-yi Khurāsān, pp.185-6.

111 Ibid, p.186.

112 Bīyābānī M, ‘Mīrzā Mahdī Isfahānī Iḥyāgar-i ma’ārif-i Ahl-i Biyt’, *Safrināh*, p.11; Namāzī Shahrūdī, ‘A. (1395 SH). *Mustadrak-i Safrināti al-Bihār*. Qum: Mu’assisah al-Nashr al-’Islāmī, v.1, p.10; Rabbānī Gulpāygānī, ‘A. (1380 SH). *Fitrat wa Dīn*, Tīhrān: Dānish wa ’Andīshi-yi Mu’āṣir, v.1, pp.4&5; see also ‘Iḥyāgar-i Hawzih-yi Khurāsān, pp.183-92. Mīrzā Mahdī’s ardor for truth is narrated by many of his students and devotees, namely Sayyid Muḥammad Bāqir Najañī Yazdī, Sayyid Kādhim ‘Alam al-Hudā, Sayyid Ḥusayn Mudarrisī, Muḥammad Bāqir Maṭlūb Mīyānajī, Muḥammad Bāqir Muhsinī Malāyīrī, and specifically Shiykh Maḥmūd Ḥalabī.

113 ’Islāmī, ‘A. (1375 SH). *Talāyīh-dār-i Farhang-i ’Islāmī dar ‘Aṣr-i Ikhtināq*, Tīhrān: Bunyād-I Bī’that, pp.292-4. Islāmī narrates form Mīrzā that he said everything started for him after that dream.

By contrast, the story is read completely differently from the opposite side. Some opponents¹¹⁴ who believe that Mīrzā's heritage is not a true reading of shi'i islam, narrate that Mīrzā's return to Iran was due to mental-disorders caused by the pressure of tough ascetic practices. According to this, Sayyid Jamāl al-Dīn Gulpāygānī (an intimate friend of Mīrzā, and one of his early classmates in Nā'īnī's circle) narrates that Mīrzā was severely confused; that he saw Sayyid Jamāl everywhere and consequently maintained that Sayyid Jamāl¹¹⁵ is the truth of existence, and he is the Divine Proof. They narrate that Sayyid Jamāl counted Mīrzā among his students who could not bear the burden of the practices. According to this pejorative story, it is Sayyid Jamāl who sends Mīrzā to Iran to rest and get treatment¹¹⁶.

Indeed, this account is utterly rejected by the *Tafkīkīs*¹¹⁷. They do not even see it worthy of response¹¹⁸. For them, all Mīrzā's contradictions and personal conflicts have an inspiring spiritual end. They refer to a momentous dream in Mīrzā's life which put an end to all his epistemic perplexities and bewilderments. In the dream, he says, he saw the Twelfth Imam and He showed Mīrzā the true method of acquiring Divine Knowledge ('ilm-i 'Ilāhī).

Fortunately, his manuscript is documented:

114 These are some names with anti-tafkīkī written works that you can read more about them in the appendix.

Hassan Islāmī: The winner of Fārābī award and the writer of "Ru'yā-yi khulūṣ: bāz-khānī-yi Maktab-i Tafkīk". He believes that Islamic culture has three pillars revelation, philosophy and mysticism excluding two of these pillars by Tafkīkīs results in destroying Islamic culture and appearance of wahhābīs ideology. (for this see نکته ۲) (مصاحبه با پژوهشگاه علوم و فرهنگ اسلامی)

Hasan Mīlānī: He is one of the main contemporary critics of Mīrzā Mahdī Isfahānī and Maktab-i tafkīk, who has a lot of works such as articles interviews debates and books against Tafkīk that you can see in his blog. I myself attended his lessons in Qum's shrine (2006-2007) in which he had harsh critiques in each session. What distinguishes Mīlānī from other opponents is his anti-philosophical and anti-mystical approach: Mīlānī claims for true Islamic Kalām based on Shiyyh Ṣadūq's discussions and categorizes Mīrzā Mahdī as a 'fraud mistic'. For detailed information and references see literature review in this thesis.

Muhammadīdā Iṛshādīnīyā: His critiques on Tafkīk lies in Islamic philosophy specially Ṣadrā 'īān School. He has written a lot of works against Tafkīk (see the appendix). In his book against Tafkīk, *Naqd wa Barriṣtī-yi Nazariyyī-yi Tafkīk*, he tries to show that Tafkīk has self-contradictions in their discussions.

115 Siyyid Jamāl al-Dīn Gulpāygānī one of the important jurists and pupils of Nā'īnī who has written Nā'īnī's lessons (*Taqīrāt*). He was classmate with Grand Ayatollah Siyyid Husayn Burūjirdī. The Great position of Gulpāygānī for Nā'īnī appears form the title that Nā'īnī has given to him as *hujjat al-Islām* which is not given to others by Nā'īnī. There is relationship between him and Siyyid Aḥmad Karbalā'ī and Siyyid Murtadā Kishmīrī in asceticism. Many of late prominent figures in hujzīh are his students. For this see Tunikābunī, 'A. (1382 SH). *Jamāl-i Ārifān* .Qum: 'A'immih.

116 Wakīlī, M.H. and Siyyidān, S.J. (1387 SH). *Širāt-i Mustaqīm*, Tīhrān: Mohammad Ḥasan Wakīlī, pp.327& 328.

117 Bīyābānī M, 'Mīrzā Mahdī Isfahānī lḥyāgar-i ma 'ārif-i Ahl-i Bīyt', *Safīnīh*, No., pp.5-6.

118 This story and other similar ones are not mentioned in the recent Biography of Mīrzā compiled by his son.

'As I started to reside in the holiest town of Najaf, highly despising the nature of taṣawwuf and avoiding this known misleading route to truth, I embarked on my divine truth seeking journey.

I stopped wondering in two major subjects, first in cognition (ma'rifat) itself, and to find a solution I referred to 'urafā's books and finally ended up searching the old (classic) philosopher's texts.

Secondly, I was thinking that if God has intended for the last Imam (the hidden) to be the true mediator, the ultimate guidance, and the reference for all his attributes, why did the truth seekers need any others.

Having this in my mind I was trying to directly reach my Imam through imploration (tawassul) and the Almighty God answered the desire of my heart.*

I found myself in one of the Najaf's religious schools, in one the small student residences (Hujrih), in a dream. I had a piece of paper in my hands there. It was like an Old Russian Qur'ānīc paper but the size of the paper was slightly larger than the current ones. On one side of the paper, it was written horizontally, **any attempt to seek the Divine Knowledge through anyone but us, the descendants of the prophet, will end up in denying them all.** I emphasize on denying them all.

The paper had golden decoration all around and on the back of it close to the bottom of the paper on the left side it was written vertically:

God has chosen me, and I am al-Hujjat Ibn al-Hasan (Hujjat the son of Hasan)

After this revelation, I experienced a gradual change in myself that led me to resolve in a short period of time the first problem I had, and gradually after that by the blessings of the Lord and direct guidance of the Imam, my encounter with other obstacles was not difficult anymore. This could not be achieved by normal measures of study and thinking for sure¹¹⁹.

2.3 Mashhad; Emergence of the School

Outline

In 1340/1922, Mīrzā Mahdī returns to Iran and after a short stay of two months in Arāk¹²⁰, resides in Mashhad until his demise in 1365/1946¹²¹. He first started teaching the formal seminary curriculum of *usūl al-fiqh* according to Nā'īnī's system. After gaining control over the circle of 'ulamā' in mashahd, he gradually starts his ideological discourses (*durūs al-ma'ārif*), launching a dramatic contest against philosophers and successfully

119 Ihyāgar-i Hawzih-yi Khurāsān, pp.186&187. This prominent manuscript still exists.

120 It is here in Arāk where Āyatullah Shiykh 'Abd al-Karīm Ḥā'irī Yazdī re-signs Nā'īnī's ijāza for Mīrzā.

121 Ḥakīmī, M.R. (1383 SH). *Maktab-i Tafkīk*. Qum: Dalīl-i Mā, p.219.

changing the *Hawza* into an anti-philosophical centre, which continues until the present time.

These are the main questions to which answers will follow in the coming parts:

- How did Mīrzā Mahdī achieve control over the circle of ‘*ulamā*’?
- What are the main subjects presented by him?
- Did he intend to establish any School of thought?
- How did he develop his ideas by that time?
- What are the main differences between his different rounds of classes? what is left as his heritage, and how did this come about?

2.3.1 Socio-Seminary Perspectives; Philosophical Mashhad

It is necessary to study the milieu of the *Hawza* in Mashhad before Mīrzā Mahdī’s entrance, which will provide a better understanding of the history of his thought. Historical reports enumerate numerous well-known clergies in Mashhad invigorating the scholarship environment of the city¹²². Despite having a profound history of teaching *fiqh* and *uṣūl*, the *Hawza* of Mashhad is famous rather as the best centre for learning ‘Arabic Literature’ (*adabīyāt*), and ‘Rational Subjects’ (*ma‘qūlāt*)¹²³. For instance, in 1302/1885 (38 years before Mīrzā Mahdī enters the city) Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān Ḥimād al-Saltanah, the publication minister (*wazīr-i intibā‘āt*) of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh, describes Mashhad’s students as having tendencies towards ‘Rational Sciences’ (*‘ulūm-i ma‘qūlah*) and ‘Literature’¹²⁴. Records that are more recent also reflect the same aspect¹²⁵. This has its root in the presence of erudite linguists and great philosophers in Iran during the Qājār era. In terms of literature, the hugely well-known names of Mīrzā ‘Abd al-Jawād Adīb Niyshābūrī (d. 1344/1925) entitled as *Adīb-i ‘awwal* (the first

122 Karbās-chī, Gh.R. (1380 SH). *Tārīkh-i Shafāhī-yi Inqilāb-i Islāmī*. Tīhrān: Markaz-I ‘Asnād-I ‘Inqilāb-I Islāmī, p.75. reports that only Shiyyah Hāshim Qazwīnī’s class, for instance, had more than 200 attendants; Khāminih-ī, S. ‘A. (1365 SH). Guzārīshī az Sābiqi-yi Tārīkhī wa ‘Awwdā’ -i Kunūnī-yi Ḥawzih-yi ‘Ilmīyyih-yi Mashhad. Mashhad: ‘Astān-I Quds-I Raḍawī; ‘Astān-I Quds-I Raḍawī (1365 SH) ‘Majmū‘ih ‘Athār-I Nukhustīn Kungirih-yi Jahānī-yi Ḥaḍrat-I Rīdā’. Mashhad; Mudarris-I Shīrāzī, A. (1393 SH). *Tārīkh-i ‘Ulamā-yi Khurāsān*. Mashhad: Bunyād-I Pajhūhish-hā-yi Islāmī-yi Āstān-I quds-I Raḍawī.

123 Khāminih-ī, S. ‘A. (1365 SH). Guzārīshī az Sābiqi-yi Tārīkhī wa ‘Awwdā’ -i Kunūnī-yi Ḥawzih-yi ‘Ilmīyyih-yi Mashhad. Mashhad: ‘Astān-I Quds-I Raḍawī, pp.22& 23; Wā‘izzādih-yi Khurāsānī, M. (1378 SH) ‘Naqd-I Maktab-I Tafkīk’ Rīdā Ḥaqpanāh, *Pajaūhish-hā-yi ‘Ijtīmā‘T Islāmī*, ‘Ādhar & Diy, pp.131-161.

124 Ḥimād al-Saltanah, M. (1362 SH). *Maṭla‘ al-Shams*. Tīhrān: Pīshkām, p.242.

125 Khāminih-ī, S. ‘A. (1365 SH). Guzārīshī az Sābiqi-yi Tārīkhī wa ‘Awwdā’ -i Kunūnī-yi Ḥawzih-yi ‘Ilmīyyih-yi Mashhad. Mashhad: ‘Astān-I Quds-I Raḍawī, p.22. Also see Wā‘izzādih-yi Khurāsānī, M. (1378 SH) ‘Naqd-I Maktab-I Tafkīk’ Rīdā Ḥaqpanāh, *Pajaūhish-hā-yi ‘Ijtīmā‘T Islāmī*, ‘Ādhar & Diy, 19, pp.46&47.

Scholar)¹²⁶, and Adīb-i duwwum (the second Scholar)¹²⁷ should be mentioned. They shaped a deep literary background for the city. In terms of philosophy, also, a chain of prominent scholars like Hāj Mullā Hādī Sabziwārī (d. 1212/1797_1289/1873)¹²⁸, the author of the important philosophical text *Mandhūmah* and *Sharḥ-i Mandhūmah*, Āqā Mīrzā Asgarī Shahīdī Mashhadī famous as Āqā Buzurg-i Ḥakīm (d. 1936)¹²⁹, Shiykhs Asad Allah ‘Ārif Faḍil Yazdi¹³⁰, and later Āyatullah Shiyk Murataḍā Āṣhtīyānī¹³¹ are worth mentioning¹³². Further to giving famous philosophy lessons in Sabziwār for a while, Hāj Mullā Hādī taught philosophy in Mashhad for 5 years. Āqā Buzurg-i Ḥakīm also taught many classical texts of Islamic philosophy during more than 22 years in Mashhad, texts such as *Sharḥ-i Qūshjī*, *Ishārāt*, *Shawāriq*, *Sharḥ-i Mandhūmih*, *Mabda’ wa ma ’ād*, *Shawāhid al-Rubūbīyyah*, *Sharḥ-i Hidāyah*, *Sharḥ-i Mandhūmah*, and *Asfār*¹³³. This would have never happened in Qum¹³⁵; which is why Mashhad has been described as one of the three major centres for philosophy in Iran (besides Tehrān and Isfahān)¹³⁶, and to me one of the subtle points of being chosen by Mīrzā as the center of his emergence. On the other side, the most famous *uṣūlī* and *fīqhī* lessons were respectively

126 For more details on him and his influence, see ’Ilāhī Khurāsāni, ‘A.’A. (1388 SH) ‘Hujjah Hiykh Muhammad Taqī ’Adīb-I Niyshābūrī, Wījhīgī-hā wa Khāṭirāt’, *Journal of Buzurgdāsh-I Marhūm Shiykh Muhammad Taqī ’Adīb-I Niyshābūrī*, 1, p.201; Karbās-chī, Gh.R. (1380 SH). *Tārīkh-i Shafāhī-yi Inqilāb-i Islāmī*. Tehrān: Markaz-I ’Asnād-I ’Inqilāb-I Islāmī, p.78.

127 For the scholarship position of Adīb-i duwwum see ’Ilāhī Khurāsāni, ‘A.’A. (1388 SH) ‘Hujjah Hiykh Muhammad Taqī ’Adīb-I Niyshābūrī, Wījhīgī-hā wa Khāṭirāt’, *Journal of Buzurgdāsh-I Marhūm Shiykh Muhammad Taqī ’Adīb-I Niyshābūrī*, 1, pp.161-9.

128 For him See ’I’timād al-Saltanah, M. (1362 SH). Matla’ al-Shams. Tehrān: Pīshkām, v.3; Mudarris-I Chahārdihī, M. (no date). *Zindgānī wa Falsafih-yi Hāj Mullā Hādī Sabziwārī*. Tehrān: Tahūrī Library; Șadūqī Sahā, M. (1381 SH). *Tārīkh-i Ḥukamā wa ’Urafā-yi Mutā’akhkhir*. Tehrān: Ḥikmat.

129 Ibid, pp.352& 524.

130 He is the student of great philosophers like Muhammad Riḍā Qumshī-ī, Āqā ’Alī Mudarris, and Mīrzā Abu ’l-Ḥasan Jilwīh, for him see Ibid, p.292; ’Ilāhī Khurāsāni, ‘A.’A. (1388 SH) ‘Hujjah Shiykh Muhammad Taqī ’Adīb-I Niyshābūrī, Wījhīgī-hā wa Khāṭirāt’, *Journal of Buzurgdāsh-I Marhūm Shiykh Muhammad Taqī ’Adīb-I Niyshābūrī*, 1, p.173.

131 Khāminih-ī, S.’A. (1365 SH). *Guzārīshī az Sābiqi-yi Tārīkhī wa ’Awwādā’ -i Kunūnī-yi Hawzīh-yi ’Ilmīyyih-yi Mashhad*. Mashhad: ’Astān-I Quds-I Radawī.

132 Many famous names of the clergies who had different philosophy lessons in Mashhad can be added to this short list: Hājī Fāḍil Khurāsānī, Āqā Buzurg-i Ḥakīm’s son Mīrzā Mahdī, Shiykhs Sayf Allah Aysī, Sayyid Abu al-Qāsim Ilāhī, shiykh Mujtabā Qazwīnī, Shiykhs Hāshim Qazwīnī, and Mīrzā Jawād Āqā Ṭehrānī; Khāminih-ī, S.’A. (1365 SH). *Guzārīshī az Sābiqi-yi Tārīkhī wa ’Awwādā’ -i Kunūnī-yi Hawzīh-yi ’Ilmīyyih-yi Mashhad*. Mashhad: ’Astān-I Quds-I Radawī.

133 A study of Constitutional period and probable influences of Ākhūnd Khurāsānī’s views can bring new insights to contemporary history of Mashhad.

135 The main reason is the anti-philosophical trend led by grand Āyatullah Ḥusayn Burūjerdī. During the time teaching a simple philosophy textbook in Qum was forbidden and should be held secretly and selectively. For more stories on this see Rizvi, Sajjad H. (2012) “Only the Imam Knows Best” The Maktab-e Tafkīk’s Attack on the Legitimacy of Philosophy in Iran’, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 22.

136 Wā’izzādih-yi Khurāsānī, M. (1378 SH) ‘Naqd-I Maktab-I Tafkīk’ Riḍā Ḥaqpanāh, *Pajaūhish-hā-yi ’Ijtīmā’ Islāmī*, ’Ādhār & Diy, p.147.

led by Akhūnd Khurāsānī's son Āyatullah Mīrzā Muhammad Āqāzādih (1294/1877 - 1356/1937), and Āyatullah Sayyid Ḥusayn Ṭabāṭabā'ī Qummī (d. 1947)¹³⁷.

Akhūnd Khurāsānī held influence over the city. On one hand, the leadership of the *Hawza* was assigned to his son Āyatullah Mīrzā Muhammad Āqāzādih, who was sent from Najaf to Mashhad¹³⁸. This was on account of the people's request to Ākhūnd to send them a scholar to lead the *Hawza*. On the other hand, Āqā Buzurg-i Ḥakīm, to whom philosophy in Mashhad owed a great debt, had also studied under Ākhūnd in Najaf¹³⁹. The influence of Ākhūnd Khurāsānī's thought in Mashhad is important because his philosophical version of *uṣūl al-fiqh* was soon to be challenged by Nā'īnī's interpretation, which emerged through Mīrzā Mahdī's hands¹⁴⁰. There was a growing sense of curiosity among all Āqāzādih's students to know about this new interpretation¹⁴¹, which could potentially spark off debates within the circle of '*ulamā'*¹⁴². Bearing in mind that Nā'īnī himself encouraged Mīrzā to choose Mashhad as his seminary base may give more significance to this analysis¹⁴³. Many of Mīrzā Mahdī's pupils had studied *uṣūl* with Āqāzādih and philosophy with Āqā Buzurg-i Ḥakīm, and they were actually acclaimed philosophers when Mīrzā entered the arena¹⁴⁴. How did Mīrzā Mahdī pull this off and change the philosophical landscape of the city to an entirely anti-philosophical one? With this background in mind, Mīrzā's first *uṣūlī* class will now be discussed.

2.3.2 Forming a Network; Early Pupils

Mīrzā Mahdī had three separate rounds of teaching. The first was held in the *Parīzād* School (*madrisih-yi Parīzād*), and was in line with formal *uṣūl al-fiqh* syllabuses. It lasted

137 He was sent to Mashhad by Āyatullah Muhammad Taqī Shīrāzī in 1331/1913. For this, see *Hayāt-i 'ulamā-yi Khurāsān*, Supplementary part, p.295.

138 Daryābiygī, M. (1382 SH). *Hayāt-i Sīyāsī 'Ijtīmā'ī wa Farhangī-yi Ākhūnd- Khurāsānī*, Tīhrān: Mu'assisih-yi Tahqīqāt wa Tawṣī'ih-yi 'Ulūm-I 'Insānī, p.58; *Iḥyāgar-i Hawzih-yi khurāsān*, p.220.

139 Rīyāḍī, Gh.R. (1336 SH). *Dānishwarān-i Khurāsān*, Mashhad: Bāstān, p. 229.

140 'Interview with Āyatullah Mīrzā Hasan Ṭālī'ī', *Andīshih Hawza magazine*, 4, No.3, Zimistān 1377SH/1999, p.147; the same can be found in *Maktab-i Tafkīk*, also *Iḥyāgar-i Hawzih-yi khurāsān*.

141 'Interview with Āyatullah Mīrzā Hasan Ṭālī'ī', *Andīshih Hawza magazine*, 4, No.3, Zimistān 1377SH/1999,, pp.147-8; *Faqīh-i nuwandīsh*,

142 'Interview with Āyatullah Mīrzā Hasan Ṭālī'ī', *Andīshih Hawza magazine*, 4, No.3, Zimistān 1377SH/1999, pp.146-48; *Faqīh-i āzādigān*, p.76; 'Interview with Dr. Ahmad Mahdawī Dāmghānī', *Shahriwar* 1389 SH/August 1990, 'Iḥyāgar-i Hawzih-yi Khurāsān', pp.219-20.

143 Ibid, p.147; Wā'izzādih believes that Nā'īnī was informed about this academic debate between Mīrzā and Āqāzādih.

144 For many similar reports see Ḥakīmī, M.R. , 'Ilāhī-yi, M. & Jalālī. Gh. (1385 SH). *Mudarris-I Ṣāliḥ*. Mashhad: Bunyād-I Pajhūhish-hā-yi Islāmī-yi Āstān-I quds-I Radawī, 'Interview with Āyatullah Mīrzā Hasan Ṣāliḥī' and 'Interview with Āyatullah Sayyid Rasūl Mūsawī Tīhrānī', he says that 150 students attended philosophy lessons of Ḥalabī in Mashhad'; *Iḥyāgar-i Hawzih-yi khurāsān*, p.245; Ḥakīmī, M.R. (1383 SH). *Maktab-i Tafkīk*. Qum: Da'līl-i Mā, he introduces a number of scholars of the School in his book, yet from an insider perspective; another fruitful source for studying their biographies is Rāzī, M.SH. (1352 SH). *Ganjīni-yi Dānishmandān*. Tīhrān: Islāmīyah.

for nearly 18 years¹⁴⁵. In a downward trend, the next two rounds lasted only for two or three years¹⁴⁶. In the second round (Ca. 1310 SH /1931 to 1314 SH /1935) he addressed his own opinions under each *uṣūlī* subject, and in the third one, which started after the ‘*Guharshād Mosque event*’¹⁴⁷ in 1320 SH /1940, he actually articulated a compendium of his major *uṣūlī* principles¹⁴⁸. It is also reported that in his third period, Mīrzā only focused on ideological discourses, instead of extensive *uṣūlī* lessons¹⁴⁹. This gradual shift from *uṣūl al-fiqh* to theology is a significant point. Mīrzā Mahdī first started teaching in private lessons at his home¹⁵⁰. Sayyid Ṣadr al-Dīn Ṣadr (d. Ca. 1298/1881 - 1373/1954)¹⁵¹ and Shiykh ‘Alī Akbar Nuqānī (d. 1370/1951)¹⁵² are reported as the first students of this class. Ṣadr al-Dīn Ṣadr the father of famous Shī‘ī clergy Imam Musā Ṣadr, is one the three Āyatullah who later led the *Hawza* of Qum before the overwhelming headship of Āyatullah Burūjirdī. They rose to fame as *marāji‘ thalāth* (three *marja‘*)¹⁵³. Nuqānī also held a great social position in Mashhad. He held the trusteeship of the *Hawza ilmīyya* of Nawwāb for six years¹⁵⁴; this school is one of those in which Mīrzā held his lessons. Starting private home tutoring lessons is tacitly praised by Mīrzā

145 There are different records of the exact period of it: according to Wā‘izzādih, it was 12 years: see Wā‘izzādih-yi Khurāsānī, M. (1378 SH) ‘Naqd-I Maktab-I Tafkīk’ Rīdā Ḥaqpanāh, *Pajaūhish-hā-yi Ijtīmā‘ Islāmī*, ‘Adhar & Diy, p. 147, whereas Āyatullah Wahīd Khurasānī believes that it was 7 or 8 years, see *Iḥyāgar-i Hawzih-yi khurāsān*, p.226.

146 Wā‘izzādih explains that Mīrzā gradually diluted his *uṣūlī* discourses.

147 The event of Gāwārshād Mosque rebellion (Persian: shūrīsh-I masjid-I Gāwārshād) happened in August 1935. It was a clash between armed-forces and policies of Shah Reza Pahlavi and people in the Imam Reza shrine in Mashhad, Iran after Shah’s Westernization and other reforming activities such as banning traditional Islamic clothing or unveiling (Persian: kashf-I hijab). Clergies played a key role in besieging people and there are different historical reports on the injuries and dead. The event is of importance because it has been always mentioned by revolutionary historical accounts as a repulse of the society to the regime and a symbol of deep chasm between people and Pahlavi’s thought for modernization. For more information see Qāsimpūr, D. (1386 SH). *Qīyām-I Masjid-I Gāwārshād bi Rīwāyat-I ‘Asnād*. Tīhrān: Markaz-I ‘Asnād-I ‘Inqilāb-I Islāmī. which has a revolutionary approach and Rāyīn, ‘I. & S. (1379 SH). *Wāqi‘ih-yi Gāwārshād bi Rīwāyat-I Dīgar*. Hamdān: Rāyī. from opposite side.

148 Namāzī Shāhrūdī S ‘A, *Mustadrak Saflna al-Bihār*, v.1, p.11; Rabbānī Gulpāygānī, ‘A. (1380 SH). *Fīrat wa Dīn*, Tīhrān: Dānish wa ‘Andīshi-yi Mu‘āṣir, p.6; Rāzī, M.SH. (1352 SH). *Ganjīnh-yi Dānishmandān*. Tīhrān: ‘Islāmīyah, v.7, p.118.

149 Mufīd, H. (1387 SH). Introduction. In: ‘Īsfahānī, M.M. *Abwāb al-Hudā*, in his useful introduction, Tīhrān: Munīr, p.36.

150 *Iḥyāgar-i Hawzih-yi Khurāsān*, pp.203: Mīrzā’s son narrates from Halabī.

151 For the exact dates see Sharaf al-Dīn, ‘A. (1991). *Bughyat al-Rāghibīn*. Beirut: al-Dār al-‘Islāmīyah, p.248; ‘Āghā buzurg-i al-Tīhrānī, M.M. (1404 AH). *Nuqabā` al-Bashar fī al-Qarn al-thānī ‘Ashar*. Mashhad: Nashr_i Dār al-Murtadā, v.3, p.43. According to this report, it has been in 1299/1882; I have expanded on their relationship in ‘seminary backgrounds, the influences of Sadr and Nā‘īnī’.

152 ‘Āghā buzurg-i al-Tīhrānī, M.M. (1404 AH). *Nuqabā` al-Bashar fī al-Qarn al-thānī ‘Ashar*. Mashhad: Nashr_i Dār al-Murtadā, v.4 p.1586; for more details on him, see Ṣadūqī Sahā, M. (1381 SH). Supplementary. In: *Tārīkh-i Ḥukamā wa ‘Urafā-yi Muta‘akhkhir*. Tīhrān: Ḥikmat, p.308; Ḥakīmī, M.R. (1383 SH). *Maktab-i Tafkīk*. Qum: Dalīl-i Mā, pp.290&291.

153 For a recent account of their activity, see ‘Marāji‘ Thalāth and collective leadership’ by Muḥammad Miṣbāhī, presented in the final workshop of the *Hawza* Project, Keble College University of Oxford, 28th-30th March 2012.

154 Ḥakīmī, M.R. (1383 SH). *Maktab-i Tafkīk*. Qum: Dalīl-i Mā, p.237.

Mahdī's advocates as a moral virtue¹⁵⁵, which I do not necessarily disagree with. Nevertheless, this also emphasizes the unknown position of Mīrzā and the less famous name of Nā'īnī, in comparison with Akhūnd. As noted earlier, Ākhūnd Khurāsānī, his thoughts, and his students were well respected in the *Hawza*¹⁵⁶. He was one of the most important *marāji'* in Najaf by the time, whereas Nā'īnī was gradually approaching the stage of *marja'īyya*. In fact, Mīrzā Mahdī was of the very first generation of Nā'īnī's students to be sent to Iran. This could be, speaking pragmatically, another reason for his anonymity. Mīrzā's private class shows his and his teacher's unknown position in Mashhad.

The following event had a major effect on publicizing this private class: Mīrzā attended Shiykh Hāshim Qazwīnī's *khārij* lesson, anonymously, and asked some questions during the class. Shiykh Hāshim answered and then again Mīrzā asked some questions about his answers. After a round of retorts Shiykh Hāshim came down from his chair and surrendered it to Mīrzā, saying that '*you should be the teacher, and I should be the student*'¹⁵⁷. It is reported that this class had more than 200 students¹⁵⁸. Shiykh Hāshim, attended Mīrzā's classes to the end of his life¹⁵⁹. In addition to Sayyid Ṣadr al-Dīn Ṣadr and Shiykh 'Alī Akbar Nuqānī, who both held high office in the seminaries¹⁶⁰, Shiykh Mujtabā Qazwīnī (1318/1900 -1386/1966) and Shiykh Hāshim Qazwīnī (1270 SH / 1892 - 1339 SH / 1960) also played a key role in introducing Mīrzā to the circles of '*ulamā'*. Shiykh Hāshim's respect for Mīrzā Mahdī's erudition and personality is significantly bold in the *Tafkīkī* account¹⁶¹. It is also heightened by a sense of spirituality¹⁶². It has not been

155 *Iḥyāgar-i Hawzih-yi khurāsān*, p.203.

156 Several examples can be seen in Namāzī Shahrūdī, 'A. (1395 SH). *Mustadrak-i Safinati al-Bihār*. Qum: Mu'assisah al-Nashr al-Islāmī, to take one, see the position of his son, Āqāzādīh, as the leader of *Hawza* in Mashhad. It is important also that people wrote to Ākhūnd asking him to send them a leader to head the *Hawza*. It is important, also, not to forget the position of Mashhad among religious cities in Iran.

157 Jalālī, Gh.R. (1378 SH). 'Interview with Shiykh Ghulām Rīdā Dihisht', in *Faqīh-I 'Āzādigān: yādnāmih-yi Faqīh-I Wārastīh, Mudarris-I Farzānih, Marhūm 'Ayat-u-llāh Hāj Shiykh Hāshim-I Qazwīnī*. Mashhad: Sitād Buzurgdāshī-I 'Ayat-u-llāh Hāj Shiykh Hāshim-I Qazwīnī, pp.107&178; see also 'Interview with Shiykh Ghulām Rīdā dihisht; Interview with Mīrzā Ismā'īl Mudarris Gharawī, Mihr 1384 SH /Sep. 2005; also another interview in Bunyād-i Pajhūhishyā-yi Āstān-i Quds-i Raḍawī, Khurdād 1386SH/May 2007.

158 Karbās-chī, Gh.R. (1380 SH). *Tārīkh-i Shafāhī-yi 'Inqilāb-i Islāmī*. Tīhrān: Markaz-I 'Asnād-I 'Inqilāb-I Islāmī, p.75: Mīrzā's son reports that Shiykh Hāshim told him, for several times, that this class had nearly 200-250 students all moved to Mīrzā's class.

159 Ḥakīmī, M.R. (1387 SH) 'Tandīs-I Dānish wa pārsāyī', *Kiyhān Farhangī*, 259, pp.34&35.

160 For his high position in seminary circle in Mashhad, see 'Nīm qarn takāpū Jaygāh-i Hawza-yi Mashhad wa asātīd wa shakhṣīyyat-hā-yi 'ilmī-i ān', *Quds Newspaper*, 28th Ordibihisht 1385 SH / 18th May 2006, Interview with Āyatullah Mīrzā Hasan Tālī'I; 'Interview with Āyatullah Mīrzā Hasan Tālī'I, *Andīshih Hawza magazine*, 4, No.3, Zimistān 1377SH/1999; *Faqīh-i āzādigān*, pp.46& 51,53,64,87,89,180,203,207,211.

160' *Iḥyāgar-i Hawzih-yi Khurāsān*, p.208. Mīrzā's son, who attended Shiykh Hāshim's classes for a long time, highlights that Shiykh Hāshim told him that was the class which was rendered to Mīrzā was a *khārij* lesson. This way he emphasises that he had a *khārij* lesson in that time and has assigned it to Mīrzās as a more qualified jurist.

161 Ibid, pp.207-16.

162 Ibid, p.212. Mīrzā's son narrates from Ḥalabī that Shiykh Hāshim once saw Twelfth Imam kissing Mīrzā's mouth.

refuted by anyone that Shiykh Hāshim not only adored Mīrzā¹⁶³, but also urged others to come and join his class¹⁶⁴. It is clear, however, that he was not fully in line with Mīrzā's anti-philosophical tendency¹⁶⁵. A further disagreement has been reported about another attendee of his *uṣūl* lesson, namely Shiykh Kādhim Dāmghānī¹⁶⁶. Scrutinizing these first connections is very important, to find out how this network was gradually developed within the circle of '*ulamā*'. Shiykh Hāshim Qazwīnī and Shiykh Mujtabā Qazwīnī are both vital, because they held high social and seminary positions, as well as profound philosophical backgrounds¹⁶⁷. This is why *Tafkīkīs* have made a palpable effort to prove that Shiykh Hāshim fully agreed with Mīrzā's doctrines¹⁶⁸. However, what their evidence points to is that Shiykh Hāshim had great respect for Mīrzā's ideas, but did not necessarily agree with them all. The only narration which can be regarded as a hermeneutic accordance between Shiykh Hāshim and Mīrzā is the one narrated by his student Muḥammad Bāqir Malikī Mīyanajī, the author of famous *Tafkīkī* commentary *Manāhij al-Bayān*. Malikī attended Mīrzā's classes and had written many of his lessons. He believes that Shiykh Hāshim had the same method in his commentary class as that of Mīrzā Mahdī¹⁶⁹. To assess Malikī's opinion, more comparative researches must be done on the commentary methods of Shiykh Hāshim and Mīrzā.

Another figure worthy of mention is Shiykh Maḥmūd Ḥalabī (1279 SH / 1900 -1376 SH /1998) the founder of the anti-Bahā'ī association (*Anjoman-i Ḥujjatīyyah Mahdawīyya*) and probably the most zealous pupil of Mīrzā. Ḥalabī is one the key figures of the School. He is socially and scholastically influential, not only in terms of the history of *Tafkīk*, but also as a leader of one of the impressive religious trends in Iran's contemporary history. Although he first resisted joining Mīrzā's lesson, eventually he was convinced to do so by his roommate and old friend Shiykh Ghulām Ḥusayn Muḥāmī. In addition to having a good scholarship position as one of the recognized teachers in the *Hawza*, Ḥalabī was also a famous preacher (*khaṭīb*). Hence, he has been recognized as one of the key factors in introducing Mīrzā to public audiences¹⁷⁰. Ḥalabī went to a lot of effort in

163 Rāzī, M.SH. (1352 SH). *Ganjīnh-yi Dānishmandān*. Tīhrān: ’Islāmīyih, v.7, p.156; Ḥakīmī, M.R. (1383 SH). *Maktab-i Tafkīk*. Qum: Dalīl-i Mā, pp.283& 284; It is also available through many interviews with Wā’izzādih, Dr. Muḥammad Ja’far Ja’farī Langirūdī, Murdād 1390 SH /July 2011; *Tarīkh Shafahī Astān-i Quds-i Raḍawī*, with Āyatullah ‘Abd al-jawād Gharawīyān, Khurdād 1386 SH / May 2007.

164 For example, Wā’izzādih Khurāsanī narrates that Shiykh Hāshim insisted to Shiykh Kādhim Dāmghānī to attend Mīrzā Mahdī's lessons, see 'Interview with Āyatullah Mīrzā Ḥasan Ṭālī'ī', *Andīshih Hawza magazine*, 4, No.3, Zimistān 1377SH/1999, p 147.

165 'Interview with Āyatullah Mīrzā Ḥasan Ṭālī'ī', *Andīshih Hawza magazine*, 4, No.3, Zimistān 1377SH/1999, p. 150; Ḥakīmī, M.R. (1383 SH). *Maktab-i Tafkīk*. Qum: Dalīl-i Mā, p.234; 'Iḥyāgar-i Hawzih-yi Khurāsān', p.249.

166 Ibid, p.148.

167 *Faqīh-i Āzādigān*, pp.64,180,207&211, there are several interviews with different scholars, they also have mentioned that before Grand Āyatullah Mīlānī, Mashhad had no one like Shiykh Hāshim Qazwīnī.

168 Iḥyāgar-i Hawzih-yi khurāsān, pp.207-216.

169 Bīyābānī M, *naqdī bar naqd*, p.243, he narrates form his teacher Āyatullah Shiykh Muḥammad Bāqir Malikī Mīyanajī who attended Shiykh Hashim's commentary class.

170 Wā’izzādih-yi Khurāsānī, M. (1378 SH) 'Naqd-I Maktab-I Tafkīk' Rīdā Ḥaqpanāh, *Pajaūhish-hā-yi Ijtīmā' Islāmī*, 'Adhar & Diy, p.148.

learning, preserving, and distributing Mīrzā’s legacy¹⁷¹. His enthusiasm was immutable until his death. It will be discussed in the last chapter that his excitement for Mīrzā’s thought and dignity is vividly reflected in his literature.

To have a general conclusion at this stage, it can be said that not all of those who attended Mīrzā’s *uṣūlī* lessons¹⁷², whatever their adherence, were equally attracted to (or convinced by) the pervasive anti-philosophical themes in his thought. This divergence becomes more discernible between students from one round to another, especially when considering his *uṣūlī* lessons compared with his ideological classes (*ma’ārif*).

Aḥmad Mahdawī Dāmghānī provides us with a list of Āyatullāhs and scholars who attended Mīrzā’s lessons in the *Parīzad* School¹⁷³. He is one the few witnesses of Mīrzā’s early lessons who still lives.

His list reads as follows:

Shiykh Hāshim Qazwīnī

Shiykh Kādhim Shāhkū’i

Shiykh Kādhim Dāmghānī

Shiykh Muḥammad Ḥasan Burūjirdī

Shiykh Mujtabā Qazwīnī

Shiykh Ghulām Ḥusayn Muḥāmī

Hāj Āqā Ḥusayn Shāhrūdī

Shiykh Muhsin Nakhjawānī

Shiykh Siyf Allah Aysī

Shiykh Maḥmūd Ḥalabī

Sayyid Aḥmad Hamadānī Sa’īdī

Āqā Ḥusyan Mūsawī Shāhrūdī

Hāj Sayyid Kamāl Sarakhsī

171 *Iḥyāgar-i Hawzih-yi khurāsān*, pp.256-68.

172 A complete (probably the best one) list of his pupils can be found in: ‘*Iḥyāgar-i Hawzih-yi Khurāsān*’, pp.222-271.

173 ‘*Iḥyāgar-i Hawzih-yi Khurāsān*’, p.36. Aḥmad Mahdawī Dāmghānī has been asked by *Tafkīkīs* to write an article about Mīrzā. He takes furious steps against philosophers and Mystics in this biography, and enormously admires Mīrzā and his thought. His articles and writings have been published in a collection: Mahdawī Dāmghānī, A. (1390 SH). *Yād-i Yārān wa Qatrīh-hā-yi Bārān*. Tīhrān: ‘Ilm wa Dānish. The atmosphere of Mīrzā’s lessons, his debates with questioners and other details are meticulously illustrated. For his personal witnesses about Mīrzā, his classes, his students, also his father, Shiykh Kādhim Mahdawī Dāmghānā, see ‘*Najd-u yārān-i Najd*’ in that collection. He excludes Sayyid Ḥusayn Hā’irī Kirmānshāhī and Muḥammad Taqī Sharī’atī from Parīzād circle. Shiykh Kādhim Mahdawī Dāmghānī and Shiykh Hāshim Qazwīnī are reported to have redacted his first lessons (*taqrīrat*).

Hāj Shiykh Mukhtār Ruhānī Bursī

Joining Mīrzā's *uṣūl* classes, these notable clergies confirmed his eligibility and gradually cleared the way for him to disseminate his controversial ideologies. Āyatullāh Muḥammad Taqī Ja'farī, a well-known philosopher and social figure in contemporary Iran, believes that 'the School of Mīrzā Mahdī Ḥisfahānī received widespread support because some dignified, pious, and erudite people attended his lessons, and understood them in a good and useful way'¹⁷⁴. Moḥammad Taqī Ja'farī attended Mīrzā's classes a few times. This strong, formal, seminary position was the platform which Mīrzā needed to severely attack Philosophy and Mysticism. This was at the very time that he thought it proper to inflame such doctrinal debates. Seemingly, Nā'īnī's rival branch of *uṣūl* eventually weighed in his favour¹⁷⁵.

2.3.3 Nā'īnī's Uṣūl al-Fiqh; A Bridge to 'durūs al-ma'ārif'

As mentioned earlier, Mīrzā Mahdī's first round of *uṣūlī* lessons lasted nearly 10 years, much longer than his next two rounds. In his first round, he followed the extensive syllabuses of common *uṣūlī* lessons using Nā'īnī's ideas, whereas in the next two rounds he diluted the formal *uṣūlī* vision to expound on non/anti-philosophical views. The number of his students was significantly on the rise¹⁷⁶, to an extent that the most famous

174 Group of Authors of Hawzih Magazine, (1382 SH). 'Āyīnhārān-I Haqīqat. Qum: Būstān-I Kitāb, p.197.

175 In a meeting with Badī' al-zamān Furūzānfar, Shiykh Maḥmūd Halabī explains the progress movement within the circle of ulamā'. He tells us that how effective it was to see that out of 20 eminent teachers of Hawza 17 have attended Mīrzā's class. He also emphasizes the role of being the Nā'īnī's student in Mīrzā's success. Halabī tells us that at the end, there was no scholar left but joined Mīrzā's classes. Khājawīyān, M.K., Nūr-u-līāhīyān, M.B. and Muṣṭafawī, S.J. (1364 SH) 'Ustād Sayyid Javād Muṣṭafawī wa Kārī Buzurg dar Kalām-I Ma'sūm', *Journal of Kiyhān Farhangī*, 24, pp.3-10.

176 For this see chapter 8 in 'Arabshāhī, M., Ṭālibīyān-Sharīf. H., Mofīd, H., 'Arabshāhī, R. and Mudarris-Gharawī, M.I. (1394 SH). 'Iḥyāgar-i Hawzih-yi Khurāsān. Tīhrān: Āfāq; Ḥakīmī, M.R. (1383 SH). *Maktabi Taftīk*. Qum: Daīl-i Mā. It is difficult to numerate all of them, some of them are: Shiykh 'Alī Namāzī Shāhrūdī, Mīrzā Hasan 'Alī Murwārīd, Muḥammad Wā'izzādīh Khurāsānī, Shiykh 'Abd al-Nabī Kujūrī, Sayyid Kādhīm Mudarrīsī, Shiykh Muḥammad Bāqir Muhsinī Malāyīrī, Mīrzā 'Alī Akbar Nuqānī, Shiykh Rajab 'Alī Wafā'ī, Shiykh 'Alī Marwī and 'Abd al-jawād Gharawīyān (both in common lesson), Sayyid Muḥammad Mūsawī Darrūdī (in fiqh and *uṣūl*), Hāj Āqā Jalīl Murwārīd, Muḥammad Bāqir Nūr 'Ilāhīyān, Shiykh 'Alī Falsafī, 'Azīz Allah 'Atārudī, Shiykh 'Alī 'Ilmī Ardaiblī, Sayyid Jalīl Husaynī, Shiykh Abu 'l-Qāsim Sarrāfzādīh, Shiykh 'Abd al-'Adhīm 'Adhīmī, Sayyid 'Alī Shāhrūdī, Sayyid 'Abbās Ṣadr, Muḥammad Rīdā KHudā'ī Dāmghānī, Āyatullāh Sayyid Husayn Ṭālī'ī, and from current famous alive Āyatullāh, Sayyid 'Alī Sīstānī and Shiykh Ḫusayn Wahīd Khurāsānī.

lessons in the *Hawza* were gradually eclipsed by his dominance¹⁷⁷. It is said that all Āqāzādīh's students (except a very few) joined Mīrzā's discourses¹⁷⁸. Mīrzā had been regarded as the topmost teacher (*mudarris*) of the *Hawza* in his last ten years¹⁷⁹. Contemporary reports show that he had access to money from *bāzāris* (businesses and merchants) that potentially enabled him to publish his catechism (*risālah ‘amalīyya*)¹⁸⁰, and consequently announce his *marja’īyya*¹⁸¹, neither of which happened though. It is reported, even by *non-Tafkīkī* sources, that when he died the *Hawza* was deeply influenced by his ideas, both in terms of *uṣūlī* concepts and anti-philosophical discourses¹⁸². It can be said that he utterly changed the nature of the *Hawza* from a philosophical atmosphere to an anti-philosophical one¹⁸³, and from Akhūnd Khurāsānī's paradigm to Nā’īnī's one. According to many evidences, after Mīrzā, philosophy lessons were absolutely deserted in Mashhad¹⁸⁴. One record states that Shiykh Mujtabā Qazwīnī

177 As it is reported in many historical accounts, Mīrzā was counted as the most important scholar in Mashhad. İzadpanah, ‘A., Najafī, M.H., ‘Ahmadī, M., Sharafī, H. And Sālihī, S. A. (1388 SH). *Chashm wa chirāgh-i Marja’īyyat*. Qum: Būstān-i Kitāb, p.212; Group of Authors. (1396 SH). *Faqīh-I Nawandīsh*. Tīhrān: Dār al-Ththaqaliyin, p.7; Mudīr Shānīchī, K. (1380 SH). *Pajhūhishī Darbarīh-yi Ḥadīth wa Fiqh*. Mashhad: Bunyād-I Pajhūhish-hā-yi Islāmī-yi Āstān-I quds-I Raḍawī; this is reflected also in these interviews: Interview with Wa‘idhādīh (Murdād 1389 SH/August 2010); Mahdawī Dāmghānī, A. (1389 SH) ‘Barrisī wa Naqd-I Kitāb: Darbārih-yi Kitāb-I “Dar Justījūy-I Șubḥ” Ta‘līf-I ‘Abd-u-rrahīm Ja‘farī’, *Journal of Bukhārā*, 76.; Interview with Āyatullāh Wahīd Khurāsānī, (1389 SH/2010). Another example can be found in: Group of Authors of Hawzih Magazine, (1382 SH). *Āyīnhādārān-I Haqīqat*. Qum: Būstān-I Kitāb, v.1, p.152; ‘Nīm qarn takāpū’, interview with Ḥasan Ṭālī’ī, 28 Urdibihisht 1385 SH/18 May 2006. ‘Allāmah Āyatullāh Ja‘farī’ Also has the same opinion: see Group of Authors of Hawzih Magazine, (1382 SH). *Āyīnhādārān-I Haqīqat*. Qum: Būstān-I Kitāb, p.197.

178 See Naqd-i Maktab-i Tafkīk, p. 147.

179 Subhānī, J. (1376 SH). *Mawsū‘ah Tabaqājī al- Fuqahā’*. Qum: Muassissih-yi ‘Imām Ṣādiq, v.14, no.2, p.1018; ‘Tārīkh-i Shafāhī Āstān-i Quds-i Radawī’, Interview with ‘Abd Allāh Nūrānī, Isfand 1385 SH/March 2007. Contemporary reports tell us that he was at the center of Hawza in last years of his life and others were under his shadow. See interview with Ramdān ‘Alī Shākirī, Bahman 1387 SH / February 2009.

180 Tārīkh-i shafāhī, p.76.

181 Mudīr Shānīchī, K. (1378 SH). *‘Ilm al-Ḥadīth wa Dirāyat al-Ḥadīth*, Qum: Daftar-I ‘Intishārāt-I Islāmī, p. 30; ‘Tārīkh-i Shafāhī Astān-i Quds-i Radawī’, Interview with Kādhim Mudīr Shānīchī, Tirmāh 1380 SH / July 2001. The same idea can be seen in: Interview with Āyatullāh Shiykh Muslim Malakūtī, Murdād 1390 SH /August 2011; Interview with Wā‘izzādīh, Murdād 1389 SH / August 2010; Interview with Āyatullāh Malikī Mīyānajī, Tirmāh 1389 SH / July 2010.

182 Tārīkh-i Shafāhī, p.76; Naqdī Maktab-i Tafkīk, pp.146, 147, 148; Maktab-i Tafkīk, p.414; Nīm Qarn Takāpū, Interview with Ḥasan Ṭālī’ī; Khāṭirāt-i Āyatullāh Muslim Malakūtī, pp. 97, 98, 100, 101. The effect of Mīrzā’s ideas can be even traced in current grand Āyatullāh’s thought, as in Sayyid ‘Alī Sistānī, for him see *Iḥyāgar-i Hawzih-yi khurāsān*, p 282; and Wahīd Khurāsānī, for him see *Iḥyāgar-i Hawzih-yi Khurāsān*, p. 223, 248, Wahīd is indeed one of the strong advocates of Mīrzā and his thoughts, though he was too young to benefit from his lessons; and Mudarrīsī, his father is one of the Mīrzā’s students and he is influenced by the School however, it should be investigated more. For his ideas and also Mīrzā’s influence on him, see a thesis done on him by Ḥasan Balūchī, Exeter University.

183 Ḥakīmī, M. and ‘As’adī, M. (1377 SH). *Suqrāt-i Khurāsān*. Tīhrān: Daftar-I Nashr-I Farhang-I Islāmī, p.60.

184 Karbās-chī, Gh.R. (1380 SH). *Tārīkh-i Shafāhī-yi ‘Inqilāb-I Islāmī*. Tīhrān: Markaz-I ‘Asnād-I ‘Inqilāb-I Islāmī, p. 77; ‘Abādharī, ‘A. (1385 SH). *Khāṭirāt-i Āyat-u-llāh Muslim Malakūtī*, Tīhrān: Markaz-I ‘Asnād-I ‘Inqilāb-I Islāmī, pp. 97,98,100&101.

(close student of Mīrzā) had a secret lesson with only four other students¹⁸⁵. This shift, however, did not happen very smoothly. There were signs of resistance from philosophers to prevent their students from joining this new movement¹⁸⁶. Furthermore, for a long time heated debates are narrated between Mīrzā and many new arrivals in his lessons¹⁸⁷. Many of these scholars (of which countless soon became his adherents) had been studying and teaching philosophy for a long time before Mīrzā made his journey to Mashhad. Some of them had a deep trust in philosophy as if it were the just and only true means to explain and defend *Islamic Doctrines*¹⁸⁸. Shiyykh Hāshim, for instance, has spent twenty years in philosophy, studying under famous philosophers like Jahāngīr Khān Gashgā'ī and Akhūnd Mullā Muḥammad Kashi, Ashtīyānī describes him as phīlsūf (philosopher) and faqīh (jurist).¹⁸⁹ Another example is Ḥalabī who had also studied philosophy with Āaq Buzurg-i Ḥakīm Mashhadī. He had studied his uṣūl al-fiqh with Aqāzādīh and Shiyykh Mujtabā Qazwīnī.¹⁹⁰ This tendency can be seen in Mīrzā Jawād Āqā Ṭīhrānī as also another example of Mīrzā's prominent students in Mashhad.¹⁹¹ Some even continued teaching philosophy for the rest of their lives, although their method changed towards a critical approach to philosophy¹⁹². It was apparent that Mīrzā was proficient enough to challenge and refute his critics; he had studied philosophy and

185 Ḥakīmī, M.R., 'Ilāhī-yi, M. & Jalālī, Gh.R. (1385 SH). *Mudarris-I Ṣāliḥ*. Mashhad: Bunyād-I Pajhūhish-hā-yi Islāmī-yi Āstān-I quds-I Raḍawī.

186 Maktab-i Tafkīk, P.234; Interview with Mudarris Gharawī, Mihr 1384 SH / October 2005; also his talk in Bunyād-i Pajhūhish-hā-yi Āstān-I Quds-I Radawī, KhurdĀd 1386 SH / June 2007; the same has been reported in Interview with Shiyykh Ghulām Ḥusayn Miṣbāḥ al-Hudā, Bahman 1387 SH /February 2009.

187 For Muḥāmī and his resistance see 'Tārīkh-i Shafāhī' Interview with Muḥammad Ridā Muḥāmī, pp.75-6; Mudīr Shānīchī, K. (1380 SH). *Pajhūhishī Darbarīh-yi Ḥadīth wa Fiqh*. Mashhad: Bunyād-I Pajhūhish-hā-yi Islāmī-yi Āstān-I quds-I Radawī, p.21; Ḥakīmī, M.R., 'Ilāhī-yi, M. & Jalālī, Gh.R. (1385 SH). *Mudarris-I Ṣāliḥ*. Mashhad: Bunyād-I Pajhūhish-hā-yi Islāmī-yi Āstān-I quds-I Raḍawī; *Maktab-i Tafkīk*, p.301. Halabī has intimidated his memories about his first meetings with Mīrzā in his lessons written by his student in different collections called *durūs al-ma'ārif* (Lessons of Cognitino). These lessons have been taught for after his death in the same method, see: Ḥalabī, M. (no date). Ma'ārif-I 'Ilāhiyyih, Lesson 13, Khurramshahr: Shams, lesson No.54; also, Farsī Lessons, Tawhīd, lesson No.17; Nubuwat, 27/1/1355 and 14/3/1355; 'Aṭārudī Niyshābūrī, 'A. (1382 SH). *Farhang-I Khurāsān*. Tīhrān: 'Aṭārud, v.7, p.272; Interview with Āyatullāh 'Alī 'Ilmī Ar dibīlī, Murdād 1390 SH /August 2011.

188 see Ja'farī Langrūdī, M.J. (1396 SH). *Dā'irat al-Ma'ārif-i 'Ulūm-i 'Islāmī Qaḍā'i*, Tīhrān: Ganj-I Dānish, v.2: p.1190.

189 See Hājī Muḥammadī, 'A. (1382 SH) 'Zindigī-nāmi-yi Āyat-u-lلāh hāj sheikh hāshim-i qazwīnī', *Journal of Mishkāt*, 22(1).

190 Iḥyāgar-i ḥawzih-yi khurāsān, pp.296

191 See his books: Tīhrānī, J. (1390 SH). *'Arif wa Ṣūfī Chi Mīgūyand*. Tīhrān: Āfāq; Tīhrānī, J. (1394 SH). *Bahāyī Chi Mīgūyad?*, Tīhrān: Rāh-I Nīkān. and some works against communisms and kasrawi.

192 Wā'idhzādīh mentions Shiyykh Hāshim Qazwīnī and Shiyykh Mujtabā Qazwīnī, and also Mīrzā Jawād Āqā Ṭīhrānī as they continued teaching philosophy, though, as a result of Mīrzā's lessons they had a critical approach in their teaching, for his information see 'Naqd-i Tafkīk'. Another example is Kāzīm Mudīr Shānīchī's report. He explains how they used to attend Shiyykh Mujtabā's philosophy lessons secretly, for this see Mudīr Shānīchī, K. (1380 SH). *Pajhūhishī Darbarīh-yi Ḥadīth wa Fiqh*. Mashhad: Bunyād-I Pajhūhish-hā-yi Islāmī-yi Āstān-I quds-I Raḍawī, p.31. It can be used from his interview that the effect of Mīrzā Mahdi's lesson on his students was utterly different. He says that once Shiyykh Mujtabā answered to one critic about teaching philosophy, that it should be taught in order to be criticized.

mysticism for a long time in Najaf. It is notable that his eligibility was not criticised or rejected by anyone, including his opponents. What had always been challenged or argued is his thought¹⁹³. On the *Tafkīkīs'* side, however, his challenges with different scholars are depicted as more normal, in a way that focuses rather on Mīrzā's superiority in debates¹⁹⁴.

According to all current records, the majority of these philosophical debates took place in Mīrzā's *uṣūlī* lessons¹⁹⁵. These following highly important points can be elicited from the reports:

(1) He began criticising philosophy within an *uṣūlī* context, or in other words, under *uṣūlī* titles¹⁹⁶. It means Mīrzā needed appropriate atmosphere to fit his ideas into the *Hawza* which is basically classical seminary lessons. This also implies that his *uṣūlī* lessons were anti-philosophical to the extent of being provocative and challenging. Now, a big question is 'what is the role of Nā'īnī in this *uṣūlī*? Does this anti-philosophical tendency in reality owe any debt to Nā'īnī? Mīrzā's *uṣūlī* lessons are as famous as Nā'īnī's lessons everywhere around the *Hawza*¹⁹⁷, lessons which find their roots in Shiykh al-Anṣārī through Mīrzā-yi Shīrāzī¹⁹⁸. So, is it possible to trace Mīrzā Mahdī's anti-philosophical tendency to Shiykh al-Anṣārī's *uṣūlī*? This question may help *Tafkīkīs* to find a remarkable original discourse for the School in primordial Shī'ī traditions. It will be answered in the last chapter of this thesis about Mīrzā Mahdī's '*modulated jurisprudential system*'.

(2) As explained earlier, the number of debates increased gradually from the first lesson to the second one.

(3) These debates also show that in the first case, Mīrzā started criticising the integration of philosophy into the Shī'ī *uṣūlī* system, which inevitably entailed repulsing philosophical principles. This task could be pulled off in two ways, (a) showing self-contradiction in philosophical arguments, or (b) exemplifying their contradiction with fundamental Islamic disciplines, as being essentially in need of an alternative ideological system (in terms of epistemology, ontology, and hermeneutic bases). These two levels: *refutation of philosophy* and *descriptive revelatory system* are key components in his thought that are crystallized throughout his intellectual legacy¹⁹⁹. Having a tendency towards each of these levels is one of the criteria by which subsequent exponents are differentiated.

193 See previous section about Mīrzā's life in Najaf. See also interview with Āyatullāh Shiykh Muslim Malakūtī, Murdād 1390 SH / August 2011.

The same approach is said about Kadkanī of Mīrzā's students, see *Interview with 'Abd al-Husayn Rīḍā Ḥ Niyshābūrī*.

194 *Iḥyāgar-i Hawzih-yi khurāsān*, pp.249-55. The one example also is Aḥmad Mahdāwī Dāmghānī's report about Mīrzā's debates, see *Iḥyāgar-i Hawzih-yi khurāsān*, p.43.

195 For instance, see all evidences shown in this chapter, they all have taken place in his *uṣūlī* lessons, there is not any record about his ideology classes.

196 See, for instance, earlier references to Ḥalabī, Muḥāmī, and their attendance in Mīrzā's lesson.

197 Faqīh-i Āzādigān, p.76; Maktab-i Tafkīk, pp.220-1; Guzārī az sābiqi-yi, p.27.

198 Sharaf al-Dīn, 'A. (1991). *Bughyat al-Rāghibīn*. Beirut: al-Dār al-'Islāmīyyah, p.219; Rāzī, M.SH. (1352 SH). *Ganjīnīh-yi Dānishmandān*. Tīhrān: 'Islāmīyah, v.7, P.114.

199 It will be discussed more in next chapters.

Mīrzā began particular classes dedicated to the second level of his system, called *ma’ārif-i Ahl-i Biyt* (The knowledge of the family of the Prophet)²⁰⁰. It was in these classes that he gradually institutionalized his scriptural system. Simultaneously with the second round of his *uṣūlī* lessons, he continued these lessons more seriously. These *ma’ārif* lessons, which are described by the *Tafkīkīs* as unprecedented,²⁰¹ were held in the *Parīzād* School at the weekend (Thursdays and Fridays). According to Mahdawī Dāmghānī, this occurred in Mīrzā’s final 4 to 5 years²⁰². Halabī’s important works were produced in this period²⁰³. The third round of *ma’ārif* lessons was initiated after Shahrīwar 1320 SH / August 1941 (Word War II events) when Mīrzā in addition to Āyatullāh Shiykh Murtaḍā Ashtīyānī played a key role in reviving the *Hawza*. This time his lessons were held in the *Nawwāb* School. Many of his famous students attended in this round, which was basically a more public doctrinal lesson for all his *khārijī* lessons of *Uṣūlī*. The legacy of *Tafkīkī* heritage owes a great debt to the effort of these Āyatullāh. They wrote Mīrzā’s lessons and also duplicated his books. They continued teaching his lessons²⁰⁴, and also circulated his ideas in their own writings.

The list given by Mufīd reads as follows:

Malikī Mīyānajī, Hasan ‘Alī Murwārīd, (again) Shiykh Hāshim and Shiykh Mujtabā Qazwīnī, Shiykh ‘Alī Namāzī Shāhrūdī, Shiykh ‘Abd al-Nabī Kujūrī, Shiykh Ziyn al-‘Ābidīn Gīyāthī, Sayyid ‘Alī Shāhrūdī, Shiykh ‘Abd Allah Yazdī, Sayyid Muḥammad Bāqir Najafrī, Mīrzā Jawād Tabrīzī, ‘Alī Akbar Ṣadrzādī, Sayyi ‘Alī Akbar Fayyādī, Sayyid ‘Alī-Riḍā Quddūsī, and later Shiykh Ḥusayn Wahīd Khurāsānī.²⁰⁵

Mīrzā also held a public class on Friday mornings, at his home, called *ma’ārif wa akhlāq* (cognition and ethics): this was from 1361/1942 to 1365/1946²⁰⁶.

To outline the shifting process from *uṣūlī* lessons to *ma’ārif* lessons, these ideas can be proposed: in a regular format of seminary studies, different students were firstly attracted to Mīrzā’s *uṣūlī* lessons in order to quench their thirst for Nā’īnī’s emerging ideas, a rival version to what they had learnt of the predominant ideas of Ākhūnd Khurāsānī. Students were gradually became familiar with philosophical challenges put forward by Mīrzā as the fundamental dividing lines between the two rivals. Challenges were consequently led to the stark critiques of Islamic philosophy, and their contradictions with Scriptures. Further to long and heated debates, several students were convinced and encouraged to learn more about this *Scriptural System* on which Mīrzā had built his criticism against philosophy, a system which was called by Mīrzā ‘*ma’ārif*’. However, unconvinced

200 Khāminih-ī, S. ‘A. (1365 SH). *Guzārishī az Sābiqi-yi Tārīkhī wa ‘Awwdā’ -i Kunūnī-yi Hawzī-yi ‘Ilmīyyih-yi Mashhad*. Mashhad: ‘Astān-I Quds-I Rađawī, p. 26.

201 See Mufīd’s introduction on *Abwāb al-Hudā*, p.35.

202 Ihyāgar-i Hawzih-yi khurāsānī, p. 27.

203 See the Introduction of Mufīd in ‘Isfahānī, M.M. (1387 SH). *Abwāb al-Hudā*. Tīhrān: Munīr.

204 For instance, see Wā’izzādīh-yi Khurāsānī, M. (1378 SH) ‘Naqd-I Maktab-I Tafkīk’ Riḍā Haqpanāh, *Pajāūhish-hā-yi ‘Ijtīmā’ Islāmī*, ‘Adhar & Diy; ‘Interview with Āyatullāh Mīrzā Hasan Tālī’ī’, *Andīshih Hawza magazine*, 4, No.3, Zimistān 1377SH/1999, p.151: Shiykh Mujtabā Qazwīnī commenced a *ma’ārif* lesson in Abdālkhān School.

205 See Mufīd’s introduction on *Abwāb al-Hudā*, p.37.

206 Aḥmad Mahdawī Dāmghānī, Ihyāgar-i Hawzih-yi khurāsānī, pp.29-30.

students at least became familiar with some different, non/anti-philosophical approaches to Islamic knowledge.

Chapter Three

Scriptural Epistemology of Mīrzā Mahdī İşfahānī

Signposting

The main purpose of this chapter, which shapes the focus of the thesis, is to shed light on the concept of intellect ('aql) in Mīrzā Mahdī Isfahānī's thought. It aims to explain the main differences between his understanding of 'aql and that of Islamic philosophers, and to touch upon the different outcomes he recognizes between the two rival systems. It is obvious that in such an ontological discourse, before epistemology or theology, the methodology should be discussed. Thus, Mīrzā Mahdī's scriptural approaches towards the text, and his hermeneutic are dissected to clarify how he was able to repudiate philosophical Islam. Because of the inextricable link between epistemology and ontology, discussing his ontological ideas is inevitable. Therefore, his ontological ideas about the essence of intellect are given full attention. As a result, this chapter starts with his methodology, then his hermeneutical system, and eventually his ontological and epistemological ideas about 'aql, specifically in theology. The role of 'aql in jurisprudence is discussed in the following chapter. I have tried to show Mīrzā's main linguistic elements; the 'real external existence' for instance. In a sharp contrast to philosophers and mainstream of *uṣūlīs*, he believes that we have direct access to the 'real external existence' (*wujūd-i 'ainī-i khārijī*), and as a result, what words (*al-alfādh*) suggest is the reality of external existents, not their concepts, whereas for philosophers, exterior objects and realities exist in our minds in their lower level of being which is called concept (*al-mafhūm al-dhīhnī*). Mīrzā does not believe in such concept of the words. In a border methodologic picture, I have claimed that Mīrzā stands far from *akhbārīs*' formal characteristics, and does not fit into their six main criteria. The label I have suggested for him, instead of *akhbārīs*, is *akhbār-girā* (*ḥadīth* oriented), and have tried to prove that having a clear tendency of scripturalism, Mīrzā leans towards *akhbār-girāyī* (*ḥadīth* orientation), and this approach is tuned with his attempts in re-defining the role of intellect (*al-'aql*). His other ideological characteristics, also, have been put to the illustration: simplification, literalism, and more importantly, his *rijālī* approach in narrating hadiths, which delineates his scriptural framework. The idea in the first part of the chapter is Mīrzā's refutation of philosophy. I have articulated his critiques against philosophy in three main parts:

- a) The history of the emergence of philosophy in Islamic society. Mīrzā provides historical reports to trace this emergence back to the School of Abbasid Caliphs in *biyt-u al-ḥikmah* in order to put philosophy in a sharp contrast to the School of the Imamate from the very beginning.
- b) Mīrzā compares the outcome of Muslim philosopher by Scripture: Quran and narrations (*al-ahādīth*) of Prophet and Imams (*al-Qur'ān wa al-sunnah*). I have demonstrated his argumentation for these contrasts in four theological principals: *al-tawḥīd* (Unity of God), Knowing God (*ma'rifat-u 'I-Allah*), Creation (*al-khalq*), and Divine Volition (*irādat-u Allah*).

- c) His epistemological argumentations against philosophers, which is, to me, the heart of his critiques. By epistemological means, I mean intellect and knowledge (*al-'aql wa al-'ilm*). Mīrzā delves into ontological chasm between philosophy and Scripture in order to get to the notion of intellect and knowledge. His claim is that, likewise their history and outcomes, the notion of epistemological means in two systems is totally different. The main difference is that in philosophy the intellect (*al-'aql*), the intellectual (*al-'āqil*), and the intellectualized (*al-ma'qūl*) are different levels of one and united reality ('*ittihād-u al-'aql-i wa l-āqil-i wa al-ma'qūl*), whereas Mīrzā considers them separate Realities. The same is said for the knowledge: ('*ittihād-u al-'ilm wa al-'ālim wa al-ma'lūm*), the unity of the knowledge, the knower, and the known.

Finally, in the last part, the reader will be able to find Mīrzā's definition of intellect (*al-'aql*). I have called this part as the demonstration level (against refutation level), in which he re-defines the intellect and knowledge. The main argues here are around the (a) notion, the (b) function, and the (c) outcome of intellect. As an 'interior authentic proof' (*ḥujjat-u al-bāṭinīyyah*), Mīrzā states that intellect cannot be defined, as there is no light superior to enlighten it. Then, I have extracted his discussion on the relationship between 'exterior authentic proof', the Prophet, and the intellect, as an interior authentic proof. For him, still, nothing is able to define the intellect, even the Prophet. The role of the Prophet (and subsequently the Scripture), then, is mere indication to the presence of intellect and knowledge (*tadhakkur*).

Chapter's Main Questions

Having all these discussions in mind, the main questions of this chapter can be articulated in this order:

1. What is Mīrzā Mahdī's methodology?
2. How does his hermeneutical system enable him to refute philosophical interpretation and outcomes?
3. What are Mīrzā Mahdī's main criticisms of the philosophical epistemic system?
4. How does Mīrzā Mahdī define the functionality of 'aql, in faith?

In the same way, following questions will be tracked in the next chapter on jurisprudence:

1. Does he apply the same concept of ‘aql in his jurisprudential system?
2. What practical effects are made in his jurisprudential system as a result of applying modulated ‘aql?
3. Does he follow the same epistemology in his jurisprudence?

In terms of faith-based discourses, fideism is the most similar term within western-language atmosphere to the *Tafkīk* ideas, however; there are many differences between the two Schools. Mīrzā’s idea is a new scriptural attempt for positing Islam outside philosophy and mysticism independently. This way Mīrzā gives us three different pictures: philosophical Islam, mystical Islam and revelatory Islam. According to him the first two are detoured and the third one is true Islam. In this chapter one can find anthropological and epistemological differences between the three Islam in one comparable scheme. I have tried here to familiarize – especially the Western reader- with Mīrzā Mahdi’s literature and work beside his main ideas and framework. How he reads *Shī‘ī* Islam as it stands far from Philosophical Islam and Mystical Islam.

Terminologies and Methodological Notes

It should be acknowledged from the very beginning that the occurrence of common philosophical terms in Mīrzā’s literature should not be interpreted in their philosophical concept, but conversely, in their literal meaning (which stems from one of his fundamental linguistic ideas). So, for instance, ‘manifestation’ (*zuhūr*) or ‘concept’ (*mafhūm*) do not pertain to any mystical or philosophical meaning beyond their literal meanings. Therefore, in terms of ‘aql I preferred to use the term ‘aql itself instead of any other translation, although the closest equivalent should be intellect, because to me, ‘reason’ sounds more cerebral, conceptual, and brain-minded (psychosocial).

Mīrzā makes a huge effort to refine or re-define all related terminologies according to their original revelatory meanings. The way he names the first chapter of ‘*Abwāb al-Hudā*’, one of his latest works, in which he gives a condensed extract of his most recent ideas, trumpets this tendency loudly:

‘The First Chapter is a Gate to The Gates of Guidance: There is no kind of convergence between Humanistic Knowledge (al-‘ulūm al-basharī) [philosophy and mysticism] and noble Divine Knowledge (al-‘ulūm al-ilāhī), even at their entrance to the gates [epistemology]. The basis of education in Divine Knowledge is that the words are

*indications to the intentions per se (al-'alfāz), and they point directly to the reality ...*²⁰⁷

Emphasizing a direct connection between the words and the reality, Mīrzā wants to eliminate the connective role of the concept between the words and the reality. In Islamic philosophy, the words point to a concept in the mind, and that concept is the bridge between the mind (inside world) and the reality (outside word). What we have access to, as the reality, is the world of concepts in our minds. Concepts form a lower level of being in our minds, and this is the entire reality to which we have access. Mīrzā rejects the world of concepts as a level of being. In fact, he does not believe in the category of being as it is discussed in philosophy. For him, we have direct access to the reality through the light of knowledge and the words indicate directly to those realities. There is no intermediation of concepts. This difference will be dissected in detail.

Human Science, Divine Knowledge

It has always been challenged within scholarly circles, even by the School's advocates, what exactly Mīrzā means by 'human sciences' (*al-'ulūm al-basharī*)²⁰⁸. What does he mean when he says 'human science' is dark and barren? Is it dark in physics and mathematics as well? What kind of scientific methods does he reject and where? Does he postite syllogism, inference, and deductive methods somewhere outside the map, literally becoming 'irrational', or, does he believe that 'human sciences' are only insufficient in the divine territory? The answer to this question clarifies the exact realm of the functionality of 'aql from Mīrzā's perspective.

As far as I understand, his words indicate that the human being, no matter how potent or bright, is feeble when it comes to the divine realm. He focuses on the term religion and confines the damages of 'human science' to the religious dominion. It is clear everywhere in his works that he is more objective about philosophy and mysticism, because of the harm he discerns as perpetrated by these two. As a result, the term 'human science', which is used repeatedly in his literature, refers to philosophy and mysticism. His opinion about the functionality of 'aql in other sciences that flourished in the minds of human beings in the course of history cannot be inferred from the anti-philosophical/mystical context of his works.

On the other hand, 'Divine Knowledge' (*al-'ulūm al-ilāhi*) is a term by which he points to the instructions of the Scripture (Qur'ān and *ḥadīth*). Ḥakīmī uses the term 'revelatory knowledge' and 'revelatory method' when he describes Mīrzā's method, in order to show

207 'Isfahānī, M.M. (1387 SH). *Abwāb al-Hudā*. Tīhrān: Munīr, p.23.

208 This is discussed in the last chapter on 'intra Tafkīkī debate'. His pupils have different methods in defining the functionality of 'aql and using it in their arguments, which implies the divergence in both theory and practice.

its methodical contrast with philosophy and mysticism.²⁰⁹ From what I understand, for Mīrzā Mahdī İsfahānī, ‘Divine Knowledge’ is a Scriptural Knowledge, a knowledge that should be inferred from the text. It is a pure knowledge that the Prophet delivered, yet philosophers and mystics contaminated.

Within this context, philosophers refers to Muslim philosophers. And finally, I have used ‘knowledge’ for the ‘Divine’ side, as I considered it more appropriate for the concept of ‘ilm, and ‘science’ for the ‘human’ side, to make the contrast more marked.

Refutation and Demonstration Levels

From a methodological point of view, Mīrzā’s literature consists of two main aspects: (a) refutation and (b) demonstration levels. Although they are not exposed separately in his works, they are quite distinct from each other. I have discussed them separately as I see this distinction critical to investigating his epistemology. This vital distinction helps to understand his approach towards the text besides his definition of ‘aql. Having these two distinct levels, Mīrzā, firstly, appears to attempt to refute philosophical interpretations from outside the text, and then to apply textual analyses in order to show the contradictions between philosophy and Scripture, and finally, to form his doctrine from inside the text. Yet again, by inside the text, I do not mean just a routine reading of it, but by explaining it in a tangible way which enlivens it for the readers and helps them to find it in their conscience(*wijdān*). Through the first step, one can grasp the independent functionality of ‘aql in Mīrzā’s thought. One can see how he uses ‘aql in the reasoning process, how he defines it practically, and eventually, how he utilizes the text to highlight the contradictions between the two systems.

It is worth noting that his pupils later expanded on each of these levels in several dedicated works. It can be said that some of them are skilled in the first level and some in the second.²¹⁰ There are also some works which cover them both.²¹¹

209 Hākimī and Siyyidān use this term more. They are pupils of Shiykh Mujtabā Qazwīnī, one of the early pupils of Mīrzā. This term prevailed in Hākimī’s works such as ‘*Maktab-i Tafkīk*’ and also Siyyidān’s works, especially in his interviews where he wants to define the school concisely. Siyyidān, S.J. (1378 SH) ‘*Maktab-I Tafkīk*’, Interviewed by ‘Ali Malīkī Mīyānjī, *Journal of Maktab-i Waḥy*, 1(4), pp.11-19.

210 The two trends of refuting and demonstrating are clearly discernible in his pupils. Many of them such as Qazwīnī had a more *kalāmī* approach, whereas others such as Malīkī Mīyānjī and Ḥalabli had a more demonstrative tendency. Hākimī, and Ayatollah Sayyid Ja‘far Siyyidān are among Qazwīnī’s students whose works inclines to the first type, and Raḥīmīyām, who is Ḥalabli’s student, or Bīyābānī, who is Malīkī’s student, can be categorized in the second.

211 One of the best examples of this is Raḥīmīyām, A. (1385 SH). *Mas’alih-yi ‘Ilm*. Tīhrān: Munīr; Malīkī Mīyānjī, M.B., Malīkī Mīyānjī, ‘A. & Bīyābānī ’Uskū’ī, M. (1395 SH). *Tawhīd al-’Imāmīyyah*. Qum: Mu’assish-yi Ma‘ārif-I ‘Ahl al-Bayt; For a scriptural *tafkīkī* work on the ‘knowing God’ see ‘Alam al-Hudā, S.M.B. (1398 SH). *Ma’rifah allāh*. Mashhad: Wilāyat.

Refutation Level

A large part of his discourse pertains to a comparable study between three main schools: philosophy, mysticism, and revelation. This part is the more publicized and palpable. As mentioned above, this level has two parts: (1) explaining the self-contradictory nature of philosophy, (2) highlighting the contradictions between philosophical outcomes and the main Islamic Scriptures; the Qur'ān and *ḥadīth*. Mīrzā usually criticizes philosophy and mysticism together. However, this thesis focuses only on his detailed critiques against philosophy. This is mainly because of the focal purpose of the thesis, which is investigating the functionality of 'aql in Mīrzā's system of thought. Philosophical discourses have much more potential for delivering different debates over intellectual issues. Nonetheless, because of the methodological similarities between philosophy and mysticism, in contrast with Mīrzā's method, the problems with mysticism are also mentioned during the debates. For him, philosophy and mysticism are the main rivals of true knowledge of Islam, and are quite similar in promoting a deviant humanistic (*basharī*) method.

What is crucial in this part is to find out what sort of epistemological means he adopts in order to evaluate philosophical rationalism. What is the essence of his intellectual reasoning? Is there anything except philosophical rationalism as the main human epistemological instrument? Can he really stand clear of the philosophical boundaries, or would he be drawn into the abyss of irrationalism?

Demonstration Level

In this step, he explains various ontological and epistemological issues in Shī'ī Islam, namely the essence of the 'aql, 'ilm, creation, eschatology, knowledge of God, God's attributes, and so on. Briefly, he shapes his theological doctrine. For him, these can all be deduced from the Qur'ān and the Imams' true *ḥadīths*. However, it is not just by reading, or memorizing them, but instead – as I will try to explain – it is to help the reader to find the reality that is veiled within the Scripture. This is a method which I name as 'scriptural epistemology', because it is different from philosophical rationalism, mere literalism, and even heuristic mysticism, yet at the same time has similarities to each of them.

The main question here is to find out where Mīrzā Mahdī's hermeneutical system stands between philosophy and mysticism. I have tried to outline the main methodological and hermeneutical methods used by Mīrzā Mahdī, under which he establishes his scriptural

system. I have chosen these labels for his scriptural system: scriptural remedy, textual conjunction, or experiencing the text.²¹²

3.1 Abwāb al-Hudā

3.1.1 Why Abwāb al-Hudā?

Abwāb al-Hudā, literally ‘The Gates to Guidance’, is one of the – if not *the* – most important treaties of Mīrzā Mahdī Isfahanī. This book stands as the main reference for this research although the rest of his works are referenced alongside. The central role of this concise treatise lies in certain elements:

This work is one of the again, –arguably *the*– last piece(s) written by Mīrzā which reflects his most recent opinions. Within the text, he makes reference to his other important works like *Miṣbāḥ al-Hudā* (a similar work in the realm of *uṣūl al-fiqh* that can be seen as the twin sister of *Abwāb al-Hudā*) and *Ma‘ārif al-Qur’ān* (his most extensive and detailed work). Both opuses are written earlier in his life. This chronological order holds more credit when considering the disputable development of his ideas which happened gradually throughout his various rounds of teachings and treatises.

As a compendium, *Abwāb al-Hudā* only comprises Mīrzā’s main ideas. Discussions are instilled and examples of verses and traditions are given succinctly.

The book is formed of feasible and elucidated chapters; it starts with clear definitions of his methodology and continues respectively to establish the epistemological bedrock of his structure, which is very much in keeping with the purpose of this thesis. This also accelerates the procedure of sifting out the focal figures of his thought from the mass of his literature.

212 One good example is the way he explains ‘God’s free will’, ‘intention’, and other attributes in chapter 21 of *Abwāb al-huda*. He first tries to explains the contradiction between philosophical interpretation of these concepts, and then gives verses of the Qur’ān followed by various *hadīths* expanding on those verses to prove his explanation, *Abwāb al-Hudā*, pp.74-85. For the primary sources see Majlisī, M. *Bihār al-Anwār*, v.5, pp.48. and for original text see the appendix 4.1; Majlisī, M. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol.55, pp.14. and for original text see the appendix 4.2; Shiykh al-Ṣadūq. *al-Tawḥīd*, vol.1, pp.327.and for original text see the appendix 4.3. Majlisī, M. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol.55, pp.30. and for original text see the appendix 4.4; Majlisī, M. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol.55, pp.9. and for original text see the appendix 4.5; Majlisī, M. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol.55, pp.34. and for original text see the appendix 4.6; Majlisī, M. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol.55, pp.36. and for original text see the appendix 4.7; Shiykh al-Ṣadūq. ‘*Ilāl al-sharāyi*’, vol.2, pp.312.and for original text see the appendix 4.8; Shiykh al-Ṣadūq. ‘*Ilāl al-Sharāyi*’, vol.1, pp.18. and for original text see the appendix 4.9; Ayyāshī, M. *Tafsīr līl-‘Ayyāshī*, vol.1, pp.29.and for original text see the appendix 4.10; Majlisī, M. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol.54, pp.368.and for original text see the appendix 4.11; Majlisī, M. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol.36, pp.165. and for original text see the appendix 4.12.

His main questions of Philosophy and mysticism, particularly the methodological and epistemological ones, are briefly cited.

There are different facsimiles of this book duplicated by various of his students, but what makes them more valuable is Mīrzā Mahdī's personal annotations in the margin of some of these transcripts.

The work, as an exception from his unpublished corpus, has been published several times by many publishers from different perspectives and backgrounds, once, even, by his philosopher opponents.

It has been translated and reviewed in Persian.²¹³

Abwāb al-Hudā is used as a textbook in *Tafkīkī* circles and has been taught as a traditional method in seminary lessons.

This researcher had the chance to attend one of these classes in Qum on daily basis for more than four years. However, the personal interpretation of the lecturer, Muhammad Bīyābānī, is not reflected here.

Overall, as a methodological note, for this research, *Abwāb al-Hudā* is the axis around which the other works of Mīrzā Mahdī turn. The format of the discourses here follows this essence, because it is the most tangible and substantial embodiment of his system of thought. However, as it was intimated above, his opinions in his other works respectively collided to make a network around each subject, and to show the consistency of his ideology as a whole. It should not be forgotten that, any changes or disparities between his different pieces are exposed in this thesis.

3.1.2 The Book's Framework

Abwāb al-Hudā consists of an introduction and 25 chapters. The introduction is dense and vital, and therefore has been given much attention in the following sections. It deals with fundamental epistemological and terminological issues, and also a short overview of the history of the integration of Hellenistic Philosophy into Islamic society during the Abbasid era. Mīrzā establishes his method and tries to show the continuity and originality of his doctrine by linking it to eminent predecessors. This, roughly 12-page, prologue ends up with an ontological, and accordingly, epistemological divergence. He firmly defines the self-gnosis of ego (*ma'rifat al-nafs*) as the epicentre of all theological dichotomies between human knowledge and divine knowledge. For him, this cognition is the most important and fundamental issue, which he calls the key to all the gates of guidance. More than half of this short introduction is allocated to substantiating this disputable claim. His endeavour is made clear by his scriptural method in this primary condensed argument, which will be deeply examined in this chapter.

213 Persian translations helped me for better understanding the text however the original Arabic has been used as the main source in the thesis.

The seven first chapters, then, can be seen as an expansion on what has been discussed briefly in the introduction. The order and content of these chapters are very important. They deal with the main epistemic meanings and fundamental theological subjects like knowledge (*al-‘ilm*) and intellect (*al-‘aql*), the terminological dichotomy between philosophy (human knowledge) and Scripture (revelatory knowledge), cognition of Allah (*ma‘rifat Allah*) and the functionality of the signs (*āyāt*) in the cognition process. There are, also, some crucially fundamental issues discussed like the providence of God and its ontology. In chapter seven, Mīrzā focuses on the teleological system of Scripture by tracing the real definition of reason (*burhān*), which leads to further debates over the functionality of ‘*aql*. The next few chapters tie more into the critiques of philosophy and comparison between its tenets and the ones of Scripture – divine knowledge – in Mīrzā’s terminology. In chapter ten, for instance, the concept of the ‘being’ (*wujūd*) is thoroughly discussed and the philosophical arguments for it are repudiated. There are, again, many demonstrative discussions, such as that in chapter twelve, about the innate disposition (*fitrah*), which is a shining star in Mīrzā Mahdī’s firmament. This chapter is of great significance: it sketches out one of his vital hermeneutical points of view in reading Qur’ānīc and other scriptural terminologies such as *being* (*al-wujūd*), *al-‘aql*, *al-‘ilm*, life (*al-hayāt*), conscious (*al-shu‘ūr*) and comprehension (*al-fahm*). Another epistemic issue discussed in chapter thirteen, is the way the way in which luminous realities can be known. The next three chapters pay more attention to the concept, function and definition of knowledge and intellect. The next chapters delve into theological issues; namely the concepts of being (*al-wujūd*), God’s providence (*al-mashīyah*), and the Throne of God (*al-‘arsh*). The last two chapters, interestingly, have different themes. Mīrzā first discusses the violation of appearances (*kharq-i-‘ādat*) and any possible abnormal phenomenon emerging on the hands of some people, stigmatizing it by exemplifying it in Sāmirī²¹⁴. Respectively, in his last chapter, he expounds lofty ideas on prayer (*al-ṣalāt*) and palpably emboldens the role of prayer as the way to cognition of Allah (*ma‘rifat Allah*). Prayer is crystal clear within the text, and passionately practised by all Messengers of God; whereas supernatural powers, different devotions (*dhikr*), with any possible or certain effect, are deviant and can be practised and urged by Sāmirī as well. This collision at the final destination signifies the dichotomy between Human Knowledge and Divine Knowledge, even in their methods of practice. It seems that Mīrzā tries to say that the difference starts from epistemology and goes up to ontology, then comes down to pedagogy and even prayer and Shari‘a. For Mīrzā there is nothing in common.

3.1.3 List of Chapters

Below is the translation of the titles of the chapters in *Abwāb al-Hudā*. Indeed, in addition to their order, the way that Mīrzā Mahdī has described and paraphrased his final chapters is of a great significance. As shown, these descriptive ‘Gates’ (*bāb*) from a short list of Mīrzā Mahdī’s main tenets, are as if they sketch out the contours of his doctrinal territory.

214 The Person who - according to the Qur’ān (Tāhā/85)- made the Golden Calf and encouraged people to worship it while Moses was on Mount Sinai talking to Allah. In Islamic literature, he is an example of an evil and fraudulent character, especially in the absence of the real proof.

- The first gate: It is the gate of all gates; Human Knowledge and the novel divine knowledge have nothing in common at all, even at their entrances and gates
- The second gate: Cognition (*ma'rifah*) of al-'aql, al-'ilm, and teaching (*ta'līm*)
- The third gate: Cognition of the reasoning of Allah and knowledge of the One which is known by the signs, the contrast between Human Knowledge and divine knowledge
- The fourth gate: To know the power of the Lord through his definition for his servants, and conveying them to His visit (*ru'yati-hī*), and to exactly meet with Him himself. This [visit] is real and factual by Him in the divine knowledge and is impossible by anyone else in contrast with the [case in the] Human Knowledge where the real cognition [of Allah] is impossible.
- The fifth gate: To know the perfections (*kamālāt*) of Allah and the signs and indications of those perfections, and [to know] that there is no end to his perfections as there is no end to his Essence [*dhāt*]
- The sixth gate: To know that luminous realities and tenebrous realities are all created by providence (*mashīyyah*), and the providence is His Act not His Essence
- The Seventh Gate: To know the reasoning for what has been discussed in previous chapters according to what the Prophet has conveyed
- The eighth gate: To mention the rise of believers and of Imams' companions and jurists against philosophical and mystical discourses and to mention the origin of these two discourses
- The Ninth Gate: The principles of philosophy and mysticism about the cognition of Allah (*ma'rifat Allah*) and other cognitions that philosophers and mystics have collected in their books
- The tenth gate: Rebuttal of the human [knowledge] basis due to divine knowledge

- The eleventh gate: To know that Allah witnesses the reality of the Prophet and his knowledge of the Great Qur'ān and its sciences, after the tragic tyranny and major crime committed by oppressive Imams ('a'immat al-jawr) against the Prophet and infallible Imams by integrating and mixing Human Science with their knowledge [of Prophet and Imams]
- The twelfth gate: Cognition of the gate of Qur'ānīc knowledge which attunes with the primordial origin (al-fitrah)²¹⁵
- The thirteenth gate: To know that it is in the infrastructure of divine knowledge that luminous realities cannot be known except by themselves, and it is impossible to know other [realities] except through these luminous realities
- The fourteenth gate: To know that the foundation of this novel knowledge is based on reminding intellectuals (al-'uqalā) about the intellect (al-'aql)
- The fifteenth gate: A reminder (tadhakkur) about primordial cognition (ma'rifat al-fitriyyah)
- The sixteenth gate: Cognition of al-'ilm, as it is the second proof in divine knowledge, and its gate is al-'aql and its stimulation ('ithārah)
- The seventeenth gate: Cognition of the 'being' (al-wujūd)
- The eighteenth gate: Cognition of the intensity of the reality of the being (al-wujūd), and I-ness ('innīyyah), and [the cognition of] what causes the intensity of the provocation of the light of al-'aql
- The nineteenth gate: Cognition that Allah is Himself the greatest witness to the reality of the Qur'ān and the invitation of the Prophet

215 The term *fitrah* which refers to a specific original creation of human being. The most important figure of this distinction is the knowledge of Allah which means all creations know him the way that he created them and the term is fully explained in coming sections. Tabātabā'i, S.M.H. (1393 AH). Al- Mīzān Tafsīr al-Qur'Ān. Beirut: Muassisah al-'A'lāmī lilmāṭbū'āt, v.16, p.3; Malikī Mīyānajī, M.B., Malikī Mīyānajī, 'A. & Bīyābānī 'Uskū'ī, M. (1417 AH). *Manāhij al-Bayān*. Tīhrān: Wizārat-I Farhang wa 'Irshād-I 'Islāmī, v.1, p.394.

- The twentieth gate: Cognition of providence (al-mashīyah)
- The twenty-first gate: Cognition of the Throne of Allah (al-‘arsh), and the Divine Pedestal (al-kursī), and the manifest Book (al-Kitāb al-mubīn)
- The twenty-second gate: Cognition of the signs of His providence which is received through divine knowledge. And a comparison of the signs of His wills (‘irādāt), destiny (taqdīr), and decree (qaḍā), between [the divine knowledge] and the old knowledge {human knowledge}
- The twenty third gate: Cognition of the way of knowing Allah in divine knowledge, contrary to what is in human knowledge
- The twenty fourth gate: To know that the authority of abnormal phenomena (kharq-i ‘ādāt) belongs to the prophets and Allah’s vicegerents, and if they appear on the hand of an ordinary person it is a test for that person
- The twenty Fifth gate: Prayer (al-ṣalāt)

3.2 Essential Elements of Mīrzā Mahdī’s Hermeneutical System²¹⁶

3.2.1 Metaphor and Reality (*al-majāz wa al-ḥaqīqah*)

To the best of my knowledge, this is the most important part of Mīrzā Mahdī’s hermeneutical system. Here his epistemology is projected onto a very fundamental *uṣūlī* logistical subject. He begins *Abwāb al-Hudā* with the linguistic chasm between the two systems:

‘The First Gate (and It Is the Gate of the Gates of Guidance): we say that ‘human sciences’ and novel ‘divine knowledge’ have nothing in

²¹⁶ They are listed in a descending order of importance, indeed according to my understanding of his system of thought.

*common at all, even in their entrances and gates. The pedagogical system in ‘divine knowledge’ is based on the words that are indications to the meanings. Words in ‘divine knowledge’, firstly and essentially, are indicators to the realities themselves, no matter whether they are Allah’s names Glory to His Majesty, or the names of other luminous realities such as ‘aql (intellect), ‘ilm (knowledge), ḥayā (life), ... and this is the first gate of the guidance. To the contrary, in ‘human sciences’, words are frames for conceptions (qawālib li-taṣṣwurāt). Intentions and meanings, whatever they are, are a kind of conception, which is the first gate of aberration and straying.’*²¹⁷

This utter linguistic disparity lies at the root of a total epistemic divergence. For Muslim philosophers, there is an intermediate world, which connects us to the ‘real external existence’, called ‘conceptual being’ or ‘mental mode of existence’ (*wujūd al-dhihnī*).²¹⁸ This connection is laid as a groundwork for justifying the ‘reality of knowledge’.²¹⁹ According to this, all exterior objects and realities exist in our minds in their lower level of being, and we, as human beings, only have direct access to their conceptual level. Philosophers assert that this ‘mental mode’ is different from the ‘external mode’.²²⁰ This theory is based on a specific interpretation of ‘the concept of being’ which divides the whole of creation into ‘the being’ and ‘the quiddity’. ‘The being’ is seen as a united reality manifested in different levels of ‘quiddity’. As a result, what we have access to is a ‘conceptual world’, and respectively, all we signify, by words, are the concepts. As will be discussed, Mīrzā does not accept the philosophers’ ontological category of ‘the being’, neither does he accept the epistemic role of the ‘conceptual world’ in validating our knowledge. In contrast, he actually believes that we have direct access to the ‘real external existence’ (*wujūd-i ‘ainī-i khārijī*), and as a result, what our words suggest is the reality of external existents, not their concepts. Here he digs into the epistemic roots of this linguistic dispute:

217 *Abwāb al-Hudā*, p.5. For the primary source see Majlisī, M. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol.4, pp.253 . and for original text see the appendix 4.13.

218 This is discussed in details in ‘Ontological Divergence, Epistemic Chasm; the Notion of Intellect and Knowledge in Islamic Philosophy’.

219 It is generally accepted that the idea of ‘conceptual being’ was first suggested by Muslim philosophers with no record among Western Philosophy. Muṭahharī says that Naṣīr al-dīn Tūsī and Fakhr Razī were the pioneers, though others believe that Avicenna was the first Muslim philosopher who suggested the idea. For a literature review on this see Jawādī, M. , Kūhī, T. and Bārān, S. (1391 SH) ‘Wujūd-i Dhihnī az Dīdgāh-i Mullā Ṣadrā’, *Journal of Hikmat-I Ṣadrāyī*, 1, pp. 34-5. (Mental Existence from Mullā Ṣadrā Perspective).

220 See ‘Ubūdīyyat, ‘A. (1398 SH). *Falsafih-yi Muqaddamātī* (*bargiriftih az āthār-i shahīd Muṭahharī*). Tīhrān: Sāzmān-i Muṭālī‘i wa Tadwīn-i Kutub-i ‘Ulūm-i Insānī-yi Dānishgāh-hā, p.92.

*'The foundation of 'human sciences' is based on idiomatic delusion [that the creation consists] of 'the being' and 'the quiddity'. [This science is based on] the 'conception' (taṣawwur) and 'assertion' (credulitus, or assensus L., taṣdīq). 'Assertions' must inevitably end up in self-evident 'conceptions', because of the impossibility of having 'assertion' without 'conception'... So, they [philosophers] thought that there is a visual 'concept' for 'the being' which is the 'mode' (modus L., wajh) of the reality of 'the being'. They were deluded that 'the reality of the being' is the Lord Glory to His Majesty... They conjectured that the legislator (wāḍi') should first imagine the words and what is intended by them, which is the meaning and the concept...and for this reason, words became indicators to the 'imagined concepts...''*²²¹

The problem emerged from ontology, affected the epistemology, reached the linguistic system, and eventually, permeated the fundamental basis of Islamic theology:

*'Here lies their [philosophers] opinion about 'content participation' (ishtirāk-i ma'nawī) [of the words] between the Creator and the creature, like the words 'truth' (haq), trustworthiness (haqqiyah), reality (wāqi'iyyah), essence (dhāt), being (wujūd). Whereas ḥadīths explicitly stress that it is a metaphor [and not the content participation], as you learnt from the ḥadīth by the Eighth Imam PBUH that there is no common ground between the Creator and the creature according to their instructions PBUH.'*²²²

In order to prevent this deadly deviation, Mīrzā declares that:

221 Abwāb al-Hudā, pp. 30-2. For the primary source see Shiykh al-Ṣadūq. 'Uyūn al-'Akhbār al-Ridā, vol.1, pp.154. and for original text see the appendix 4.14.

222 Ibid

*'Words are nothing but indicators to the external realities, by the light of 'aql and 'ilm for every intellectual ('āqil) and knowledgeable ('ālim)...'*²²³

*'Words are signs and indicators by which man indicates to the realities, firstly and essentially. The meaning and intention are the external realities...'*²²⁴

It should be clear from what we have discussed so far that Mīrzā maintains the 'Making of words' (*ja'I al-alfādh*) to be only for external realities (including luminous realities like '*aql*' and '*ilm*'). It means that each word is assigned for a specific reality, content, intention, or meaning. As a result, in terms of 'metaphor and reality', he rejects the metaphoric (*majāzī*) usage of the words and advocates the idea that words are real (*haqīqī*) in their meanings. For instance, when we have one word with different meanings in the text, the word is real in all possible meanings, yet, to know which one of them is intended within that particular text, we need to look at 'attached and separate indications (*qarā'in-i muttaṣilīh wa munfaṣilīh*)'. This is the same case in the Qur'ān and *ḥadīth*.²²⁵

3.2.2 Scripturalism, but not *akhbārīsm*

The term *Akhbārīs* (Arabic: *akhbāriyūn*, Persian: *akhbārīyān*) literary the followers of the narrations of Twelver Shia Muslims who are known mainly by their contrast to the *uṣūlīs* (from *uṣūl al-fiqh*, principles of Islamic jurisprudence). The movement emerged in late Safavid and early Qajari Iran and is found nowadays in Basra area of southern Iraq, Bahrain, Yamen, Hyderabad, India and different cities of Pakistan.

Unlike *uṣūlīs*, *akhbārīs* do not follow -or do *taqlīd*- of a *Mujtahid*, the *marja's* (models for imitation); consequently, they do not accept *uṣūl al-fiqh* as the principles by which a fallible jurist can derive his own verdicts as the sharia law. For *akhbārīs*, the infallible Imam is the one and the only who should be followed in his verdicts.

Though for roughly three centuries *akhbārīs* where the majority of Shī'ā 'ulamā, nowadays, they form a minority within Shia Islam, against *uṣūlīs* who hold the main stream of seminary circles.

Uṣūlīs and *akhbārīs* both believe in Qur'ān and *ḥadīths*. There is no challenge in following the Imams as the fundamental pillar of Shi'a ideology. Though, they differ in

223 Ibid

224 *Abwāb al-Hudā*, pp. 26-7.

225 For a detailed survey of his idea on this, see Mufīd Ḥ, Mufīd, Ḥ. (1387 SH) 'Ma'nāyi Khārijīyat-I Ma'nā wa Mawdū'-I lah az Nażar-I Mīrzā Mahdī 'Isfahānī', *Journal of Naqd wa Nażar*, 49 & 50; Banī-Hashimī, S.M. (1397 SH) 'Hujjīyat-i Zawāhir-i Qur'ān-I Karīm az Nażar-i Mīrzā Mahdī 'Isfahānī', *Journal of Safīnih*, 59.

their methodology of reading scripture. It is to say that there is no difference in sources, the difference is how to read them.

The main conflicts forming the body of *uṣūlī-akhbārī* strife are:

1. *Ijtihād* and *taqlīd* (permission of issuing verdict and imitating); *akhbārīs* do not allow *ijtihād*, whereas *uṣūlīs* see it as a *wājib* (obligatory). For *akhbārīs* imitating fallible person (who is not innocent Imam) is not accepted at all.
2. For *akhbārīs*, ḥadīths divided in two categories: *sahīh* (true) and *da’īf* (weak). Whereas for *uṣūlīs* there are four types of ḥadīths: *sahīh* (true), *ḥasan* (good), *muwaththaq* (valid) and *da’īf* (weak). Their definition of *sahīh* is also different.
3. For *akhbārīs* all ḥadīths in *kutub al-’arba’ā* (the main pillar books) are true but for *uṣūlīs* the validation of all should be checked.
4. for *akhbārīs* actions are either permitted or forbidden, so if there is a case in which we do not clearly know the Imams’ opinion (*mushtabah* or ambiguous), then we should stop, which means to act cautiously (*al-iḥtīyāṭ*). *Uṣūlīs* however do not stop in such cases, they verdict and allow people to act freely only because they don’t know. (*iṣālah al-barā’ah*)
5. *Akhbārīs* forbid laying on conjecture (*ẓan*). For theme *sharī’ā* law should be definite and decisive (*al-’ilm*). But, *uṣūlīs* consider conjecture as valid as *al-’ilm* (knowledge) in *sharī’ā* law.
6. The authority of explicit meaning of Qur’ān.²²⁶

The main figure of *akhbārīsm* is undoubtedly Muḥammad Amīn al-Astarābādī (d. 1623/1036). Some other eminent figures are Muḥammad Bāqir Behbahānī (d. 1706). Muḥammad bāqir al-majlisī (d. 1699/1011), Mullā Muḥsin Fiyd Kāshānī (d. 1680), Siyyid Ne’matullāh Jazāyirī (d. 1700), Shīykh Yūsif Bahrānī (d. 1772).²²⁷

For me, an *akhbārī* is a shī’ā scholar who basically rejects *uṣūlī* format for extracting *sharī’ā* law and, in a broader scope, in construing the scripture. **From my perspective**, *akhbārīsm* is a conflict in jurisprudence, rather than theology; however, what ties their jurisprudential discourse into this thesis is the root of their scripturalism which lays down

226 That is fully discussed in section 3.7

227 For a comprehensive survey on *akhbārīs* see Bihishtī E., *Akhbārīgarī* and also Robert Gleave’s works such as Gleave R (1994). *The Akhbāri-Usuli Dispute in Tabaqat Literature: an analysis of the biographies of Yusuf al-Bahrani and Muhammad Baqir al-Bihbhanī*. Jusur: UCLA Journal of Middle Eastern Studies, 79-109; Gleave R (1997). *Akhbāri Shi’i Usul al-fiqh and the Juristic theory of Yusuf b. Ahmad al-Bahrani*. In Gleave R, Kermeli E (Eds.) *Islamic law: Theory and Practice*, I B Tauris & Co Ltd, 24-45; Gleave R (2000). *Inevitable doubt: Two Theories of Shi’i Jurisprudence*. Leiden, Brill Academic Pub; Gleave RM (2011). *Compromise and Conciliation in the Akhbāri–Usuli Dispute: Yusuf al-Bahrani’s Assessment of ’Abd Allah al-Samahījī’s Munyat al-Mumarisin*. In (Ed) Fortresses of the Intellect: Ismaili and Other Islamic Studies in Honour of Farhad Daftary, London: I. B. Tauris, 491-520

in the main epistemological means: *al-‘aql* (intellect) and *al-‘ilm* (knowledge). This takes us to the famous hermeneutical question that who has the right to interpret the text?²²⁸ In other words, this is, in fact, an attempt for dissecting the position of ‘aql (reasoning or intellect) and scripture, according to different Islamic schools. **From my understanding**, what differentiates schools from each other – not only in Islam, but anywhere which human being and text exist- is the same epistemological debate. And this is why *Tafkīk*s have been truly drown into the triangle of intellectualism, Akhbārīsm and scripturalism.

I believe that Mīrzā should not be identified as *akhbārī*, because he does not fit into the *akhbārī* framework which I have delineated above. Instead of *akhbārī*, I would describe Mīrzā as an *akhbārgirā* (*ḥadīth* oriented). The term *akhbārgirā* is aptly used for describing scholars such as Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī, the influential Shī‘ī scholar in the Ṣafawīd era and the compiler of the voluminous *ḥadīth* encyclopedia *Bihār al-anwār*.²²⁹ It is interesting that Majlisī was not *akhbārī* either, though, undoubtedly, he had a definite tendency towards *akhbārī*.²³⁰ So, why Mīrzā Mahdi Isfahani is not an *akhbārī*?

1. Mīrzā is an eminent pupil of Na’ini, attended his first round of *dars al-kharīj*, Na’ini signed a very high standard certificate of fatwa issuing allowance (*ijazah-tu al-ijtihad*)²³¹
2. After coming to Mashhad, Mīrzās was accepted by the circle of *uālāma*, he started teaching *usul* and *fiqh* in highest level (*dars-o al-kharīj*) which vividly shows that he was embraced as an outstanding jurist. This should be brought to attention that in such occasions it is not easy for a newcomer to overcome the circle of *uālāma* especially starting straight forward from *dars-o al-kharīj*, this clearly shows his over standing position in seminaries.
3. There is no report of any accusation or labeling of *akhbārīsm* reported during his life, and not even close to his death. Seemingly, the first accusation was made by Siyyid Jalal Ashtiyani in 1985²³² It can be said, for sure, that, no one – at least according to extant reports, has recognized him as an *akhbārī*, or even *akhbārī-oriented*.
4. His lessons follow the main structure of classical *usuli* lessons- particularly influenced by Na’ini as one of the pillars of the contemporary Shia *usuli* seminary.

228 This will be discussed later in detail in section 3.5

229 This term has been reflected appropriately in some books. Such as Malikī Mīyānajī, Allāmi Majlisī: Akhbārī yā uṣūlī?; Ja‘farīyān R., bīhār al-anwār az zāwīyi-yi nigāh-i dāyirat-u al-ma‘ārifī; ‘ābedī A., bīhār al-anwār dar dāyirat-u al-ma‘ārif-i tashayyu‘; Ṭarumī H., ‘allāmi Majlisī.

230 See Ṭarumī H., ‘Allāmih Majlisī; uṣūlī yā akhbārī’. Majlisī has been sometimes described as temperate akhbārī by some scholars.

231 These all have been discussed in details in chapter 2 on his intellectual biography.

232 ‘Āshṭīyānī, S.J. (1364) ‘Falsafih wa Kalām’, *Journal of Kiyhān-I ‘Andīshih*, 3, pp.50-51&53&60

All his *usuli* works start with linguistics (*mabahith-o al-alfad*), self-evidence reasoning (*mostaqilat-o al-aqliyyah*), certainty (*al-qat'*), conjecture (*al-dhan*), four pillars (*usul-o al-arba'ih*), and continues to follow the rest of *usuli* chapters.

5. In terms of specific *akhbārī-usuli* differentiating principles outlined above, Mīrzā's ideas stand far enough: in terms of authority of explicit meaning of Qur'ān, for instance, *Abwāb al-Hudā*, in spite of being a compendium – and not a vast work like his *Asās-u ma 'ārif al-Qur'ān* – contains around 152 verses in around only 100 pages. It is interesting that the number of the *ḥadīths* quoted (around 118 *ḥadīths*) is less than the number of *Qur'ānic* verses. The number of quoted *ḥadīths and* verses is greatly expanded in *Asās-u ma 'ārif al-Qur'ān*. In the first chapter which is on '*aql*', in only 81 pages, 136 verses are cited. What makes these numbers more significant, is the way that he reads and interprets them; despite *akhbaris*, who do not refer to Quranic verses without quoting *hadiths*, Mīrzā frequently refers to many verses and associates them to his understanding directly without any hadith explanation.²³³

Mīrzā's tendency towards scripturalism as intrinsic characteristic of his intellectual system is clear everywhere in his legacy. He, and his followers, are bounded by the Imams' sayings, indeed, to the different levels. They seek the truth only from the Imams' *divine gate*²³⁴.

The passage below is one good example of his method of applying *ḥadīth* to his arguments after clarifying his own opinion from outside the text. The passage is on the linguistic debate over the functionality of words. He, first, argues why words are merely indicators to 'external realities and their function is not by their essence, but by God's Will, and then, narrates *ḥadīths* to prove that his opinion is supported by Scripture. This is a ubiquitous pattern in his works.

'The functionality of words is nothing but an indicator to the realities which are illuminated/explored by 'aql and 'ilm..., and this indication is not the 'Causality' (ma 'lūliyyah), or the 'Making' (maj 'ūliyyah) as it is the basis of intellectualism. This is what we discussed about [the

233 See this is chapter

234 Referring to various traditions which introduce Shī'a Imams as the only way of the truth. See the expanded and numerous chapters of *kitāb al-hujjah* in *al-kāfi* as the main authentic reference in shī'ī īmāmat issue.

system] of discovering the intentions of the Qur'ān and ḥadīths according to the first nature/innate disposition. And this is the gate of the gates in the knowledge of the Qur'ān, and based on this, the gates of guidance are instituted, not on what Greeks have termed in their collected sciences. And what is narrated in al-Kāfi chained to (musnad/with a chain of transmitters to) Muḥammad b. Sinān indicates to what we mentioned: [Sinān] says: I asked him about the name, what it is?

Then he quotes a few more *ḥadīths*, with the same content, to strengthen his argument:

*'And also in al-Kāfi, chained to Abī 'Abd Allah PBUH in a holy narration: whoever worships the name without the meaning is a unbeliever and has worshipped nothing, and whoever worships the name and the meaning together, is an idolater/polytheist and has worshipped two, and whoever worships the meaning without the name, that is the unity'*²³⁵

Then he continues, quoting some *ḥadīths* from *Bihār*. *Bihār* quotes *ḥadīths* from *al-Tawḥīd* and *al-'Uyūn*, by Ṣadūq. And then again, more *ḥadīths* from other sources. The order and importance of these narrations will be discussed in coming sections.

In addition to narrating *ḥadīths* from Imams, Mīrzā's direct narration from the Twelfth Imam has become a slogan for his Imāmīte scriptural method. Detail of his encounter with the Imam is discussed in chapter two.²³⁶ This apocalyptic event and its crucial message mean a lot for *takfīkī*. The message of this sacred event has been memorized and widely spread among followers of the School in the past decades and it is now very famous, not only among them but also among their opponents. According to Mīrzā, it was clearly written on a rolled paper that was held obliquely on the Imam's body. The exact words are:

'any attempt to seek the Divine Knowledge through anyone but us, the descendants of the prophet, will end up in denying them all'

Mīrzā adds to that sentence:

'I emphasize 'denying them all''

235 *Abwāb al-Hudā*, pp. 26-8

236 Fully translation of the letter is available in 2.2.3.

He continues describing every single feature of the event, and the document, and pronounces the role of the Imam at the end:

'The paper had golden decoration all around and on the back of it close to the bottom, on the left side, it was written vertically: God has chosen me, and I am al-Hujjat Ibn al-Hasan (Hujjat the son of Hasan).'

Although there is no doubt about his having a scriptural method, the way Mīrzā deals with Scripture, (Qur'ān and *ḥadīth*) should be investigated in detail:

- a. Which *ḥadīths* does he apply to his system? In other words, what is his *rījālī* method (the chain of narrators, technically *esnād-i ḥadīth*)?
- b. How does he form his arguments based on collected *ḥadīths*? What is his hermeneutical method?
- c. How does he define the relationship between the verses of the Qur'ān and *ḥadīths*?

These are classical *uṣūlī* questions and a lot of importance is attached to Mīrzā's scriptural method. These questions outline the main hermeneutical differences between *akhbārīs* and *uṣūlīs*. Finding Mīrzā's answers to these questions enables us to recognize substantial elements of his scriptural method in *kalām* in addition to his textual jurisprudential tendency. These elements are categorized, and will be discussed, in following sections.

3.2.3 Simplification

At the very beginning of his introduction to *Abwāb*, he brings in two epistemic systems and openly draws a dividing line between them. He binds philosophy and mysticism together and articulates them as a bunch of 'human knowledge' ('ulūm-i *basharī*), stigmatizing them and saying that they are in contrast with 'divine knowledge' ('ulūm-i 'Ilāhi'), which is clearly projected within Scripture. It is crucial to examine how a human being can refute all heritage of human speculation and uphold his own explanation as the pure divine knowledge. Does Mīrzā really ignore all unavoidable consequences of human beings' systematic epistemic slips? Sajjad Rizvi raises the same epistemic concern about the hermeneutical system of Mīrzā Mahdī's thought. He criticizes Mīrzā's system for being simplistic and naive²⁴⁴. He correctly asks how it is possible that all formidable hermeneutical debates occurring in the course of intellectual Islamic history have so easily been neglected in Mīrzā's system.

244 Rizvi, Sajjad H. (2012) "Only the Imam Knows Best" The Maktab-e Tafkīk's Attack on the Legitimacy of Philosophy in Iran', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 22, pp. 478-503.

To answer this question, I should refer to my division at the beginning of this chapter. Mīrzā's system consists of two levels: (1) refutation and (2) demonstration. Rizvi's question about the hermeneutics of Mīrzā goes back to the second level where he develops his system based on *ḥadīths*. It is meaningful to ask how Mīrzā easily uses *ḥadīth* and puts them in contrast with Muslim philosophers' understanding of the text. This will be elaborated in a following section, 'making a network', where I discuss how Mīrzā shapes his textual network based on *ḥadīths*. Yet, in terms of refutation, hermeneutical blame is not appropriate, because Mīrzā does not deploy a textual method; instead, he tries to refute philosophy from inside. Mīrzā avoids philosophical frameworks and, as you would expect when it comes to challenging philosophers, his arguments are much simpler than their intricate philosophical argumentation. Therefore, 'simplism' seems to be a more appropriate label for his system.

3.2.3.1 Simple Arguments

Technically, his arguments follow common-sense and never go beyond basic logical patterns. This style of reasoning is completely premeditated and is in line with his epistemology. Nevertheless, it is said that Mīrzā is a philosopher, although he pretends to be anti-philosophy, because eventually he is unable to avoid using a kind of reasoning in his argumentations. This argument is based on how we define philosophy. The same simplistic argument can be traced in Mīrzā's jurisprudential works. As a jurist, he modulates the functionality of intellect in *uṣūl al-fiqh* from 'solid intellectual contemplations' to a 'common-sense reasoning system', which finally results in a temperate *fiqhī* ('urfī) system.²⁴⁵

The following examples help us to understand the essence of simplicity in Mīrzā's arguments. In addition, they show how he conceives 'aql, and uses it practically in the *kalāmī* discourses. Criticizing philosophy, he uses neither the Qur'ān nor *hadīth*. His argumentation is not textual. To my understanding, it is located somewhere between philosophical intellectualism (*al-'aql al-falsafi*) and irrationalism. It is an attempt at being logical, but not philosophical. Robert Gleave describes his approach towards 'aql as 'redefining it'.²⁴⁶ Mīrzā acknowledges logical principles like 'negation of two contradictories' (*irtifā' -u al-naqīdayn*), and at the same time, rejects what philosophers derive from it. He has the same problem with many basic logical principles tainted by philosophy such as 'Causality'.²⁴⁷

In the following passage, Mīrzā first digs into the roots of the systematic mistakes of philosophers and mystics, and then endeavours to refute them by showing their self-contradictions. The last part of his argument is based on 'innate cognition' of Allah (*ma 'rifat al-fitriyya*). As discussed earlier, the pivotal point of his argument lies in rejecting a 'conceptual being' or 'mental mode of existence' (*wujūd al-dhihnī*). It is clear that he never refuses to admit that 'to be' is contradictory to 'not to be'. He believes in 'negation of two contradictories', but rejects the occurrence of it between 'the concept of being'

245 For the details on his *fiqhī* instead, see the next the next chapter in his jurisprudential thought.

246 Gleave R, p. 16

247 For some examples of this, see 'ontological divergence' in next section 4.3.

and the ‘concept of lack’. The main problem is the ‘concept’, when read in its philosophical context.

‘They [philosophers] thought that because the essence of ‘the being’ (wujūd) is to contradict ‘the lack’ (‘adam), it does not mean to make ‘the being’ (ja’l al-wujūd), and as a result, they supposed that the ‘being’ is the Glory Lord. They accorded all perfections to ‘the being’, which is evident to everyone, and denied the existence of any reality but ‘the being’, [it is only one reality that exists, which is ‘the being’, which is God]. They were deluded in that it is exactly ‘negation of two contradictories’ [Allah is ‘the being’ or ‘the lack’, He must be either ‘the being’ or ‘the lack’, He is not ‘the lack’, so He is ‘the being’]. They denied reality from creation and thought that the reality of creation is exactly the same as the Creator, and this is Sufism and the basis of mysticism... And we say that the conception (taṣawwur) of something is not the knowledge about it and its reality. They consider conception of ‘the being’ as the concept of it, and this concept [according to philosophical principles] is a type of reality, and a beam of its being. So, yes, ‘negation of two contradictories’ is the most evident truth, but not of their concepts. ‘The being’ is evident for everyone, imagining it (apprehending or conceptualizing it) does not manifest it. ‘Negation of two contradictories’ evidently echoes that the reality of ‘a being’ contradicts ‘its lack’, which means that when there is ‘a being’, there cannot be ‘the lack of it’, because the essence of ‘a being’ is to be, and it contradicts its lack. [The contradiction occurs between ‘a being’ (mujūd) and ‘its lack’ (ma’dūm), not between the concept of ‘the being’ (wujūd) and the concept of ‘the lack’ (‘adam)] ... Allah is heteronymous from ‘the being’, the knowledge, the life, and other perfection signs, in different attributes.

He is not at the same level of ‘the being’ that is contradictory to ‘the lack’...²⁴⁸

3.2.3.2 Simple Goals

Mīrzā believes that the essential cognitions in religion, such as ‘knowing God’ (*ma’rifat Allāh*), are attainable for everyone and there is no need to comprehend abstruse arguments.²⁴⁹ This epistemic view pushes his thought towards simplicity as well. The following examples show how simple his explanation of the true method of ‘knowing God’ is.

*‘what makes ‘human knowledge’ different from ‘divine knowledge’ is that in ‘divine knowledge’ finding God in his perfection, finding the light of knowledge, and seeing the reality of substances by that light is not under a human’s control, but necessarily needs His grace²⁵⁰(*tawfiq*)...²⁵¹*

3.2.3.3 Pragmatism, but not Sufism

He draws a dividing line between the easy way of purification in religion and tough mystical abstractions:

‘And one of the greatest gates of guidance in ‘knowing Allah’ and approaching Him, is to know that the Lord is close to everyone and responsive with no need for difficulties of education, or abstraction

248 Abwāb al-Hudā, pp.20-21.

249 This tendency is supported by many famous scholars such as Shiykh Shams al-dīn Muhammād b. Makkī b. Ahamd ‘Āmilī Nabīj Jazīnī famous as Shahīd-i Awwal (first martyr), Makkī al-‘Āmilī, M. (1408 AH). *al-‘Alfiyyah wa al-Nafīyyah*, Qum: Daftar-I Tablīghīt-I Islīmī ye Ḥawzih ‘Ilmīyyih, pp.38&9; Muḥāqqiq Ardibīlī, famous as Muqaddas Ardibīlī, Muqaddas ‘Ardibīlī, ‘A. (1375 SH). *Zubdah al-Bayān fī Aḥkām al-Qur’ān*. Tīhrān: Maktabah al-Murtaḍawiyah, p.438; ‘Astarābādī, M.A. and ‘Āmilī, S.N. (1383 SH). *al-Fawā’id al-Madaniyyah wa al-Shawāhid al-Makīyyah*, Qum: Daftar-I Intishārāt-I Islāmī, p.569-71; Mīrzā Abu al-Qāsim Gīlānī, famous as Mīrzā-yi Qummī, Qumī, A. (1363 SH). *Qawānīn al-‘Uṣūl*. Qum: Ḥawzih-yi ‘Ilmīyyih, v.1, p.455; and finally and more importantly Shiykh Murtaḍā Anṣārī, ‘Anṣārī, M. (1394 SH). *Farā’id al-‘Uṣūl*. Qum: Maṭbū’āt-I Dīnī, p.583, and also see ‘Anṣārī, M. (1414 AH). *al-Rasā’il al-Fiqhīyyah*. Qum: Majma’ al-Fikr al-Islāmī, pp.83-6; for a detailed survey on this issue see Maqsūdī, H.R. (2011) ‘The Authenticity of One Narrated Ḥadīth in belief’, *Journal of ‘Ulūm-I Ḥadīth*, 58, pp.5-41.

250The term *tawfiq* which translates to "the ability or opportunity to achieve success", in Islamic Theology refers to the generous act of Allah to the faithful people in order to help them succeed in delivering their duties. The opposite term of *tawfiq* is *khidhlān* which translates to forsaking. It exactly refers to the occasion in which Allah dismiss people to continue their wrong path. Neither helps them, nor sends any alarm or notification.

251 Abwāb al-Hudā, p.24.

*(detachment or tajrīd). [Instead] They should have piety, then they will approach Him, and gates of knowledge and light will open to their hearts... ’*²⁵²

What remains unanswered is that how he differentiates between the method of this ‘divine knowledge’ and mysticism? Why is the first productive and the second barren?

*‘Humans speculated that they are capable of knowing God, therefore, endeavoured to detach themselves and as a result [of abstraction], witnessed the reality of the being, while they were led astray from knowing the Owner of that reality, who bestows it, takes it, and holds dominance over it’*²⁵³

A helpful example in answering this question is the last chapter of *Abwāb al-Hudā*.²⁵⁴ There Mīrzā discusses the functionality of Prayer as the main religious method of ‘knowing God’, which is introduced by Sharī‘a and highlighted clearly within Scripture as the pillar of Islam.²⁵⁵ The way that Mīrzā decodes the secret of the pivotal role of Prayer is significant. He states that this role is rooted in the cognitive functionality of Prayer. As you can see below, he believes that Prayer is the pillar of Islam because it is the way of ‘knowing God’, and ‘knowing God’ is the ultimate purpose of Islam. That is the reason Prayer is of utmost importance in religion. Exactly what he means by ‘knowing God’ will be discussed in more detail. It is not actually ‘knowing’, because no one is capable of knowing God. It is ‘a remembrance’ of God (*tadhakkur*), which happens through Him, via Prayer. According to Mīrzā, there are two main differences between this interpretation of the functionality of Prayer and the ascetical methods of mystics:

Prayer is an authentic religious practice. It is imposed by Allah within Sharī‘a law, whereas ascetical practices (*rīyādāt al-‘Irāfiyya*) are fabricated by mystics without any scriptural foundation.

The Cognition is neither assigned to the Prayer nor to any other practice, but to God’s Free Volition. Religious practices are mere means, yet the ultimate actor is Allah.

He puts Prayer in sharp contrast to the Sufi’s ascetic practices. Pertinent parts of his chapter on Prayer read as follows:

‘The twenty fifth Chapter of the Gates of Guidance: Prayer.

252 Ibid, p.42.

253 Ibid, p.64.

254 Another good example is his treaty on Prayer called ’Isfahānī, M.M. (1392 SH). ‘*Ghāyat al-Munā wa Mi‘rāj al-Qurb-i wa al-liqā’*. Tīhrān: Āfāq. His practical approach can be dissected there in much more detail.

255 It is very famous in Islam that ‘prayer is the pillar of religion’, (al-Salāt-u ‘amūd-u al-Dīn).

*It is the ultimate purpose of the Divine Religion, and the culmination of all Divine Shari‘a law from the beginning of the book of purity (*tahārah*) to the end of the book of blood-wit (*dīyāt*). It is the end of the ends, and Allah’s greatest grace to the human being. It is the result of the prophecy and Divine vicegerency. So, we say, Allah Glory to His Majesty, who created the entire world, is intrinsically beloved by every Creation. His love is deposited as their first nature, therefore; they all search for ‘knowing Him’ (*yātlubūn-a ma‘rifatih*). Yet, they make mistakes in finding the way to know Him, as it is His authority/responsibility (*sha‘n*) to ‘introduce Himself’. There is no way to the Lord of the Throne. Thus, He granted greatest gifts to the Muslim community (*ummah*), and made the Prayer as an ascending means in order to take them to His Proximity, to let them know Him, observe Him, and to testify the trustworthiness of His Guide (Prophet). It was due to His infinite mercy and courtesy, and [also in order to] glorify His Messenger, that He made some of the Prayers compulsory... and the secret behind this is that cognition is in His hand and under His control, therefore; it is His duty to introduce Himself and appoint a time for His visit... So, He dedicated places on earth as His house and named them mosques, appointed specific times for visiting the Beloved as the Prayer times, ... and other obligations and necessaries for such a meeting like purification of the cloths and... This is the meaning of Prayer: to eliminate the veil between the hearts and the Lord.... For this reason, Prayer has become the pillar of Islam, because the final destination can be achieved by it, and all other duties are prerequisite for it ...²⁵⁶*

He expands on the values of Prayer: why the Prophet, Imams, their disciples, and respectively, all Shi‘a scholars have paid such close attention to Prayer in their life and works. Then he moves on to the opposite side and explains his systematic problem with mystical practices. (Rīyādāt al-‘irfānīyya) They are human-made, not in line with Shari‘a,

256 Abwāb al-Hudā, pp.91-3.

and as a result, deceptive and delusive. For Mīrzā, any kind of human attempt has the same obscure destiny in Divine territory.

'And nothing destroyed this pillar but 'human knowledge' and the Sufi's promotions. So, the mosques were demolished and monasteries were built, the Prayer was disgraced and [ascetic] abstractions and unveilings were invented...'²⁵⁷

Another sign of the simplicity of his system is the use of the term *tadhakkur* (remembrance, reminding, or notice). Playing a pivotal role, the term is an epistemic substitute for 'reasoning' or 'arguing' and is pervasive in his works like a spirit. The following passage implies an essence of simplicity as a natural result of shifting from the 'reasoning system' to the 'reminding system'. It is very much different, and indeed simpler, in terms of cerebral procedure, to make a reality remembered, or, to argue for it in order to prove it.

*'And the greatest indication of rightfulness in the religion of Islam is instituted by remembering the first-natured affairs (innate dispositions or al-umūr al-fitrīyyah) in order to show that the Ruler Legislator is the Wise Creator Glory to His Majesty. It is evident that human beings transmit their intentions by way of language, and it is clear by the first nature that the exterior facts (al-ḥaqā'iq al-khārijīyyah) which are self-evident, such as intellect, conception, intuition, life, knowledge, being, and power, seem like sunlight to human beings when they are in ignorance of them. The words indicate to those luminous facts without imagining or intellectualizing them. The meaning and the intention [of the words] are those self-evident exterior facts.'*²⁵⁸

Not only Allah, but also other realities like 'aql, are found by *tadhakkur* as shown in this example from chapter fourteen of *Abwāb*.

'Chapter Fourteen of the Gates of Guidance:

257 Ibid, p.91-4, the chapter is a good example of catching the practical differences between his understanding of Islamic practices and the one by mystics.

258 Ibid, pp.25-6.

*to know that this novel knowledge is founded upon reminding intellectuals about ‘aql... It is based on knowing this light [‘aql], and then, knowing dark realities by this light, not by imagination or intellectualization... the basis of the knowledge of the holy Qur’ān is to notice this light which is the proof, and verifier between the truth and untruth...’*²⁵⁹

Finally, in terms of pedagogy, his system is also simpler. When the epistemology is based on reminding, the pedagogical system should be instituted upon exemplifying:

*‘I say: because this novel theological knowledge is not from intellectual concepts, and not under its rules and principles, therefore; a teacher should give examples to help the pupil observe it’*²⁶⁰

3.2.4 Literalism

Words play a key role in Mīrzā’s thought, from different aspects. He attached a lot of importance to the Arabic language. He asserts that Arabic was revealed by God to human being in pre-worlds (*al-‘avālim al-sābiqah/‘ālam al-dhar*), and then was applied to their communication system in order to work according to this innate disposition (*al-fitrāh*). This intuitive idea inspires his linguistic approach with an essence of innate disposition which is an inalienable part of his thought.

*‘It seems that other languages are derived/deviated from Arabic (*inḥirāf min al-lughat al-‘Arabiyyah*), which is the ancient language in pre-worlds (*‘ālam al-dhar*). It was by Allah’s inspiration and utilized by this first disposition ...’*²⁶¹

259 Ibid, pp.32-4.

260 Ibid, p.74.

261 Ibid, p.26.

Şī'a *uṣūl al-fiqh* has been intermingled with Islamic philosophy, particularly since the fifth century.²⁶² Some modern jurists intimate that it is impossible to study *uṣūl al-fiqh* without knowing philosophy.^{263,264} In this context, linguistic subjects of *uṣūl al-fiqh* are more influenced by philosophy than other parts. Therefore, it is to be expected that Mīrzā's ideas collide with *uṣūlī* linguistic issues, not only in jurisprudence, as the main product of *uṣūl al-fiqh*, but also in his theology.

Linguistic subjects in *uṣūl al-fiqh* (*mabḥāth al-’alfāz*) deal with two major questions:

The first question is about 'the meaning of words', and what they have been made for (*mawdū'-un lah*). It is to find out the reality of intended meanings, whether they are 'external realities' or 'conceptual moods'.

The second question is on the 'reality of Making' (*haqīqat al-ja'*). It is to find out the relationship between words and meaning (*al-lafẓ wa al-ma'na*). It is a question about the functionality of words and their essence. It is to define how words work: are they a mirror through which concepts have been reflected? Are they connective beings? Or, mere indicators to the external realities?

Indeed, different ideas have emerged among *uṣūlis* in providing answers to these questions, yet, they are more or less affected by philosophy.²⁶⁵

In terms of the first question, as discussed earlier, Mīrzā denies 'conceptual mood' of 'the being'. He does not accept the division of 'the being' and 'quiddity', nor does he agree with the category of 'being'. Alternatively, words are merely tasked with bringing 'external realities' to our notice, not to make them, not to mirror them, and not to refer to any so-called 'conceptual mood' behind them.

*'One of the greatest signs of the rightfulness of the religion of Islam
is that it is instituted on remaindering the first nature affairs, in order
to show that the Ruler Legislator is the Wise Creator Glory to His Majesty.'*

262 For details on this see 'Amīrzādih Jīrkulī, M. (1383 SH) 'Barrisī-yi Tārīkhī-yi Ta'thīr-i 'Ulūm-i 'Aqlī dar 'Ilm-i 'Uṣūl-i Fiqh', *Journal of Fiqh wa Mabānī-yi Huqūq*, 1. Also see these article and thesis, Mūsawī, S.M. (1388 SH) 'Ta'āmul-I Mutiqābil-I Falsafih wa 'Uṣūl-I Fiqh az Manzār-I Shahīd Sayyid Bāqir Ṣadr', *Journal of Ma'rifat*, 140; 'Akhūndī, M.H. (1388 SH). *Kārburd-i qawā'id-i falsafī dar 'ilm-i uṣūl-i fiqh*. Qum: Mu'assissih-yi Amūzishī wa Pajhūhishī-yi Imam Khumiynī;

263 See the introduction of Mohsin Gharawīyān on his translation of Ṭabāṭabā'i, S.M.H. (1399 SH). *Bidāyah al-Hikmah*. Qum: 'Alī-I 'Alīmad. Gharawīyān is one the famous commentators and teachers of 'Bidāyat al-hikmat' as the main basic text book for teaching classical Islamic philosophy in modern seminaries.

264 For a comprehensive database on the changes of *uṣūl al-fiqh* in different periods of the history of this knowledge see 'Alīpūr, M. (1382 SH) 'Ma'kaz Shināsi – tārīkh-i 'Ilm-i 'Uṣūl', *Journal of Fiqh-I 'Ahl-I Biyt*, 33. For more sources, see "Purtāl-i Jāmi'-i 'Ulūm-i 'Islāmī" where you can find 70 sources on different levels and categories talking about the history of *uṣūl al-fiqh*, movement and integration of philosophy into the *uṣūl al-fiqh* available at: www.ensani.ir. The main periods are 1. institution and foundation 2. development and compiling 3. evolution 4. Emergence of Akhbārīgarī(Recession of *uṣūl al-fiqh*) 5. Re-flourishing.

265 For a survey for these ideas, see the 'encyclopaedia of *uṣūl al-fiqh*', recently published in Qum. The book is a productive and comprehensive source for learning about all *uṣūlī* terminologies. It includes categories of different ideas under each subject with jurists' names

It is evident that the realization flows among human beings by nothing but language, and it is evident by the first innate disposition (al-fitrīyyah al-'awwaliyyah) that ‘external realities’ such as ‘aql (intellect), fahm (conception), intuition (shu‘ūr), life (hāyāt), ‘ilm (knowledge), being (wujūd), and power (qudrah) are like sunlight in being neglected or noticed by human being. And they are indicated by words without imagination, or intellectualization. The meanings are ‘external realities’ per se.²⁶⁶

For the second question on the essence of words, Mīrzā maintains that words are indicators, but their ‘indicatory-role’ is not due to their inherent essence as it is established in philosophy. For philosophers, words are a mirror into which concepts have been projected. They reflect the concepts, and this reflection happens under ‘Causality’ principles. It means that this indication is embodied in their essence and they cannot evade it. Whereas, for Mīrzā, this function is given to them by God’s Will. There is nothing essential, inalienable, or inherent in his system, including the functionality of words.

Below, a profound passage is given. In this passage Mīrzā expounds on his opinion about the function of words:

‘Use of words within the Scripture flowed in accordance with innate-disposition. It is learnt by [direct indication of words to external realities] that arguing for the Glory Lord [as an external reality], or believing in Him, cannot be fulfilled by imagined concepts, nor by a mood of imagined essence (al-dhāt al--mутаšwar bi-vajh-in), as it is the basis of philosophy. To the contrary, the functionality of words is nothing but an indication to the realities which are illuminated/explored by ‘aql and ‘ilm, ... and this indication is not of the ‘Causality’ (ma lūlīyyah), or the ‘Making’ (maj’ūlīyyah) as it is the basis of intellectualism. As a result, it is needless to answer the question of ‘Causality of quiddity’ and its ‘being made’ (maj’ūlīyyat-i-hā) after contingency in ‘the being’ and essentiality of limitation. This is what we discussed about [the system] of discovering the intentions of the Qur’ān and ḥadīths according to the first nature/innate

266 Abwāb al-Hudā, pp.24-5.

*disposition. And this is the gate of the gates in the knowledge of the Qur'ān, and based on this, the gates of guidance are instituted, not on what Greeks have termed in their collected sciences...’*²⁶⁷

For him, the primary usage of the words is very important in finding their genuine meaning. Therefore, as a hermeneutical method, Mīrzā always digs into the roots of the words to derive their first-used meaning. This method empowers him to pin the blame more on philosophers and mystics for deviating from original Islamic terminologies.

'It is apparent to whoever knows history that Mysticism and Sufism were born of Greek wisdom, even the word Ṣūfīa is a Greek word...'

²⁶⁸

This method has a long continuum among his followers. Their works begin with finding the original roots of the words. This approach is clearly reflected in the introduction of *Abwāb al-Hudā*. In order to debase philosophy in all aspects, Mīrzā tries to label Greek Philosophy as an ‘old science’ and put it in contrast with the novel ‘divine knowledge’. To prove this preference, he starts by explaining the literal roots of the word ‘ḥadīth’, which literally means ‘new’. He says that the use of this word in Islam is not accidental. Actually, the usage of every word is not accidental. Mīrzā’s supports this substantial linguistic idea that there is a semantic accordance between the terminological usage of a word and its literal meaning. As a result, there is a semantic connection between the word ‘ḥadīth’, which means ‘new’, and the Prophet’s sayings. The connection is that the Prophet’s sayings are essentially ‘new’, therefore Islam chose this word for them. Consequently, companion terms are used in different forms of verb and noun, like *ḥaddathānī* (narrated to me); *ahādīth* (narrations); *muḥaddith* (narrator). Mīrzā sums up that what is descended from the sky is ‘new’, and that is why the Arabic word *hadīth* is assigned to it, a fact that might be relatively more neglected by non-Arabic speakers:

‘ḥadīth [versus] the qadīm (old), and it means new. any new knowledge or wisdom descended from the sky is ḥadīth, and for this reason it became prevalent to say: ḥaddathānī ‘an-in al-Nabī (he narrated this to me from the Prophet PBUH, and ḥaddathānī abī ‘an ābā’iyī (my father narrated this to me from his fathers). Divine knowledge was called ahādīth (plural of ḥadīth, which means narrations), and those who had that knowledge were called muḥaddithūn (narrators or traditionalists) ...’²⁶⁹

267 Ibid, pp.26-7, see also pp.30-2, he stipulates the same idea in more details.

268 Ibid, p.16.

269 Ibid, p.2.

It is interesting that he quotes a *hadīth* from Shiykh al-Mufid about the re-emergence of the Twelfth Imam (al-Mahdī), to reinforce his argument for the novelty of the Scripture. He tries to bond his linguistic argument about the derived meaning of *hadīth* to the Twelfth Imam. The *hadīth* says that the Imam will bring ‘a new’ subject when he re-emerges (jā’-a-bi amr-in jadīd)²⁷⁰, like the Prophet brought ‘a new’ subject when he introduced Islam (ka mā da‘ā Rasūl Allah ṣallā Allāh hu ‘alayh-i wa ʻalī-hī fī badw-i al-Islam ‘ilā amr-in jadīd)²⁷¹. Islam was ‘new’, and ultimately, turned to ‘a new’ phase. In this way, he steps forward to prove that ‘divine knowledge’ was new at its commencement, and has never become timeworn. Scripture is always available and if we go back to those sources we can attain ‘divine knowledge’ fresh and noble. This is the irreversible nature of the Prophet’s literature until Mahdī’s time.

3.2.5 Making a ‘hadīth Network’

Making a network of *hadīths* is common practice in seminaries. A Shī‘ī scholar (indeed within the Scriptural environment) always faces the challenge of providing sufficient textual support for his argument. It is sometimes called ‘making a *ḥādīth family*’. ²⁷² This happens between different categories of scholars, between *akhbārīs* and *uṣūlīs*, traditionalists (*muḥaddiths*), theologians (*mutakallims*), *uṣūlīs*, jurists, and even philosophers and mystics. It is a challenge over the authority of the Text²⁷³, to determine who has the right to interpret the text and how. Within the context of this textual dispute, Mīrzā accuses philosophers (and mystics) of making ‘technical mistakes’. Shī‘ī philosophers narrate *hadīth* in their works, but obviously integrate them into their specific disciplines. They even write commentaries on eminent *hadīth* collections, such as one of Mullā Ṣadrā’s on *al-Kāfi*. Mullā Ṣadrā and many other philosophers consider their commentaries as the true interpretation of Scripture.²⁷⁴ However, their understanding, Mīrzā believes, is a juxtaposition of two very different substances. Nevertheless, to win the competition, each side is obliged to find ‘a better textual support’. A ‘better textual support’ means:

Having a higher credibility or authenticity (*wuthūq* or *i‘tabār*), which is a *rijālī* issue, in terms of the narrators, the chain of the *hadīth* (*‘isnād*), and the collection from which the *hadīth* has been narrated.

Having a stronger indication, deals with contextual analysis (*dilālat*) of the text.

‘Making a network’ is the most effective element. It means collecting different convergent *ḥādīths* to form a supportive network. This is a type of *mutawātir hadīths*. *Mutawātir* is a

²⁷⁰ Ibid, p.2. For the primary source see Shiykh al-Mufid, M. *al-‘Irshād*, vol.2, pp.384. and for original text see the appendix 4.17.

²⁷¹ Ibid, p.2.

²⁷² For a productive work on this see, Mas‘ūd, ‘A. (1399 SH). *Rawish-i Fahm-i Ḥadīth*. Tīhrān: SAMT.

²⁷³ First time I heard this sentence from Paul Walker in Chicago conference ‘Reason and Esotericism in Shi‘ī Islam’, 2014 where he attended as a keynote speaker. He asserted that this is a sentence which concludes his research in the field for roughly half a century.

²⁷⁴ Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī, M. (1366 SH). *Sharḥ ‘Uṣūl al-Kāfi*. Tīhrān: Mu‘assisih-yi Muṭāli‘āt wa Tahqīqāt-I Farhangī.

well-known technical term in *rijāl*, used for a *ḥadīth* narrated by various chains of different transmitters, the frequency of transmission guaranteeing its attribution.

Mutawātir versus *wāhid* (plural *āḥād*), which is ‘one-narrated *ḥadīth*’ (*khabar al-wāhid*). There are two main categories of *mutawātir*:

Mutawātir lafdhī (verbally recurrent/ *mutawātir* in wording), means the *ḥadīth* has been frequently narrated with exact words;

Mutawātir ma’nawī (meaningfully recurrent/ *mutawātir* in meaning), means the exact meaning is recurrent in different narrations, but not necessarily with exactly the same words.²⁷⁵

It is clear that textual conflict has two steps:

(a) *isnād*, for verifying the trustworthiness of transmitters, to ensure credibility of the *ḥadīth*.

(b) *dilālah*, contextual analyses for realizing the exact meaning of the *ḥadīth*.

As a result, ‘a better textual support’, means:

(a) Collecting different types of authentic *ḥadīths*, as many as possible, to guarantee the attribution of the *ḥadīth*,

(b) extracting the exact meaning of the *ḥadīth*.

Having these technical terms as a background, it is now clear that ‘making a network’ can serve both purposes. Hence, Mīrzā’s attempt at quoting *ḥadīths*, as much as possible from different chapters of different collections, to make a textual network around his viewpoint. It is a crucial point of his doctrine to prove that his textual understanding of major theological subjects such as materiality of ego, pre-known God, innate-disposition of cognition (*ma’rifat al-fitrīyyah*), world of pre-existence, human’s incapacity in knowing God, bodily resurrection, and other fundamental creeds, is not inferred from one-narrated *ḥadīths* (*āḥād*), but conversely, from ‘a group of convergent *ḥadīths*’.

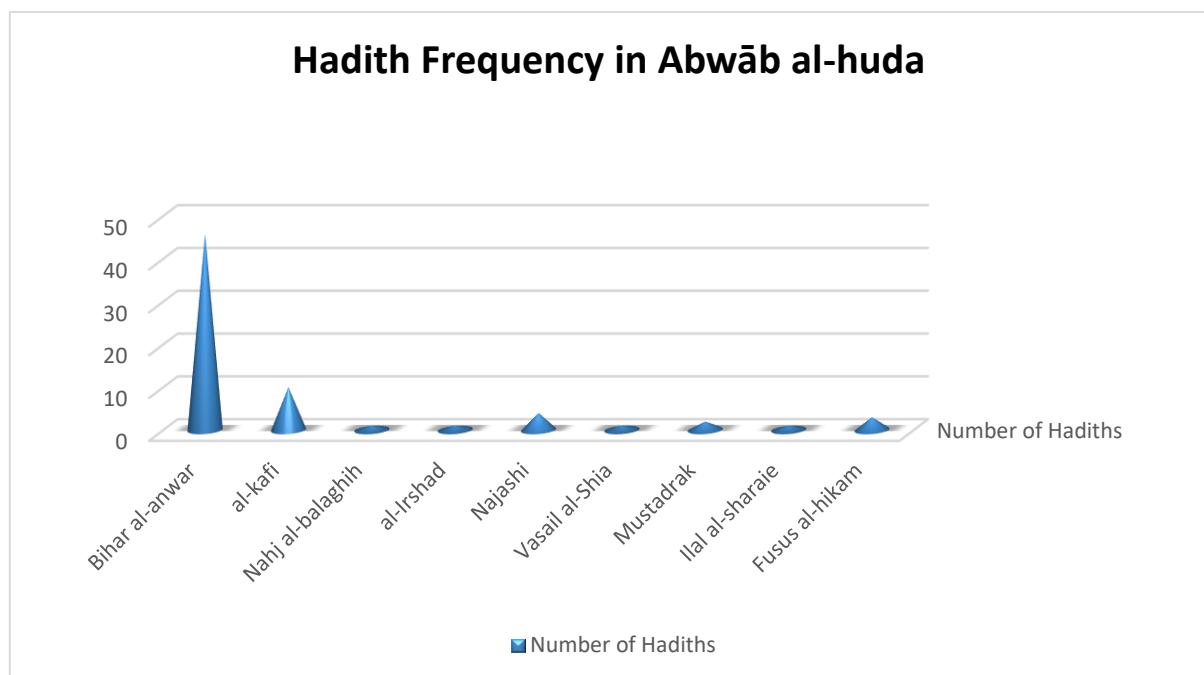
As it is discussed many times in this thesis Mīrzā’s critic on philosophers has two main parts: (1) showing self-contradictions among their basis of argumentation (2) showing the conflict between the result of philosophical argumentations and Scripture (*Qur’ān*

275 ‘*Hadīth terminology*’ or *muṣṭalaḥ al-hadīth*, was first emerged on the hands of Sunni scholars. Some of the early works authored in this subject are Rāmahurmuzī, H. (1404 AH). *al-Muḥaddith al-Fāṣil*, Dimashq: Dār al-Fikr lil-ṭibā’ah wa al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī’; Khurāsānī, M. (1409 AH). *Kifāiyah al-’Uṣūl*, Qum: Mu’assisih-yi ’Āl al-Bayt li’ihyā’ al-Turāth; Al-Baghdādī, A. (1403 AH). *al-Jāmi’ li’akhlāq al-Rāwī wa Ādāb al-Sāmī’*, Beirut: Maktabat al-Mā’arif. ; For more information on Sunni literature see al-’Asqalānī, ’A. (1415 AH). *al-Nukat ‘alā Kitāb Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ*. Rīyād: Dār al-Rāyah. Shī’ī sources emerge afterwards, the delay indicate to different systems of evaluating *ḥadīth*. Some early Shī’ī works are ‘Amīlī, Z. (1360 SH). *Al-Bidāyah fī ’Ilm al-Dirāyah*. Qum: Maḥallātī; ‘Amīlī, H. (1360 SH). *Wuṣūl al-’Akhyār ilā ’Uṣūl al-’Akhbār*. Qum: Majma’ al-Dhakhā’ir al-Islāmī; ‘al-wajīzah fī al-dirāyah’, by al-’Amīlī. For some modern works on this, see Mudīr Shānicī, K. (1378 SH). *’Ilm al-Hadīth wa Dirāyat al-Hadīth*. Qum: Daftar-I ’Intishārat-I ’Islāmī; Naṣīrī, ’A. (1385 SH). *’Ashnā’ bā’ ulūm-i ḥadīth*. Qum: Hawzah ‘ilmīyyih-yi. Fourth chapter on ‘*ḥadīth terminologies*’. This is the textbook for seminaries in year 6th.

and *ḥadīths*). To reach this standard, he narrates plenty of *ḥadīths* after constructing theological foundations, in order to make it difficult or impossible for philosophers to resist. However, this is not the case in *Abwāb al-Hudā*, because this is a compendium of his ideas. The scale of the following charts would have greatly expanded, if, for instance, his *Asās-u ma ‘ārif al-Qur’ān* was taken into consideration. For example, in *Abwāb al-Hudā*, only five *ḥadīths* have been narrated for the essence of ‘*aql*’, whereas in *Asās-u ma ‘ārif al-Qur’ān* 108 *ḥadīths* are narrated for the same subject in only 81 pages.²⁷⁶

Nevertheless, his scriptural tendency, which is the main contention in this section, can be examined even in *Abwāb al-Hudā*.

The chart below shows the frequency of *ḥadīths*, and the sources to which Mīrzā refers in *Abwāb al-Hudā*.



This information is further analyzed in the next table. It shows exactly how many *ḥadīths* have been narrated in each subject, and from which sources. This enables us to examine Mīrzā’s *rijālī* method, to analyse his sources, and his method in assessing the credibility of narrations in the next stage. It is also necessary to pay careful attention to the narrations from *Bihār al-anwār* as a secondary source. Therefore, original sources from which *Bihār* is narrating are mentioned in this table.

276 ’Isfahānī, M.M. (1397 SH). *Ma ‘ārif al-Qur’ān*, Tīhrān: Āfāq, v.1, pp.7-89.

Page	Subject	Source	Number
15-6	The history of Sufism and mysticism	<i>Bihār al-anwār</i> (it is narrated from Fakhr Rāzī)	1
16-7	Imams Condemns Sufism and Mysticisms	(3)from Mustadrak; Tawḥīd; Tafasī al-‘Askarī;	6
65-6	Deviation of Sufis in dancing , detachment, and mystical audition	Nahj al-balāghah; Ṣahīfah Sajjādīyyah	2
18	Shī‘ī Scholars who authored critiques on Philosophy and Mysticism	(2) <i>Kashshī</i> (they are seemingly from <i>Najāshī</i>); introduction of <i>Bihār al-anwār</i> by <i>Majlisī</i>	3
24 62	God is known only by God	al-Kāfi al-Kāfi	1 1
28	Words are indicators to the ‘external realities’	(2)al-Kāfi; 2 <i>Bihār al-anwār</i> (<i>Bihār</i> quotes from ‘Uyūn and al-Tawḥīd)	3
35	The essence and functionality of ‘ <i>aql</i> ’	<i>Bihār al-anwār</i> ; ‘Ilal al-Sharā‘; 2 from al-Kāfi; <i>Bihār</i> (narrates from <i>Ikhtisāṣ</i>)	5
39	The relationship between the intellect and Prophet	al-Kāfi; Khiṣāl; <i>Bihār</i> (from Nahj al-balāghah)	
54	The reality of being	He cites the <i>ḥadīth</i> from Mufaddal, but it is not yet found in <i>hadīths</i> collections	1
59	Incapacity of human to know God,	al-Kāfi	1

63 82-3	The unique attributes of God, His different attributes How God should be described?	Mīṣbāh al-Kaf’amī al-Kāfi Unspecified source ‘Ilal al-Sharāyi’	5
70	The essence of knowledge, it cannot be known	Bihār (narrates from al-Kāfi); al-Kāfi; Tawhīd	3
73-81	Allah’s Providence	Najh al-balāghah Şāfi Commentary (3)al-Tawhīd (4)’Ihtijāj ’Ikhtisāṣ (4)Bihār (from al-Kāfi; al-Tawhīd, Rawdah al-wā’izīn, and other unspecified sources) al-Kāfi	15
84	The creation, knowledge of God, and His Providence, meaning of ‘Book of fate’, and Qalam of predestination	‘Ilal al-Sharāyi’ ‘Ayyāshī Commentary Ma’ānī al-akhbār	3

As mentioned above, textual debates have two parts. Even if the problem of *’isnād* is overlooked, the problem of *dirāyah*²⁷⁷ persists. This is the reason why textual conflict is ceaseless. Texts are often inconsistent or even contradictory. This is a common trend even among scholars of one category, such as jurists, *akhbārīs*, *uṣūlīs*, traditionalists, theologians, and commentators. However, the hermeneutical debates between different categories such as *akhbārīs* and *uṣūlīs*, philosophers and scripturalists, mystics and literalists, are technical, or in other words, methodical. A very recent example of this

277 For a very recent and fully detailed work on the effects of *dirāyah* and *’isnād* see Huseynī Shīrāzī, S.A. (1398 SH) *I’tibār Sanjī-yi Ahādīth-i Shi’i*. Tahrān: Samt.

contrast happens between Sajjad Rizvi, from the Şadrā'īyan School²⁷⁸, and Muhammed Bīyābānī, from Mīrzā Mahdī's camp.²⁷⁹ They both examine a well-known debate between the Eighth Shī'a Imam, 'Alī Ibn Mūsā al-Riḍā, and Sulaymān Marwzī, a famous theologian and philosopher of the time. The debate is over God's Attributes, Providence, and Will. Mīrzā, also, refers to this significant debate in *Abwāb* – the clandestine scenario of the Abbasid Caliph, Ma'mūn, inviting Sulaymān in order to disgrace the Imam, a plot that was finally foiled by the Imam's response.²⁸⁰ Rizvi focuses on the use of philosophical terms in the Imam's arguments. Responding to Mīrzā's followers, he argues that this is a clear sign of the legitimacy of using a philosophical framework in *kalāmī* discourses. Conversely, Bīyābānī highlights the content of the Imam's arguments, which is all against Sulaymān's opinions. Bīyābānī responds by saying that the usage of philosophical terms is a terminological technique, which is necessary when arguing with other groups.

Rizvi and Bīyābānī's different approaches to one Immami text clearly show how a Muslim philosopher wants to marry philosophical bases with the text, and how a scripturalist tries to stand far from it. How a philosopher concrues a narration as it is a philosophical argumentation itself, in spite of a scriptuaralist who tries to justify the usage of philosophical terms by Imam. For a scripturalist the content of Imams' narrations is against philosophy whereas for a Muslim philosopher philosophy is a logical structure from which no one can escape even the Imam.

3.2.6 *Rijālī* Approach

As can be extrapolated from the table above, Mīrzā cites *hadīths* from various collections without making any remarks about the credibility of their narrators. He does not even quote the chain of *hadīths*. Occasionally he mentions the first narrator, who is positioned at the beginning of the chain of *hadīth* and narrates directly from the Prophet or Imam. As a result, there is no *rijālī* evaluation in his works. Although, Mīrzā does not refer to any specific *rijālī* method in his introductions, his complete reliance on early Shī'a sources such as *al-kāfi*, *al-Tawḥīd*, 'Uyūn-u akbār al-Riḍā, 'Ilal al-Sharāyi', *al-Khiṣāl*, *al-Mahāsin*, *Nahj-u al-balāghah*, is an evident sign of his approach. He generally trusts the main Shī'a *hadīthī* sources. What makes his *rijālī* method more obvious is that he often quotes from *Bihār al-anwār*, which is not an original source, but rather a *hadīth* encyclopedia by Majlisī in the late Ṣafawīd dynasty. Original sources in Bihār, to which

278 Şadrā'īyan School refers to the most famous and influential philosophcical trend in the modern iranian philosophy. The school owes his fame to his founder Mullā Şadrā, the most prominent Iranian-Islamic Philosopher (dead 1571). The main idea of Mullā Şadrā in philosophy which is called Hikmat-i Mute'ālī (Transcendent Wisdom) is fully influenced by theoretical mysticism ('īrfān-i Nazārī) of ibn-i 'arabī it is a mixture of holistic philosophy, theoretical mysticism and Islamic theology which sees the whole being including the Creator and Creatures united in one concept.

279 Rizvi, Sajjad H. (2012) "Only the Imam Knows Best" The Maktab-e Tafkīk's Attack on the Legitimacy of Philosophy in Iran', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 22; Bīyābānī 'Uskū'ī, M. (1392 SH) 'Niāhī Gudharābar 'Ilm Bilā Ma'lūm dar 'Aḥādīth 'Imām Riḍā', *Journal of Safinah*, 39.

280 See *Abwāb al-Hudā*, p.149.

Mīrzā makes reference, vary between different types. He refers to sources with less authenticity, such as *Tafsīr al-Imam al-Hasan al-’Askarī*, *Hādīqat al-Shī’ā*, or *Rawdat al-wā’izīn*. There are also many references to complementary sources (*mustadrak*) such as *Mustadrak al-Wasā’il*.²⁸¹ Overall, he is more concerned with shaping a ‘*hadīth* network’ from all available sources.

This method is known as ‘*muthūq al-ṣudūr*’²⁸², literally, trustworthy attribution. There are two main approaches in ‘ilm al-rijāl’ for assessing the trustworthiness of a *hadīth* attribution:

muthūq al-ṣudūr (trustworthy attribution)

khabar al-thiqah (trustworthy narrator)

For those with a *khabar al-thiqah* tendency, the confidence relies upon examining the credibility of all narrators in the chain of *isnād*, whereas the *muthūq al-ṣudūr* approach is more concerned with true attribution of the *hadīth*, no matter how it is obtained. It is clear that this confidence can be achieved by other means, namely internal indications (*qarā’ in al-matnīyyah*), such as contextual accordance with other valid *ḥadīths* in a network/family of *ḥadīths*; external indications, such as historical evidences (*qarā’ in al-hāfiyyah*); and also, truthfulness of the compiler of the book or treaty in which the *ḥadīth* is narrated.

It is interesting that *akhbārīs* were almost *muthūq al-ṣudūrī*, but the method is not confined to them. Mullā Ṣadrā, the great philosopher, for instance, had the same method in his *ḥadīthī* commentary of *al-Kāfi*. This implies that the problem is not the narration (*riwāyah*), but the conception and indication (*dirāyah*). Mullā Ṣadrā believed in the same *ḥadīths* as Mīrzā, but construed them far differently.

‘*Muthūq al-ṣudūr*’ was a mainstream trend among early Shī’ī scholars, who were closer to the Imams’ time, and obviously had more access to the different indications. Shiyykh al-Mufid²⁸³, for instance, believed that all Shī’ā *ḥadīths* are surrounded by indications (*mahfūf bi al-qarā’ in*), and the terms ‘one-narrated *ḥadīth*’ (*khabar al-wāhid*)²⁸⁴, or, *Shādh* (exceptional *ḥadīth*) should be assigned to the Sunni’s heritage. They are incompatible with Shī’ā sources.²⁸⁵ Eventually, for those scholars who came later, *ḥadīth* was left bereft of external indications, and conversely, surrounded by several internal perplexities and hermeneutical interpretations. Therefore, this impelled the Shī’ā scholars to shift their *rijālī* method from *muthūq al-ṣudūr* to *khabar al-thiqah*. A turning point in the shifting paradigm happened with Ahmad ibn Mūsā ibn Ṭāwūs al-Hillī, the teacher of many famous scholars like ‘Allāmih Hillī, in the 7th/13th century. He, for the first time, re-

281 Ibid, pp.17&36.

282 ’Astarābādī, M.A. and ’Āmilī, S.N. (1383 SH). *al-Fawā’id al-Madanīyyah wa al-Shawāhid al-Makīyyah*, Qum: Daftar-I Intishārāt-I Islāmī.

283 Khuhudāyārī, ’A.N. (1389. SA) ‘Rawish-hā wa Mi’yā-hā-yi Naqd-I Ḥadīth dar ’Āthār-I Shiyykh-I Mufid’, *Journal of ’Ulūm-I Ḥadīth*, 56, pp.59-84; Khānjānī, Q. (1382 AH) ‘Rawish-I Pajhūhishī-yi Shiyykh-I Mufid dar Tārīkh-I Mu’arrrefī wa Naqd’, *Journal of Pajhūhish wa Hawzih*, 13 & 14, pp.161-173.

284 Gleave, R. (2002) ‘Modern Shi’i Discussions of *khabar al-wāhid*: Sadr, Khumayni and Khu’l’, *Journal of Oriente Moderno*, 21. pp.189-205.

285 For a detailed article for this, see Maqṣūdī, H.R. (2011) ‘The Authenticity of One Narrated Ḥadīth in belief’, *Journal of ’Ulūm-I Ḥadīth*, 58. pp.5-41.

categorized Shī‘ī *hadīths* and put them into four main types, according to the Sunnī system. Before that time, a Shī‘ī *hadīth* had only two categories of *ṣahīḥ* (correct/true/credible), and *da‘īf* (weak, false, unauthentic).²⁸⁶ Besides the Sunnī’s influence, it is also worthy of mention that the expansion of *uṣūl al-fiqh*, which was gradually integrated with Islamic philosophy, played a crucial role in this reformation. The more jurists became philosophers, the more their *uṣūl al-fiqh* and *rijālī* ideas were affected by philosophical regulations. As for Great Ayatollah Abu al-Qāsim al-Khu‘ī, some of his prominent pupils believed that his tough *rijālī* ideas were influenced by his *uṣūlī* mind. The reality is that an answer to a *rijālī* question is not provided in the same way as to an *uṣūlī* or philosophical one. *Rijāl* follows a quite different paradigm from one of philosophy, or *uṣūl*. The debate over the priority of *rijālī* methods is still actively debated by seminary scholars.²⁸⁷

In this context, Mīrzā’s modulation of the functionality of ‘*aql*’ in *rijāl* can be identified. This modulation systematically resonates in his theology, as well as *uṣūl al-fiqh* (which will be discussed later). For Mīrzā, ‘*aql*’ is not as dominant as it is for philosophers and *uṣūlīs*, who are definitely influenced by it. A philosopher, epistemologically, is in need of a logical reasoning to trust someone as a true narrator. This mathematical epistemology has resulted in the emergence of a mainstream *rijālī* assessment of the testimony of two just people (*shahādat al-‘adlāyn*). These two are usually *rijālī* scholars, like Kashshī or Najāshī, who either invalidate or authenticate transmitters of *hadīths* (*ruwāt*) in their *rijālī* works. Mīrzā, in accordance with *akhbārīs*, and all late Shī‘ī scholars, gained the confidence to trust narrators in a much more practical way (‘*urfī*). My understanding is that he thinks people never use logical reasoning for trusting each other, including transmitters of *hadīths*. Sharia law, for the same reason, has endorsed the current customary practice of religious people (‘*urf al-mutasharri‘ah*) in trusting each other, but has not laid down new legislation for a transformation system.²⁸⁸ The practical problem of the usage of philosophy in *uṣūl al-fiqh* emerges here. The normal common behaviour of people who have normal daily life should be changed by specific logical system. These two methods of living are ‘*uqalā‘ī*’ and ‘*aqlī*’. The term ‘*uqalā‘ī*’ refers to the normal life of people, the measure that they take issues serious, the way they trust each other, and the way that they reject or accept something, but if we integrate logical firm system into the life then we shouldn’t anticipate to have a ‘*urfī*’ normal life. What Mīrzā says is that *shari‘a* law is based on normal life of people and God by encouraging them to use ‘*aql*’

286 It is reflected in almost all *rijālī* sources. See, Subhānī Tabrīzī, J. (1369 SH). *Kulliyāt fī ‘Ilm al-Rijāl*, Qum: Hawzih ‘Ilmīyyih Markaz-I Mudīriyyat; Huseynī Shīrāzī, S.A. (1398 SH) ‘I‘tibār Sanjī-yi Ahādīth-i Shi‘ī. Tīhrān: Samt.

287 For this animate debate see Ayatollah Shubiyrī Zanjānī’s method in Huseynī Shīrāzī, S.A. (1398 SH) ‘I‘tibār Sanjī-yi Ahādīth-i Shi‘ī. Tīhrān: Samt.

288 This debate is clearly reflected in *rijālī* discussions between *uṣūlīs*, also in many *uṣūlī* issues where the role of ‘common practice’ (‘*urf*’) and its relationship with ‘*aql*’ is investigated. For this see ‘Alīdūst, ‘A. (1394 SH). *Fiqh wa ‘Urf*. Tīhrān: Pajhūhishgāh-I Farhang wa ‘Andīshih-yi ’Islāmī.

didn't intend to use philosophical meticulous argumentation, but normal '*uqalā'ī*' system.²⁸⁹

3.2.7 Authority of Explicit Meaning (*ḥujjīyat al-żawāhir*)

Authority over the explicit meaning of Qur'ānīc verses (*ḥujjīyat żawāhir al-Qur'ān*) forms one of the main hermeneutical disputes between *akhbārīs* and *uṣūlīs*. This is not a challenge only between these two rivals: there has never been unanimity on this issue, even among *uṣūlī* scholars.

There is no doubt among Muslims that the Qur'ān has different layers (*baṭn*), up to seven. Some *ḥadīths* even suggest that the number of these layers goes up to seventeen, as each layer has another layer. It is generally accepted that Imams holds the ascetic knowledge of the Qur'ān,²⁹⁰ but the problem is not about the existence of these ascetic layers, but on the exact borders of them. Is their knowledge confined to ascetic interpretations, or is it extended to the explicit meaning of the verses as well? Can we understand the Qur'ān without *ḥadīth*? In other words, do these *ḥadīths* dig only into the ascetic layers of the verses and leave the explicit meaning conceivable for ordinary people? Or, are they clarifying exactly what we have wrongly thought to be explicit and providing a clear meaning of them?

For those with mystical tendencies, other people, also, could reach the level of ascetic knowledge, including the explicit understanding of it. For mainstream *uṣūlīs*, however, verses are clear only after an exhausted search of *ḥadīths*. It means that if there is a *ḥadīth* explaining a verse, it is actually clarifying its true meaning; so that if, after a comprehensive search, no *ḥadīth* is found under that verse, the explicit meaning of the verse remains authentic and effective. This method is called 'coalitional authority', or *ḥujjīyat al-jam'iyyah*²⁹¹. This is one of the six main characteristics of *akhbārīs* which separate them from *uṣūlīs*.²⁹² For *akhbārīs* it is not accepted to read and understanding Qur'ān without *ḥadīth* clarification. As a result, verses without clarifying *ḥadīths* under them remain sacred and unknown. Indeed, neither *uṣūlīs* or *akhbārīs* stand at the same level in this issue. This has been always a distinctive methodological point. It is clear to me that it is an attempt by *uṣūlīs* to serve both sides; (a) *ḥadīths* and verses that urge people to think about the Qur'ān and try to understand it, and (b) those who confine the

289 It can be seen in Mīrzā Mahdī's different books: 'Iṣfahānī, M.M. (1398 SH). *Al-Qurān wa al-Furqān fī Wajhi l-Jāz al-Qurān al-Majīd l-Jāznāmīh*, Qum: Mu'assisih-yi Ma'ārif-I 'Ahl al-Bayt. pp.291-294; 'Iṣfahānī, M.M. (1387 SH). *Miṣbāḥ al-Hudā bi Dāmīmīh-yi l-Jāz al-Qur'ān*. Qum: Būstān-I Kitāb, p.507; 'Iṣfahānī, M.M. (1398 SH). *al-Uṣūl al-Wāsiṭ Miṣbāḥ al-Hudā*. Tīhrān: Āfāq. pp.211-213; 'Iṣfahānī, M.M. (1396 SH). *al-'Iftā' wa al-Taqlīd*, Qum: Mu'assisih-yi Ma'ārif-I 'Ahl al-Bayt. p.233.

290 Indeed, this is not accepted by those with mystical tendencies, as they have their own ascetic interpretations of the Qur'ān which in many cases opposes the Imams' explanations, at least in their literal meaning.

291 Anṣārī, M. (1398 SH). *Farā'id al-Uṣūl*, Qum: Majma' al-Fikr al-'Islāmī, v.1; Banī Hashimī, S.M. (1397 SH) 'Hujjīyat-i Żawāhir-i Qur'ān-I Karīm az Naẓar-i Mīrzā Mahdī 'Iṣfahānī', *Journal of Safīnīh*, 59.

292 These key differences are listed in the section 3.2.

Qur'ān's knowledge to the heart of the Imam. A comprehensive collection of different ideas on this issue can be found in the classical seminary work of Shiykh Murtadā al-Anṣārī called *farā'id al-uṣūl*, famous as *rasā'il*.²⁹³ The Introduction of *tafsīr al-mīzān* by 'Allāmih Ṭabāṭabā'ī is another masterpiece in which the author controversially argues for the authority of the Qur'ān to be head and shoulders above the authority of *ḥadīth*. For 'Allāmih Ṭabāṭabā'ī, and many of his later followers, it is *ḥadīth* that should be checked through the Qur'ān, not vice versa.

For *akhbārīs*,²⁹⁴ on the other hand, the Qur'ān is not a self-study book. Understanding the meaning of the Qur'ān is almost impossible without explicit instructions given by the Prophet or Imam. They narrate numerous *ḥadīths* in which independent understanding of the Qur'ān is strictly prohibited by Imams. It is mentioned by some of them that whoever interprets the Qur'ān based on his personal conception is doomed, and nothing could be farther from the Qur'ān than human intellect.²⁹⁵ However, the exact meaning of these narrations has always been the object of various interpretations. According to *akhbārīs*, God's words are not similar to human ones. The Book of the Lord, consequently, does not look like a human source. The reason behind this difference is that people are not assigned to be the first addressees of the Qur'ān Prophet, and respectively his true successors, are those who have been given its true knowledge. They know the exclusive meaning of each verse through their divine knowledge. This discloses the real meaning of the term 'Orator of Qur'ān' (*Qur'ān-i al-nāṭq*) which is held in high esteem in Imamate doctrine. This fundamental challenge is one of the best hermeneutical arguments which sheds light on the role of intellect in Islamic texture. It is the most advantageous sphere where a ceaseless debate over the relationship between intellect ('*aql*) and revelation (*vahy*) can be scrutinized.

Having discussed the roots of the contrast, Mīrzā Mahdī's Qur'ānīc approach seems easier to grasp. His works are packed with verses of the Qur'ān which are used here and there in favour of his arguments. The prevalence of this usage is such that it elaborately enhances the structure of his works, taking them far from the *akhbārī* format which generally avoid dependent understanding of Qur'ānīc verses. However, what has more meaning is his method of applying those verses. Mīrzā quotes many verses under each subject to support his specific understanding of them. This often happens without quoting any *ḥadīth*, which means that he believes, at least in practice, in independent understanding of the verses of the Qur'ān.²⁹⁶ More precisely, even when a *ḥadīthī*, or a set of *ḥadīthīs* (a group of convergent *ḥadīths* named as a *ḥadīth* family) is narrated under a subject, alongside verses, in order to be used in an argument, the *ḥadīths* are not

293 For this see 'Anṣārī, M. (1398 SH). *Farā'id al-Uṣūl*, Qum: Majma' al-Fikr al-'Islāmī, a chapter on the authenticity of explicit meaning of Qur'ān.

294 Bihishtī, 'I. (1391 SH). *'Akhbārīgarī*, Qum: Dār al-Ḥadīth.

295 This refers to a bunch of narrations gathered under the label of '*tafsīr-i bi ra'y*', meaning based on personal commentaries. In these narrations the conception of the Qur'ān is described far from the intellect of people. For a good collective example see related chapters in Majlisī, M. (1368 SH). *Bihār al-Anwār*, Beirut: Dār 'Iḥyā' al-turāth al-'Arabī. where the same concept from different sources is gathered and discussed.

296 This method can be seen in all his voluminous works such as 'Isfahānī, M.M. (1397 SH). *Ma'ārif al-Qur'ān*, Tīhrān: Āfāq.

directly related to the verse, and are not specifically narrated under it. This sends a clear message that understanding both *hadīth* and the Qur’ān stand at the same level for Mīrzā Mahdī.

A very good example of his method can be found in his arguments for the ‘essence of ego’. This issue is highly important as it is directly related to the fundamental question about the relationship between ‘creature and creator’. Mīrzā speaks about this issue as the greatest gate of passage (*min a’zam-i Abwāb-i al-Hudā*).²⁹⁷ He recognizes ‘self-ego’ or ‘cognition of the soul’ (*ma’rifah al-nafs*) as the key to the gate of passage (*miftāh-u Abwāb-i al-Hudā*).²⁹⁸ He highlights that this new reasoning (*ma’rifah al-jadidah*), which has descended from the sky, contrasts with the old Hellenistic Human Knowledge, born of the materiality of thought.²⁹⁹ In stark contrast with all teachings of Islamic Philosophy, he rejects the incorporeity of the soul ‘*tajarrud al-rūh*’. According to his understanding of the Scriptures, the soul of a human being is a material substance, completely dependent, but ontologically separate from Allah. Ego is dark and nothing, *per se*. This dark substance, however, can be illuminated by luminous creations such as knowledge and intellect, but it never becomes united with them. To him, a human being is given the light of intellect and knowledge but has no personal power to obtain them. Focusing on the essence of ego, he draws an abyss between the ‘being of creator’, and the ‘being of creature’.

Reading the passage from *Abwāb* below I try to focus on his method to see how he infers his interpretation about ego from Scripture.

‘Human ego to which his/her reality refers, is the essence entitled ‘I’ (‘ana). It is a shadowy creature, and when it is imagined it is called ‘simulacrum’ (shabah). When it is given life and consciousness it is called ‘spirit’ (rūh), and when it is incarnated it is called ‘human’ (‘insān). And this reality, as it is noted (*tadhakkur*) by a Sharia Legislator, is an independent substance, essentially dark (*muzlim al-dhāt*)...and all luminous realities are outside it. These luminous realities are the possessions of the Allāh and outside human power, beyond access, let alone Allah’s cognition...’³⁰⁰

It is highly important in learning Mīrzā’s scriptural method to grasp that according to his understanding, cognition of ego is not achieved by Scripture, but it is rather a personal experience. Scripture, in this context, plays a mere reminder (notifying) role (*tadhakkur*). It means that the essence of ego is perceived individually. Considerable usage of the term *vijdān*, derived from the root *vajada* (discovering or finding), in his works, hinges on this process. It is clear in the passage that the human being plays an absolutely passive role. Mīrzā calls this level of *tadhakkur*, in which ego finds its characteristics, the first step of emerging from the darkness of ignorance into the very first level of knowledge and cognition.

As mentioned above, Mīrzā cites more than thirty verses to support his opinion about the mortality and materiality of ego (*jismānīyyat al-rūh*).

297 *Abwāb al-Hudā*, p.101.

298 Ibid.

299 Ibid.

300 Ibid.

Reading these verses, the following notes should be borne in mind:

He does not follow the *akhbārī* method of refusing usage of the explicit meaning of the verses (*zāhir*) without looking at the Imams' explanations of them.

These verses do not overtly move in the direction he tries to present. Actually, they can be interpreted in many different ways, as they have been by other commentators. This is because he, technically, uses specific meaning of the verses (*zāhir*), but there is always a variety of interpretations about them. For instance, in case of the verses given below, they are quoted consecutively and are not followed by any specific explanation or further exegesis from the Imams' narrations.

Please also note that I have deliberately quoted the complete phrase of the verse in cases where Mīrzā had chosen a part of the verse according to his specific intention. I wanted to give a wider context of the verse in order to make easier for the reader to assess Mīrzā's interpretation.

These verses are from a variety chapters of the Qur'ān and therefore belong to diverse contexts.

This method of quoting verses at the beginning of each chapter prevails in almost all Mīrzā's works.

After quoting verses, he narrates a considerable number of *hadīths* (a family group of *hadīth*), but, yet again, these *hadīths* are not necessarily narrated under those verses. It means that although there are many *hadīths* recounted alongside a verse, the verse remains independent in transferring its meaning.

These *hadīths* are collected from various chapters of *hadīth* collections, even *fiqhī* ones. Indeed, they help him to confirm his specific understanding of the essence of ego from verses.

These are the verses which he quotes³⁰¹:

(This is) a Scripture which We have revealed unto thee (Muhammad) that thereby thou mayst bring forth mankind from darkness unto light, by the permission of their Lord, unto the path of the Mighty, the Owner of Praise.³⁰²

Allah is the Protecting Guardian of those who believe. He brings them out of darkness into light. [As for those who disbelieve, their patrons are false deities. They bring them out of light into darkness. Such are rightful owners of the Fire. They will abide therein].³⁰³

301 translations are from Quru'ān explorer site: <http://www.quranexplorer.com>.

302 Al-Qurān, Chapter Ibrāhīm, Verse 1. And for original text see the appendix 1.1.

303 Al-Qurān, Chapter Al-Baqarah, Verse 257. And for original text see the appendix 1.2.

Now hath come unto you light from Allah and plain Scripture, (15) Whereby Allah guideth him who seeketh His good pleasure unto paths of peace. He bringeth them out of darkness unto light by His decree, and guideth them unto a straight path. ³⁰⁴

ye who believe! Remember Allah with much remembrance. (41) And glorify Him early and late. (42) He it is Who blesses you, and His angels (bless you), that He may bring you forth from darkness unto light; and He is Merciful to the believers. (43) Their salutation on the day when they shall meet Him will be: Peace. And He hath prepared for them a goodly recompense. (44)³⁰⁵

He it is Who sends down clear revelations unto His slave, that He may bring you forth from darkness unto light; and lo! For you, Allah is Full of Pity, Merciful. (9)³⁰⁶

ye who believe! Be mindful of your duty to Allah and put faith in His messenger. He will give you twofold of His mercy and will appoint for you a light wherein ye shall walk, and will forgive you. [Allah is Forgiving, Merciful].³⁰⁷

Is he who was dead and We have raised him unto life, and set for him a light wherein he walks among men, as him whose similitude is in utter darkness whence he cannot emerge? Thus is their conduct made fair-seeming for the disbelievers ³⁰⁸

Is he whose bosom Allah hath expanded for the surrender (unto Him), so that he follows a light from his Lord, (as he who disbelieves)? Then woe unto those whose hearts are hardened against remembrance of Allah. Such are in plain error.³⁰⁹

[Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The similitude of His light is as a niche wherein is a lamp. The lamp is in a glass. The glass is as it were a shining star. (This lamp is) kindled from a blessed tree, an olive neither of the East nor of the West, whose oil would almost glow forth (of itself) though no fire touched it. Light upon light]. Allah

304 Al-Quran, Chapter Al-Mā`idih, Verse16. And for original text see the appendix 1.3.

305 Al-Quran, Chapter Al-Aḥzāb, Verse 41. And for original text see the appendix 1.4.

306 Al-Quran, Chapter Al-Hadīd, Verse 9. And for original text see the appendix 1.5.

307 Al-Quran, Chapter Al-Hadīd, Verse 28. And for original text see the appendix 1.6.

308 Al-Quran, Chapter Al-An`ām, Verse 122. And for original text see the appendix 1.7.

309 Al-Quran, Chapter Az-Zumar, Verse 22. And for original text see the appendix 1.8.

guides unto His light whom He will. [And Allah sets forth for mankind similitudes, for Allah is Knower of all things].³¹⁰

Allah receives (men's) souls at the time of their death, and that (soul) which dies not (yet) in its sleep. He keeps that (soul) for which He hath ordained death and dismisses the rest till an appointed term. [Lo! herein verily are portents for people who take thought].³¹¹

...And he for whom Allah hath not appointed light, for him there is no light.³¹²

So believe in Allah and His messenger and the light which We have revealed. And Allah is Informed of what ye do.³¹³

We verily sent Moses with Our revelations, saying: Bring thy people forth from darkness unto light. And remind them of the days of Allah.³¹⁴

Lo! We did reveal the Torah, wherein is guidance and a light, by which the prophets [who surrendered (unto Allah) judged the Jews, and the rabbis and the priests (judged) by such of Allah's Scripture as they were bidden to observe, and thereunto were they witnesses. So fear not mankind, but fear Me. And barter not My revelations for a little gain. Whoso judges not by that which Allah hath revealed: such are disbelievers].³¹⁵

He said: Our Lord is He Who gave unto everything its nature, then guided it aright³¹⁶

And We caused Jesus, son of Mary, to follow in their footsteps, confirming that which was (revealed) before him in the Torah, and We bestowed on him the Gospel wherein is

310 Al-Quran, Chapter An-Nūr, Verse 35. And for original text see the appendix 1.9.

311 Al-Quran, Chapter Az-Zumar, Verse 42. And for original text see the appendix 1.10.

312 Al-Quran, Chapter An-Nūr, Verse 40. And for original text see the appendix 1.11.

313 Al-Quran, Chapter At-Taghābun, Verse 8. And for original text see the appendix 1.12.

314 Al-Quran, Chapter Ibrāhīm, Verse 5. And for original text see the appendix 1.13.

315 Al-Quran, Chapter Al-Mā'idih, Verse 44. And for original text see the appendix 1.14.

316 Al-Quran, Chapter Tāhā, Verse 50. And for original text see the appendix 1.15.

guidance and a light, confirming that which was (revealed) before it in the Torah - a guidance and an admonition unto those who ward off (evil).³¹⁷

Those who follow the messenger, the Prophet who can neither read nor write, [whom they will find described in the Torah and the Gospel (which are) with them. He will enjoin on them that which is right and forbid them that which is wrong. He will make lawful for them all good things and prohibit for them only the foul; and he will relieve them of their burden and the fetters that they used to wear.] Then those who believe in him, and honour him, and help him, and follow the light which is sent down with him: they are the successful.³¹⁸

[Thou wilt not find folk who believe in Allah and the Last Day loving those who oppose Allah and His messenger, even though they be their fathers or their sons or their brethren or their clan]. As for such, He hath written faith upon their hearts and hath strengthened them with a Spirit from Him, [and He will bring them into Gardens underneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide. Allah is well pleased with them, and they are well pleased with Him. They are Allah's party. Lo! Is it not Allah's party who are the successful]?³¹⁹

And know that the messenger of Allah is among you. If he were to obey you in much of the government, ye would surely be in trouble; but Allah has endeared the faith to you and has beautified it in your hearts, and hath made disbelief and lewdness and rebellion hateful unto you. Such are they who are the rightly guided.³²⁰

Hast thou not seen how thy Lord hath spread the shade - And if He willed He could have made it still - then We have made the sun its pilot; (45) Then We withdraw it unto Us, a gradual withdrawal?³²¹

[They will ask thee concerning the Spirit. Say: The Spirit is by command of my Lord], and of knowledge ye have been vouchsafed but little.³²²

317 Al-Quran, Chapter Al-Mā`idih, Verse 46. And for original text see the appendix 1.16.

318 Al-Quran, Chapter Al-A`rāf, Verse 157. And for original text see the appendix 1.17.

319 Al-Quran, Chapter Al-Mujādilah, Verse 22. And for original text see the appendix 1.18.

320 Al-Quran, Chapter Al-Hujurāt, Verse 7. And for original text see the appendix 1.19.

321 Al-Quran, Chapter Al-Furqān, Verse 45. And for original text see the appendix 1.20.

322 Al-Quran, Chapter Al-`Isrā`, Verse 85. And for original text see the appendix 1.21.

Our Lord! Cause not our hearts to stray after Thou hast guided us, and bestow upon us mercy from Thy Presence. Lo! Thou, only Thou, art the Bestower.³²³

[No calamity befalls save by Allah's leave]. And whosoever believeth in Allah, He guides his heart. [And Allah is Knower of all things].³²⁴

And He taught Adam all the names, [then showed them to the angels, saying: Inform Me of the names of these, if ye are truthful.].³²⁵

Teaches man that which he knew not.³²⁶

[And Allah creates you, then causes you to die], and among you is he who is brought back to the most abject stage of life, so that he knows nothing after (having had) knowledge. [Lo! Allah is Knower, Powerful].³²⁷

Why, then, when (the soul) cometh up to the throat (of the dying).³²⁸

Think not of those, who are slain in the way of Allah, as dead. Nay, they are living. With their Lord they have provision.³²⁹

[Then We caused Our messengers to follow in their footsteps; and We caused Jesus, son of Mary, to follow, and gave him the Gospel], and placed compassion and mercy in the hearts of those who followed him. [But monasticism they invented - We ordained it not for them - only seeking Allah's pleasure, and they observed it not with right

323 Al-Quran, Chapter Āl-i 'Imrān, Verse 8. And for original text see the appendix 1.22.

324 Al-Quran, Chapter Al- Taghābun, Verse 11. And for original text see the appendix 1.23.

325 Al-Quran, Chapter Al-Baqarah, Verse 31. And for original text see the appendix 1.24.

326 Al-Quran, Chapter Al- 'Alaq, Verse 5. And for original text see the appendix 1.25.

327 Al-Quran, Chapter An- Nahl, Verse 70. And for original text see the appendix 1.26.

328 Al-Quran, Chapter Al-Wāqi'ah, Verse 83. And for original text see the appendix 1.27.

329 Al-Quran, Chapter Āl-i 'Imrān, Verse 169. And for original text see the appendix 1.28.

observance. So We give those of them who believe their reward, but many of them are evil-livers].³³⁰

And they will not heed unless Allah will (it). He is the fount of fear. He is the fount of Mercy.³³¹

[And of His signs is this]: He created for you helpmates from yourselves that ye might find rest in them, and He ordained between you love and mercy. [Lo! herein indeed are portents for folk who reflect].³³²

[And hold fast, all of you together, to the cable of Allah, and do not separate. And remember Allah's favour unto you]: how ye were enemies and He made friendship between your hearts so that ye became as brothers by His grace; [and (how) ye were upon the brink of an abyss of fire, and He did save you from it. Thus Allah makes clear His revelations unto you, that haply ye may be guided].³³³

3.3 Why is Philosophy not good? Critiques of Islamic Philosophy

Outline

What I want the reader to discover in this section are Mīrzā Mahdī's main criticisms of philosophy which consist of historical backgrounds, epistemic troubles, and the epistemic disparities between Human Knowledge (philosophy) and what he calls divine knowledge (revelation). This part attempts mainly to illustrate why Mīrzā Mahdī believes that philosophy is inoperative, delusive, and even deceptive. Although a wide range of criticisms raised by Mīrzā are mentioned, focus is given to the notion of knowledge and intellect to see what the main epistemic differences are and how he debunks as devastatingly damaging the endeavour of Muslim philosophers to adapt Scriptures within the philosophical framework.

330 Al-Quran, Chapter Al-Hadīd, Verse 27. And for original text see the appendix 1.29.

331 Al-Quran, Chapter Al-Muddaththir, Verse 56. And for original text see the appendix 1.30.

332 Al-Quran, Chapter Ar-Rūm, Verse 21. And for original text see the appendix 1.31.

333 Al-Quran, Chapter Āl-i 'Imrān, Verse 103. And for original text see the appendix 1.32.

3.3.1 Historical Accounts; The School of Ahl al-Bayt versus The Abbasid School of Caliphs

Historical accounts of the integration of Hellenistic philosophy into Islamic texts is generally accepted within the circles of Iranian scholars, from both academia and seminaries.³³⁴ What still remains unanswered and disputable is whether this combination of Greek philosophy and Islam³³⁵ was supportive of the enforcement of Scripture, or of its total destruction and disturbance. Answers to this question are also diverse. Some zealot Islamic philosophers maintain that not only was it useful, but it was actually Greek philosophy that benefited more in this coalition³³⁶. Others, in a more moderate approach, express that philosophy potentially served religion as a defensive weapon against misgivings and questions which threaten religious faith from outside³³⁷. Still other perspectives believe in Islamic philosophy as an exact demonstration of Islamic intellectualism and textual rationalism which is absolutely consistent with the nature of revelation³³⁸. Based on the latter view, revelation and philosophy are essentially not atypical enough to have any incompatibility or antagonism.³³⁹

For Mīrzā Mahdī Iṣfahānī, integration of Hellenistic Philosophy into the Islamic fabric has a deep-rooted controversial story. He traces the historical roots back to the inception of the confrontation between two rival Schools: the Shiīte School of Imamate and the Sunnīte School of Caliphs. Neglecting all historiographical debates over the existence of such a distinction between the two Schools and their disciplines at that time, Mīrzā, from an absolutely Shī‘ī traditionalism perspective, recognizes the infiltration of the philosophy into Islamic society as a clandestine affair by Abbasid Caliphs conspiring against the Imamate School of Ahl al-Bayt. Mīrzā maintains that the Caliphs, devoid of any substantial resistant ideology, ordered the literature of other schools, including Greek Philosophy, to be translated and disseminated in Islamic territory. The aim of this plot was to fill the gap with a substitute doctrine, and ultimately distract people from the School of Ahl al-Bayt by involving them in some circuitous and devious conceptual, apologetic thoughts.

334 Miṣbāḥ Yazdī, M.T. (1394 SA). *Amūzish-i Falsafih*. Qum: Mu’assissih-yi Amūzishī wa Pajhūhishī-yi Imam Khumiynī, p.29.

335 Mīrzā does not define clearly what he means by Greek philosophy, neither does he do with *akhbārīs*, nowhere in his works, but I can assume that he categorizes all philosophers in one group from the emergence of ancient philosophy in Greek -as he mentions their name in his works- to the contemporary era; so, for him -if I want to suggest according to his works- philosophy is a deviated epistemological and ontological framework which is the result of contemplation of the intellect within divinity. This is indeed my understanding of his picture of philosophy.

336 Ibid, Mutahharī, M. and Tabāṭabā’ī, S.M.H. (1332 SH). *Uṣūl-i Falsafī wa Rawish-i Rī’ālīsm*, Tīhrān: Ṣadrā, p.30.

337 ʻIbrāhīm Dīnānī, G.H. (1376 SH). *Mājarā-yi Fikr-i Falsafī dar Jahān-i Islām*. Tīhrān: Tarh-i naw.

338 For this one see Sajjad Rizvī in his analysis of the debate of Imam Rīḍā as he attempt to show that Imam actually uses the same philosophical terminology: Rizvi, Sajjad H. (2012) “Only the Imam Knows Best” The Maktab-e Taftīk’s Attack on the Legitimacy of Philosophy in Iran’, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 22.

339 Attempts to introduce philosophers as prophets can be counted in this regard.

Here are his words from the introduction of *Abwāb al-Hudā*:

*'It is *prima facie* for anyone familiar with the policies of the Caliphs that the reason behind translation of the philosophy and promulgating Sufism from Greece was nothing but to prevail over Ahl al-Bayt's knowledge (peace be upon them) and to make people self-sufficient from their knowledge. First they exposed the society to a variety of challenging issues and then translated those sources, and this way, they achieved their goal which was to overshadow Ahl al-Bayt's knowledge similar to what they had already done in usurping Ahl al-Bayt's apparent dominion (*al-salṭanat al-zāhirīyya*). As a result, Muslims were entangled in disputing the theoretical sciences and after the translation of philosophy felt no need of Ahl al-Bayt's knowledge. Finally, People started arguing and debating with Ahl al-Bayt as is clear from the Eighth Imam's History (peace be upon him). Furthermore, even the Imams' followers looked down on their knowledge and started interpreting Ahl al-Bayt's knowledge according to Greek Human Science, assuming that the comprehension of Ahl al-Bayt's knowledge was conditioned upon learning Greek sciences³⁴⁰.*

To highlight this historical conflict, he backs up this historical conception with quotations from Majlisī in *Bihār al-anwār*, where he narrates stories about some of the Imams' pupils who resisted the importation of philosophical ideas³⁴¹. He quotes a *hadīth* in which Hishām b. Ḥakam, a very famous apologist disciple of Imam Ṣādiq, is described as having had disputes over philosophical issues with Yaḥyā b. Barmak, the well-known vizier of Hārūn al-Rashīd:

'The Caliphs and their followers had inclinations towards philosophy and Yaḥyā al-Barmakī was their friend, supporting their religion. Al-Kashshī narrates through his chain of narrators from Yūnis b. ‘Abd al-Rahmān that: Yaḥyā b. Khālid al-Barmakī found some invectives from Hishām assailing philosophers, and therefore decided to

340 *Abwāb al-Hudā*, p.3.

341 *Ibid*, p.6.

*slander him to Hārūn and provoke Hārūn to kill Hishām. He [Yūnis] related a long story that Yaḥyā concealed Hārūn somewhere in his house and invited Hishām to debate with other scholars there [in order to dishonour Yaḥyā and show Hārūn exactly what Hishām's belief is]*³⁴²

The same skeptical approach towards the history of Islamic Philosophy can be seen in Mīrzā's famous jurisprudential work *Mīṣbāḥ al-Hudā*. Unlike *akhbārīs*, who in effect blamed Shī‘a jurists for making deviances in the Shī‘ī *uṣūlī* system by imitating Sunnite *uṣūlī* patterns³⁴³, Mīrzā took another way: for *akhbārīs*, Astarābādī for instance, the whole problem was rooted in imitating Sunnī system by Shī‘ī ‘ulamā he harshly names them and strikes them. Mīrzā, unlikely upholds the idea that all deflections in the system are caused by a mixing with philosophy and have nothing to do with Shī‘ī Jurists. Secondly, he again points a finger at Sunnite Caliphs, blaming them for this catastrophe. The introduction of *Mīṣbāḥ al-Hudā* reads as follows:

'And the reason behind the expansion of 'ilm al-uṣūl by our scholars (may they be raised in God's paradise) was the catastrophe which happened in Islam when Caliphs promoted their scholars to disseminate a variety of different thoughts and discussions in all religious aspects. This was intensified after the translation of philosophy, dissemination of mysticism, amalgamation of religious knowledge into them, and promulgating them in all cities which led to the dominance of negligence ... and there was no intellectual ('aqli), primordial nature (fitrī), or rationalistic ('uqalā'ī) matter left unless it had become theoretical, and then [as a result] inferring from traditions (riwāya) became difficult, then dignitaries of companions and our outstanding jurists stood to secure the religion and repulse this massive disaster... and complied 'ilm al-uṣūl and its principles... and this continued to the role of the Sheikh of all

342 Abwāb al-Hudā, p.6. For the primary source see Majlisī, M. Bihār al-Anwār, vol.10, pp.293. and for original text see the appendix 4.18.

343 For this see introduction of 'Astarābādī, M.A. and 'Āmilī, S.N. (1383 SH). *al-Fawā'id al-Madāniyyah wa al-Shawāhid al-Makīyyah*, Qum: Daftar-I Intishārāt-I Islāmī, p.75. ignorance of some of late shī‘ī scholars about re-instructing shī‘ī principals based on sunni structures.

Sheikhs, Sheikh al-Anṣārī (may Allah sanctify his secret), who paraphrased and purified it...³⁴⁴

For a better understanding of this passage, attention needs to be drawn to the continued concern regarding his denomination as an *akhbārī*. He consistently avoids this label, and as a result, prudently distances himself from certain delineations of *akhbārīsm*. His attempts to shift the blame from Shiite jurists to outsider aliens, non-Muslim Greek philosophers and non-Shī‘ī Caliphs keep his thoughts safe, as well. This is plain to see in the two passages above, and will be clearer in the next chapter where his jurisprudential ideas will be examined in much more detail.

Mīrzā’s cynicism about the history of Islamic philosophy is followed by his students, and finds a great deal of expansion and depth in the hands of the adherents of the School as the main body of criticism against philosophy.³⁴⁵

Leaving aside the extensive academic debates about the validity of these historical accounts, espousing the story of Islamic philosophy with the Caliphs’ anti-Imamate policy and tracing it right back to Greek Philosophy had some opposing consequences for Mīrzā and his thought: the positive side was the reinforcement of his camp with the fusion of devotional sympathy within seminary students and scholars not only against Greek Philosophy, but also to preserve and purify Shī‘ī heritage from amalgamating with any incompatible ideology, specifically opposing Sunni literature, which is more provoking and contentious. The revival call within seminaries, in this context, would potentially have roused a much greater stimulus than a mere theoretical anti-philosophical debate. On the other hand, from a negative perspective, casting serious doubts upon the role of Bayt al-ḥikmah, which, for many, still echoes the inauguration of the *Islamic Golden Age*³⁴⁶, paved the way for Mīrzā’s objectors to label him as an ossified, biased, and anti-rational figure.³⁴⁷

In addition to disparagement of the translation of the Greek legacy, by situating it in diametrical historic contrast to the School of Ahl al-Bayt, Mīrzā provides some terminological explanations to discredit the necessity of philosophy as a prerequisite framework for understanding the Qur’ān and *Hadith*. He simply asks how this procedure can be indispensable to one’s faith when the majority of Muslims are not even familiar

344 Miṣbah al-Hudā, pp. 4, 5.

345 Tīhrānī, J. (1390 SH). ‘Arif wa Ṣūfī Chi Mīgūyand. Tīhrān: Āfāq; Ḥakīmī, M.R. (1383 SH). *Maktab-i Tafkīk*. Qum: Dalīl-i Mā.

346 For more detailed evidences, see chapters in Hussein Naṣr works: Naṣr, S.H. (1976). Three Muslim Sages: Avicenna, Suhrawardī, Ibn ‘Arabī. Lahur: Caravan Books, Introduction; Naṣr, S.H. (1993). An Introduction to Islamic Cosmological Doctrines. New York: State University of New York Press, chapter: Foreword.

347 Rizvi, Sajjad H. (2012) “Only the Imam Knows Best” The Maktab-e Tafkīk’s Attack on the Legitimacy of Philosophy in Iran’, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 22; Naṣr, S.H. (1993). A Young Muslim’s Guide to the Modern World. Chicago: Kazi Publication, pp. 77&86.

with these extensively perplexing terms, let alone with learning all those formidable and bottomless arguments³⁴⁸.

*'Consigning the wording of the Qur'ān and tradition to the terminological meanings (ma'āni al-iṣṭilāḥīyyah), and stipulating the perfection of the human being upon learning these terminologies, of which the majority of the community (ummah) will remain ignorant until the day of judgment except very few who learnt them after dissemination of philosophy, is a clear distortion of the sayings of Allah and his Prophet from the intellectuals' path (tariqat al-'uqalā'). And to refer people's perfection to a philosophy expert is to refute the purpose of the prophecy and to demolish its legacy which is the most nefarious oppression of all (dūnah u al-sayf wa al-sanān)*³⁴⁹.

There is a vivid tendency to create a sense of 'originality and continuity'³⁵⁰ within his literature. The Imam's disciples, early Shiite scholars, and traditionalists, all are gathered in his camp in order potentially to create a full synergy from a Shī'ī heritage background.

He reads the story of Imams and their disciples in a way that one may think that fighting with philosophy has always been at the centre of their concerns:

'Because of their [philosophers'] clear confrontation with the Qur'ān and the Prophet PBUH, Imams condemned them and clarified the noble path and the noble knowledge. Imams constructed for their disciples a way to gather and protect that knowledge. So, great traditionalists and jurists followed the same path as well. Besides, Imams exhorted the people to refute philosophy and

348 *Abwāb al-Hudā*, p.4; A collection of ideas of Shī'ī Scholars about necessity of philosophy or even logical arguments in faith can be followed in my MA thesis: Maqsūdī, H.R. (2011) 'The Authenticity of One Narrated Ḥadīth in belief', *Journal of 'Ulūm-I Ḥadīth*, 58. pp.5-41.

349 *Abwāb al-Hudā*, pp. 4&5.

350 The term was first used by Robert Gleave to describe the main features of the scriptural and traditionalist Tafkīk in his article to which this thesis refers a lot. Gleave, R. (2010). 'Continuity and Originality in Shī'i Thought: The Relationship between the Akhbāriyya and the Maktab-i Tafkīk', in Mervin, S. and Hermann, D. (ed.) *Shiite Streams and Dynamics*. Beirut: Orient-Institut, pp.1800-1925.

Sufism on their emergence into Islam, and this was followed by the jurists and their followers. [Some examples of Imams' narrations]:

In Tawḥīd by al-Mufaḍḍal, he narrates from Imam Ṣādiq PBUH, that the Imam said:

“damnation, failure, and misery is for those who follow philosophy. How their hearts are blinded by this strange creature so they cannot discern the clear clandestine plot in it”.³⁵¹

And from Sayyid al-Murtadā, and also al-Safīnah and al-Mustadrak, it is narrated from Imam al-Hasan al-‘Askarī PBUH that he said to Abū Hāshim al-Ja‘farī :

“Their scholars [at the apocalyptic time] are the worst people on the earth, because they incline towards philosophy and Sufism. Swear by God that they have detoured and deviated.... They are bandits on the believers’ way, they call to the unbelievers’ heresy. So, who faces them should avoid them in order to protect his faith”.

³⁵²

In al-Mustadrak from Bazanṭī and ‘Ismā‘il ibn Bazi‘ from Imam Rīḍā PBUH:

“Whoever hears that Sufis are being mentioned somewhere and does not condemn them by his/her tongue and heart, is not considered to be one of us, and whoever refutes them, looks as if he/she fights with unbelievers shoulder to shoulder with the Prophet”.³⁵³

351 Ja‘far ‘Ibn Muhammad. *Tawḥīd al-Mufaḍḍal*, vol.1, pp.68. and for original text see the appendix 4.19.

352 Nūrī, M. *Mustadrak al-Wasā‘il wa Mustanbaṭ al-Masā‘il*, vol.1, pp.380. and for original text see the appendix 4.20.

339 Nūrī, M. *Mustadrak al-Wasā‘il wa Mustanbaṭ al-Masā‘il*, vol.12,pp.323. and for original text see the appendix 4.21.

Bazanṭī also narrates that one of the disciples asked Imam Ṣādiq PBUH about the emerging people who are called Sufis: what was his opinion of them? The Imam said:

*"They are our enemies, and whoever inclines to them is one of them, and will be resurrected with them. There will emerge some people who claim our love, but at the same time, incline towards Sufis, and liken themselves to them... oh, whoever approaches them is not considered one of us, and we are purified from them..."*³⁵⁴

Siyyid Murtadā also narrates, in a long ḥādīth with his own chain to Imam Hādī PBUH that once a group of Sufis entered the Mosque and started reciting in their circles. The Imam said about them:

*"Do not pay attention to these frauds, they are the devil's successors, they ruin religion's pillars. Their recitations are dancing and acclamation. Their invocation is chanting; no one believes in them but fools. Whoever goes to their visit, alive or dead, it looks as if he attempted to visit the devil, and to worship idols. Whoever helps one of them, has indeed helped Yazīd and Mu'āwīyyih, and Abā Sufyān." Then one of Imam's followers said to him: even if [the Sufi] was a believer of yours? The Imam stared at the man as if angered, and said: "leave this opinion! Whoever admits our rights does not oppress us. Don't you know that these people are from the worst cults of Sufis? All Sufis are our dissidents, and their way is widely divergent from ours. They are not but Christians and Zoroastrians of Islam. They attempt to turn off Allah's light..."*³⁵⁵

340 Nūrī, M. *Mustadrak al-Wasā'il wa Mustanbaṭ al-Masā'il*, vol.12,pp.323. and for original text see the appendix 4.22.

355 *Abwāb al-Hudā*, p.84.

In an ultimate scriptural trend³⁵⁶, Mīrzā tries to attach traditionalists (*muḥaddithīn*) to his camp, as much as possible. He starts with al-Kulaynī and sees the introduction of al-Kulaynī in *al-Kāfi* as absolutely harmonious with his anti-philosophical mission. This construal of *al-Kāfi*'s introduction is something unprecedented.

'After diffusion of philosophy and domination of ignorance, the pillar of Islam that the grand Ayatullāh, and great shiykh, al-Kulaynī, may God praise him, stood to serve was noble divine knowledge and he sat to protect it as he stipulates in his introduction. So, he was followed by other traditionalists and jurists until it came to 'allamah Majlisī's turn, when he made his stipulation in the introduction to his Bihār al-anwār. And this has been the method of all scholars and jurists until now, thanks to God as he deserves it.'

To prove that anti-philosophism had been a current flow and a continuous trend among Imāmī scholars, Mirzā makes reference to the main *rijāl* works such as *rijāl al-Kashshī*, *rijāl al-Najashī*, *rijāl shiykh al-Mufid* (which is lost and not available at the moment), and names the books and treaties written by eminent scholars against philosophy, logic, and mysticism. This begins from Kulaynī and ends with Majlisī.

'Kashshī in his rijāl lists Hishām ibn Ḥakam's book which is the al-Dalālāt 'alā ḥudūth al-ashyā' [Confuting for temporal originatedness], al-Rad 'ala al-zanādaqih [Confuting heterodoxies], al-Rad 'alā al-aṣḥāb al-ṭabāyi', and al-Rad 'alā Arastāṭalīs [Rebutting Aristotle], which is on Tawhīd. And also there is al-rad 'alā ahl al-manṭiq [Confuting logicians], and al-Tawhīd wa ḥudūth al-'ālam, by the great Shiykh al-Ḥasan ibn Mūsā al-nawbakhtī. Also al-Najashī lists from Faḍl ibn Shāzān's books al-rad 'ala al-falāṣifah [Confuting philosophers]. In addition, great Shiykh al-Mufid³⁵⁷ in his rijāl, jawābāt al-filsūf fi al-ījād [Responds to the philosopher on creation], al-rad 'ala al-falāṣifah [Confuting philosophers], al-Rad

356 Mullā Amīn AstarAbādī, Sheikh Aḥmad Aḥsā'ī, and others should be added in to this list as examples.

357 For more information on Shiykh al-Mufid's view on tradition, see the chapter in McDermott, M. (1978). *The theology of al-Shaikh al-Mufid*, Beirut: Dar al-Mashriq. p. 304.

*'ala al-Hallāj [Confuting Hallāj]. Moreover, Ṣadūq confuted them in his introduction of *Ikmāl al-dīn*.*³⁵⁸

In this symposium, he encourages the people to follow Kulaynī and other great traditionalists (*mashāyikh al-izām*) to resist the juxtaposing of Human Knowledge with Divine Knowledge³⁵⁹. In fact, he recognizes these two types of knowledge as stark contrasts due to their very nature. For him, their terminologies, epistemological meanings, teleological systems, ontologies, pedagogies, and outcomes are in absolute inverse relation to each other. He detects a battle between divine knowledge and human knowledge as an abyss between light and darkness, reality and illusion, authentic proof and dubious science, and eventually between *al-'ilm wa al-jahl* (knowledge and ignorance).

'So, it is our duty to clarify the [wrong] bases of Philosophy and Sufism³⁶⁰, and their beliefs, after dissecting what they have achieved at the end of their path. This is [unfortunately] the basis on which Human Knowledge is formed. This is what is known as the knowledge all around the world.'³⁶¹

Finally, the following narration which he selects and narrates from *Bihār al-anwār*, concludes the discussion and shows how he looks at philosophy and philosophers:

"Chapter Eight: Mentions the thoughts of some philosophers and mystics, citing some narrations which show stark contrast to them, with an explicit refutation of them. Citing these narrations is of benefit to wise people. It is reported by Socrates that he heard about Moses PBUH. He was told he should arrange a meeting between him and Moses. But he replied that we are conducted (guided) folk, we are not in need of anyone to guide us."³⁶²

3.3.2 Polarity of Outcomes; Is Islamic Philosophy Islamic?

Apart from historical bases, epistemic or ontological analyses, Mirzā Mahdī - and later his followers – does not forget to show the contradictions between Philosophy and Scripture. Therefore, the outcomes of Islamic Philosophy (and mysticism) are considered

358 *Abwāb al-Hudā*, pp.15-19.

359 *Ibid*, p.6.

360 In Mīrzā Mahdī Iṣfahānī's literature Sufism and Mysticism are looked from one eye because they considered to have common ideological bases. A very good example is the use of the term human science (*al-'ulūm al-basharīyyah*) which is always equivalent to philosophy and mysticism bounded together: See *Abwāb al-Hudā* chapters 8,9,10. However, later for his followers the distinction was noticed and more taken into consideration. For instance, his famous pupil Mīrzā Javād Āqā's work, *Tihrānī*, J. (1390 SH). 'Arif wa Ṣūfī Chi Mīgūyānd, *Tihrānī*: Āfāq. Another famous pupil Namāzī's work, *Namāzī Shāhrūdī*, 'A. (1379 SH). *Tārīkh-i Falsafi wa Taṣawwuf*, *Tihrānī*: Naba', which has an inlaid language for general readers.

361 *Abwāb al-Hudā*, p.19.

362 Majlisī, M. (1368 SH). *Bihār al-Anwār*, Beirut: Dār 'Ihyā' al-turāth al-'Arabī, vol.57, p.198. and for original text see the appendix 4.78.

to be in irremediable conflict with the instructions of the Qur'ān and *hadīth* in almost all subjects.

These contradictions are wide-spread in Mirzā's treatise. However, they have been articulated and projected even further by his students.

A list of Mirzā's main epistemic contradictions is provided below. His literalistic and simplistic method is worthy of attention. Reading his critiques, one expects to read through a list of comparable *hadīths*, sorted under one umbrella. This way, contradictions are exposed: (1) simple and easy to catch, (2) in stark contrast with the Imams' sayings, and, (3) convergent, making unanimity, which is vital for his theological arguments. His hermeneutical method is discussed at length in the following sections.

Focusing on contrast or even polarity of outcomes between philosophy and revelatory scriptures as Mīrzā reads has found acceptance more easily, especially among the youth. Having a psycho-religious view of his method, this type of criticism is highly efficient, because of its populist essence. This simplistic method even if not deeply, is always understood. This is due to the undemanding and swift answers it brings to many of their methodological questions about philosophy, mysticism, and the *akhbārī* tendency always hovering within society.

3.3.2.1 *Tawhīd* (Unity of God)

This is indeed the most controversial criticism against Islamic Philosophy. Mīrzā points to the problems and starts with the major philosophical principles such as: 'an impersonal deity is all beings' (*basīt al-ḥaqīqah kul al-`ashyā'*). According to this principle, the entity (*wujūd*) – versus quiddity (*māhīyyah*) – is the reality of 'being', and, Allah is the real non-composite entity (impersonal deity) to which all other creations refer. Mīrzā emphasizes that, for Islamic Philosophers, Allah is the indivisible referent of the concept of entity (*meṣdāq-u mafhūm-i `l-wujūd*). He explains that this blasphemous outcome is a result of a wrong philosophical interpretation of 'Causality', which has led to the formation of 'cognition' (*sinkhīyyah*) between Creator and Creature. The last sentence in the following quotation points to this wrong interpretation:

‘...but in Human Sciences God is a referent of the notion of entity, and all perfections (*kamālāt*) refer to the reality of entity, and all made entities (*al-wujūdāt-u `l-ma‘qūlah*) are essential properties of Allah’s entity, because according to the research of philosophers, it is impossible for the complete cause (*adaquata cause L.*) to refuse following the caused (*causatum L.*)...’³⁶³

He discerns that same problem – and even worse ones – within Mysticism. If, for philosophers, God was the perfect notion of 'the being', and all creations had a distinctive entity as His properties, for mystics, no reality is left but Allah. All other entities are merely

363 *Abwāb al-Hudā*, pp.8&9.

'stages' of His entity that are projected in different levels. This model refers to the polemic idea of 'oneness of existence' (*wahdat-u 'l-wujūd*):

'For mystics, creatures are exactly "stages" of the reality of the "being", which is Glorious Allah in their opinion, and all perfections refer to that reality...'³⁶⁴

In sharp contrast, Mīrzā reads Allah in the Scripture as the one who has created 'the being' in a unique and unknown way, without any possible comparison between His entity and all created perfections:

'And the reality of being is a sign and an indicator of His indicators and signs... by which His eminence is known. He is the Lord of "the being" as He is the Lord of dignity, glory, magnificence, kingdom of light, power, knowledge, and life, as mentioned before.'³⁶⁵

Like many other terms in Islamic philosophy, 'projection', and 'manifestation' are alien, and it is very important to understand why they are inappropriate to be used in the Qur'ān and *ḥadīth* for describing the reality of creation. That is why it is wrong to replace the revelatory terms with possible alternatives.

*'This is what we mentioned about the way of the innate disposition (*fīṭrah*) by which the intent (*murād*) of the Qur'ān and *ḥadīth* is discovered, and this is the gate of the gates in Qur'ānic knowledge upon which the gates of guidance are established, not on the Greek philosophers' terminology...'*

'Existents' are not referents of Allah, nor different stages/levels of His entity. Creation is not the projection or manifestation of His entity. The old dispute goes back to the deep classical question about 'participation between Creator and the Creature whether it is verbal ('*ishtirāk-i 'l-lafzī*) or content ('*istirāk-i 'l-ma'nawī*')'. The very question is about the entity of God and His essence to find out the reality of Creation. General, and simple, perception of *tawhīd* is that Allah is not similar to anything. For a scripturalist like Mīrzā Mahdī, the main concern is to show that the philosophical and mystical perception of Allah, besides being self-contradictory, has nothing in common with what is demonstrated within Scripture.

'And the Glorious Allah, toward whom the glorious Qur'ān calls and the generous Prophet guides, is different from what the

364 Ibid, p.8.

365 Ibid, p.8.

*philosophers and other Greeks introduce and worship. Allah, the Almighty, says: “and in which saying after Allah and His signs do they believe”?*³⁶⁶

He tries to show that the essence of Allah within Scripture is clearly depicted based on ‘segregation’ (*biyūnīyyah*). This ‘segregation’ between Allah and His creation is the key factor in the concept of Unity. Many *ḥadīths* specify that the ‘deep notion of Allah is differentiation between Him and His creation’. Cognition (*sinkhīyyah*), which is used as a logical human instrument in connecting the creature side to the Divine realm, is barren and refused. No means are efficient in introducing Him: He is known by nothing but Himself.

*‘It is impossible knowing Him, conceptualizing Him, intellectualizing His essence, the way He created the knowledge, the life, the [state of] Being by His Will, and how He created the tenebrous creations, how they exist and abide. [It is also impossible] to find out how He is infinite, and how His essence is contrasted with His creation in an adjectival segregation (mubāyinah al-ṣifatīyyah). Nevertheless, there is no way of knowing all of these but by Him, and not by anyone else, therefore; He is the introducer of Himself by Himself, and also His perfections and acts to the endless levels’*³⁶⁷

On the other hand, for philosophers, it is irrational to ignore the cognition between the ‘Cause’ and the ‘Caused’. Whoever rejects ‘Cognition’ most reject ‘Causality’, and acknowledge falling into the abyss of accidentalism. Mīrzā retorts that ‘Causality’ has an accepted concept in its common sense, which is not equivalent to its philosophical form.

In this paragraph Mīrzā exemplifies how Allah stands beyond ‘Being’ and ‘Lack’. He is not a third type of these two.

‘The reality of Glory Lord is not ‘negation of two contradictories’ (‘irtifā’ al-naqīdayn), to be obligated for being one of them, as is the case in knowledge and ignorance [He is not obliged to be either knowledge or ignorance]. Because the level of the owner of knowledge is not the same as the level of knowledge. And knowledge, per se, reveals that His essence cannot be attained by

366 Ibid, p.9.

367 Ibid, p.8.

*knowledge and intellectualism (*al-ma'lūmīyyah wa al-ma'qūlīyyah*). Therefore, when He refuses to be known, it becomes clear that the essence of Glory Lord, His “being”, and His abundance, is not known by anything but Him. So, He is His own introducer.’³⁶⁸*

3.3.2.2 Knowing God (*ma'rifat-u'l-Allah*)

Below is a succinct passage by Mīrzā in which he outlines a set of contrasts between the literal meaning of many *ḥadīths* and what Islamic Philosophers have decided on the issue of knowing God. Some parts of this dense list – the more epistemic ones – will be deliberated in coming dedicated sections and discussed in much more detail.

*‘The legislator [Prophet] says that Allah has introduced Himself to all His worshippers, rather created them on innate dispassion of His own cognition (*bal faṭara-hum 'alā 'l-ma'rifatih*). Moreover, people saw their Almighty Lord with the reality of their faith, thereafter; He enunciated that they will meet Him again, and this cognition is not [achieved] by intellects, eyes, thoughts (*al-owhām*), nor by conceptions (*al-afhām*). [To the contrary], philosophers (*ahl-u al-iṣṭilāḥ*³⁶⁹) maintain that Allah is an absolute unseen (or mystery/unknown); there is no name ('ism) or description (*rasm*) for Him. [According to them], the [only] way for knowing Him is based on ‘indirect knowledge’ (*ma'rifah bi 'l-vajh*), and it is obvious that indirect knowledge necessitates imagining Him, and thinking of a face/dimension (*vajh*) for Him. Whereas the Prophet states, there is no dimension for Him, because of the heterogeneousness (complete mutual exclusion) between Creator and Creation, and,*

368 Ibid

369 Technically the people of technical term. In seminary textbooks it refers to specialists in one knowledge *uṣūl jurispudence* or logic those who know specific technical term of that knowledge and use it. In Mīrzā's refers to philosophers as it is translated to. However, by using this term Mīrzā wants to stigmatize philosophers because he believes our religion has not been revealed on the technical term bases. Unlikely, one can not understand philosophy without technical terms, whereas for Mīrzā understanding Prophet and Imams' sayings (scripture) is of no need to any terminological system to be added, the audience are people and the language is common ('urfi). As a result, twisting into the terminologies itself is a kind of deviation from the straight path.

specifies that whatever is Imagined, He is exactly opposite to it (mā tuṣuwir-a fa-hu-wa bi-khilāfih). Allah will not be known by inspection of hearts (lā yu'rāf-u bi tawahhum-i 'l-qlūb). ³⁷⁰ “[The real] Divine Unity, is to avoid cogitating about Him (tawḥīda-hū 'an lā yatwahhamah)”. “Whoever worships Allah by contemplation is actually disbelieving Him (man 'abad-a 'a-Allah bi 'l-tawahhum, faqad kafar), and whoever knows Him by any means, does not know Him, and, in reality, knows something else”. As for being invisible to eyes, He is veiled from intellects ('iḥtajb-a 'an-i 'l-'uqūl-i ka-mā 'iḥtajab-a 'an-i 'l-abṣār”).³⁷¹

3.3.2.3 Creation and Divine Volition

Mīrzā asserts that taking philosophical bases into consideration leaves no room for free will, neither for Creature, nor for Creator. He refers to ‘al-wāḥid principle’ or in its Latin origin ‘*ex uno non fit nisusnum*’ as one of the most imperative philosophical principles. According to this principle, because God is Non-dual (L. *unitas, unus*), only one act can emanate from Him. That ‘act’, is indeed the best, the first, and the last. There is no change in Him, as His Will, in philosophy, is one of the ‘attributes of Essence’, not ‘attributes of action’. Changes are permissible in his actions not in His Essence. His Will is His Essence not His act.

‘Philosophers believe in pre-eternity of the world, whereas the Legislator says it is a temporal coming-into-being. They say that Allah has only one action that is beginning-less ('azalī), and eternal ('abadī), does not alter or change. [To the contrary], the Prophet says Allah makes neo-decisions (badā'). He has volition; postpones, advances, eliminates, and affirms. He possesses the

³⁷⁰ It is too much of importance that the term ‘tawahhum’, literary meaning delusion or illusion, should not be translated in classical Arabic texts, especially in ḥādīth terminologies, as in its literal meaning. The modern conception of the term (illusion or delusion) is different from its classical usage, which is close to conceiving, contemplating, and speculating. Al-Kuliynī, M. *al-Kāfi*, vol.1, pp.98. and for original text see the appendix 4.23.

³⁷¹ The lessons of Mīrzā Mahdī Isfahānī have been gathered in a formal handbook famous as “Ma'ārif Treaties”, though unpublished they are available in Āstān-i Quds library. This handbook is mentioned as “Handwritten treaties” in this thesis. Handwritten treaties p.8. For the primary sources see Majlisī, M. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol.4, p.253. and for original text see the appendix 4.24./ Sharīf al-Raḍī, M. *Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol.1, pp.558. and for original text see the appendix 4.25./ Al-Kuliynī, M. *al-Kāfi*, vol.1, p.87. and for original text see the appendix 4.26./ Majlisī, M. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol.4, p.301. and for original text see the appendix 4.27.

grace and grants it to whomever He wishes. He is Omnipotent to do, or, to dismiss....'³⁷²

3.3.2.4 Free Will

The status of having essential materials and essential substances, which is one of the fundamental philosophical principles, is strictly contradictory to free volition. He selects specific narrations from *Bihār al-anwār* by Majlisī and narrates them to show that (a) this dispute has been reflected in Shī‘ī narrative literature since the Imam’s time; (b) it is primary and essential, and (c) it is rooted in the fundamental question of the relationship between Creature and Creator, and also goes back to the essence of the ‘being’ which is the main enquiry of philosophy. In the final destination of Islamic philosophy the ‘being’ is introduced as a ‘one’ and ‘united’ reality which has all attributes related to the ‘being’ in common with its Creator (*ishtirāk-i Ma‘nawī wujūd*).³⁷³ Embedding the attributes of Creator among the attributes of Creatures, and not beyond it, ultimately transmits all His attributes to the whole ‘being’. This ontological combination is a result of philosophical epistemology in which, like all other human sciences, enquiry about the entity of any possible creator begins from tangible substances shaping human world, and inevitably ends up with something dominated by human epistemological means. In other words, ‘a creator’ proved (or found) by a human being, or by any feasible means, cannot be posited beyond human epistemological dominion. On the other hand, ‘being’ which shares its most intrinsic essence ‘the being’ with its creator, will necessarily be the best of its kind (*nizām al-ahsan*), everlasting and constant, without any imaginable alternative amendment in all aspects (including peoples’ deeds).³⁷⁴ It is clear that there is no beginning, nor end for this type of system. For those against philosophy no room is left empty for ‘Free Will’ within this context. The whole system is deemed to be ‘one and best’.

‘They [Islamic Philosophers] hold all people’s deeds to be desirable for Allah by accident (jamī‘-u ’l-af‘āl-i maḥbūba-tun la-hū bi ’l-‘arad). Conversely, the Prophet asserts that Allah dislikes decay and never consents to heresy... They believe in ‘best order’ in the system of being (*nizām al-ahsan*), because they see it in line with Divine Order (muṭābiq-un li ’l-nizām-i ’l-rabbānī). Yet, the Qur’ān states: ‘Corruption has appeared on land and sea because of what men’s hands have wrought’, ‘And if the people of those towns had

372 Handwritten treaties p.9, For the primary sources see Majlisī, M. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol.4, p.95. and for original text see the appendix 4.28.

373 As‘adī, ‘A.R. (1391 SH). *Āghāz-I Hikmat: Darsnamih-yi Falsafih bar ’Asās-I Bidāyah al-Hikmah ’Allāmih TabāTabāyī*. Tīhrān: ’Intishārāt-I ’Ilmī wa Farhangī. p.7.

374 Ibid, pp.41-5.

believed and been righteous, We would have surely opened for them blessings from heaven...' ³⁷⁵ Allah has no individuation (ta‘ayyun), in no way, therefore, determining the system into His essence (ta‘ayyun-u ‘l-nizām-i fī dhātihi), and Divine Order is an egregious mistake.' ³⁷⁷

Here also comes his narration from Bihār al-anwār,

'A saying from Jālīnūs has been reported by some philosophers that he said that the difference between Moses's belief and ours, [also] Plato's, and other Greeks', is that Moses thinks that it is enough for God to will and prepare the being and decorate it, then the whole being will be created, because he thinks that everything is possible for God, so if He suddenly intends to create a horse or cow out of ash, He does. But we do not recognize this and [conversely] believe that: things are impossible in their essence, and God does not will them.' ³⁷⁸

3.3.2.5 Causality; a wrong epistemic mean

Mīrzā seeks the reason behind these theological divergences in different epistemologies. It is highly important, in terms of a methodological criticism that, according to Mīrzā, because philosophers follow the common methods of Human Science in forming their theological arguments based upon Creations' characteristics, their result could not escape from anthropomorphism. It is true that a philosophical argument is either deduction or induced from temporal concepts. Philosophers confine the functionality of intellect in deducing and inducing. As they state, what intellect does is to segregate the general concepts (*tajzīyat-u ‘l-kullī*), or combine segregated ones (*tarkīb-u ‘l-juz’ī*). But, one is forgiven for being skeptical about this claim that the revelatory method in which Allah is argued for is completely different from the philosophical result, in terms of being devoid of any human influence. Mīrzā argues that, because of the lack of homogeneity between the essence of Allah and the rest of 'Being', methods like 'Cognition' cannot be deployed in a theological reality. Instead, He can only be mentioned and found individually in a unique way of Cognition (*fītrah*), He does not remain unknown. Creation plays an absolute indicator role as a sign for His 'being', and has no more teleological functionality. This is the main reason for Mīrzā's refusal of all philosophical and logical

375 Al-Qur’ān, Chapter ‘Ar-Rūm, Verse 41. For the original text see appendix 4.29.

377 Handwritten treatises, p.p.10&11.

378 Abwāb al-Hudā, p.227.

epistemological tools, calling them ‘Human Science’, mainly syllogism. For him, arguing for Allah starts from Allah and ends with Him. It is not unknown for His Creatures to be in need of proof and there is nothing purer than Him to clarify or define Him. He is beyond any concept and intellect. He needs only to be mentioned, to be found. This is how Allah stands upon Himself as a self-maintainer. He stands far from all beings by any means to be compared with, discovered with, or proven by. Refusal of syllogism is rooted in the epistemological inadequacy of ‘Cognition’:

‘...arguing for Allah in Divine Science, which is completely different form Human Science, is based upon mentioning... , the reality of being is an indicator and a sign of His signs by which Allah is known, and He the Almighty and Glorious is the Guardian Lord (rabb) of being...’

His criticism on syllogism is dissected more in detail here:

3.3.2.6 Teleological Critiques

Mīrzā’s explicit attack on human nous continues to one of the most fundamental bases of the deduction process of logical syllogism³⁷⁹ (*qīyās al-mantiqī*). The foundations of the criticisms are not new. They find a long history in *Mu’tazilī-Ash’arī* conflicts³⁸⁰, in early Islamic history. The historical debate is focused on the role of intellect in different theological realms. As it is mentioned in theological sources³⁸¹ the first debate was on the *determinism and free will* (*jabr wa ikhtiyār*) but gradually it spreaded out to all other theological issues such as *intrinsic good and bad* (*husn wa qubh-i zāti*) and then to jurisprudence where the result of the conflict became much more clear. He casts doubts upon the credibility and veracity of the *deductive* and *inductive reasoning systems*. For him, it makes no intrinsic difference whether syllogism is used in a logical context (*qīyās al-mantiqī*), or as an analogy in a juridical reasoning system (*tamthīl*). Syllogism is an act of Satan:

379 Gleave, R. (2002). ‘Imami Shi’i Refutations of Qīyās’, in Weiss, B. (ed.) *Studies in Islamic Legal Theory*. Leiden: Brill Pub, pp.267-292.

380 Schmidtke, S. (ed.) (2016). *The Oxford Handbook of Islamic Theology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp.130-214. Chapter: Mu’tazila; Adamson, P. (2016). *Philosophy in the Islamic World*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp.10. Chapter: Mu’tazila; Adamson, P. (2016). *Philosophy in the Islamic World*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp.10. Chapter: Mu’tazila; Schmidtke, S. (ed.) (2016). *The Oxford Handbook of Islamic Theology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp.130-214. Chapter: Mu’tazila; Frank,D; Richard,M. (2020). *Classical Islamic Theology: The Ash’arites: Texts and Studies on the Development and History of Kalam*, v.3. Oxford: Taylor & Francis; Halverson, J. (2010). *Theology and Creed in Sunni Islam: The Muslim Brotherhood, Ash’arism, and Political Sunnism*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

381 The best and oldest example is Shahrastānī, M. (1387 SH). *al-Milal wa al-Nihāl*, Tīhrān: Ṣādiq. He mentiones a lot of cases to be the first issue of kalām (theology) and there are also many historical acconts on the emergence of ash’arī and Mu’tazilī Schools.

*'... Syllogism in [both] fundamental principles (*uṣūl*) and derivative principles is absolutely repulsive and impure as it is the act of Satan...'³⁸²*

Furthermore, he identifies logical syllogism (*qīyās al-mantiqī*) as more hideous and deceptive than jurisprudential analogy (*al-tamthīl*). To him, this kind of *qīyās* ruins all the Prophet's instructions, including doctrinal issues, whereas jurisprudential analogy merely provides training in Sharia law:

*'Indeed constituting religion on the syllogism forms (*maqā'īs*) and proving Exalted God by it, confutes all the prophet's legacy, because that is the greatest syllogism and the best one of its ilk.'*³⁸³

The conventional path of the Shī‘ī juridical system clearly differentiates between three main types of syllogism. Considering the classical sources of Logic, all arguments are articulated in three categories:

- (a) Analogical inference (*tamthīlī*);
- (b) Deductive reasoning (*qīyās*);
- (c) Inductive reasoning (*al-istiqrā’ī*).

Although they are all named as syllogisms, their natures differ from a *recta ratio* to fallacy. Analogical inference or *qīyās al-tamthīl* is totally rejected and absolutely prohibited in the legal deduction process. This is because the reasons which should act as a commonplace connection (*had-i wasat*) behind judicial laws are not clear to the jurist, and as a result, he is not able to extend or stretch the roots to similar issues and simply re-uses the same verdict in a similar case. The only exception accepted in the system appears when the reason behind a judicial decree is 'specifically mentioned'. This type is called *qīyās manṣūṣ al-‘illah* (word-specified-reason analogy). In this case, the legal status follows the 'specified reason' and can be re-issued whenever it is found. In fact, there are few examples of such specified reasons in the Sharia law system. An infrequent but famous example is the legal injunction against alcohol. It is mentioned in the Qur’ān that the reason behind the prohibition of alcohol is the ecstasy which is caused by it; this means that the reason is ecstasy, not alcohol. This reason acts as a mediocre connection in forming a syllogism and enables the jurists to generalize the legal status of the prohibition of alcohol to any other liquid causing ecstasy. This extension is, for sure, a kind of syllogism or *qīyās* but is accepted in the Shī‘ī juridical system. Putting aside these few examples, it is unanimously asserted as a basic principle in the Shī‘ī legal system

382 Miṣbah al-Hudā p.5. For the primary source see Majlisī, M. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol.58, pp.314, and for original text see the appendix 4.30.

383 Miṣbah al-Hudā p.5. For the primary source see Al-Kuliynī, M. *al-Kāfi*, vol.1, pp.146. and for original text see the appendix 4.31.

that *qīyās* is not considered as one of the law-producing sources among the other four essential sources: the Qur’ān, authentic *hādīths*, *aql*, and *ijmā*³⁸⁴.

Nevertheless, for Islamic Philosophers and Islamic apologists (*mutakallims*), deductive reasoning (b) surpasses analogical inferences by a vital change in its essence. Classical Logic sources, which are still taught within the seminaries³⁸⁵, divide deductive reasoning into five types which are named as the Five Figures (*ṣanā‘at al-khams*) including (1) demonstrative reasoning (*burhān*), (2) dialectical inference (*jadal*), (3) poetry (*shīr*), (4) oratory (*khitābah*), and (5) sophistication (*moghālītah*). What divides these types is the material used in their premises. None of them is eligible to be used in any philosophical argumentation as logical reasoning except the first one (*qīyās al-burhān*). This kind of *qīyās* is not only legitimate, but also plays a key role as the focal intellectual proof (*burhān al-‘aqlī*) in rational demonstration. Again, the fundamental difference between these kinds of *qīyās* is not, of course, rooted in their format, but in the materials of the premises. In contrast with the rest of the types, the roots in deductive reasoning are always clear, and, the materials are also self-evident (*badīhi*). This is why the result of this syllogism is certain (*yaqīnī*), and essentially invincible. Basically, only a syllogism (*qīyās*) which meets these criteria is called *qīyās al-mantiqī*, or, in a more philosophical context, *burhān al-‘aqlī* (intellectual proof). The rest, such as *tamthīl*, poetry, or oratory are indeed devoid of any rational value. The term *al-burhān* itself is often used in apologetic sources and resonates a sense of transparent illumination and a logical reasoning supporting any rational argument in that context. It is usually defined as the ‘certain result gathered from the presupposed premises’. What is crucial in the accuracy of *al-burhān* is the logical connectivity between the premises and the result. Even if the premises are not true on their own, what concerns the syllogism is whether or not the result can be deduced from them³⁸⁶.

In sharp contrast, Mīrzā believes that there is no difference between all these kinds of syllogism, and what makes the use of *tamthīl* forbidden in the legal reasoning system, bans so-called *al-burhān* for the same reason. He asserts that dividing syllogism into *tamthīl* and *burhān* is nothing but shenanigans to hide the same refuted *qīyās* behind another name:

384 This is a very famous slogan of Shi‘ī uṣūl al-fiqh that syllogism (*qiās*) is totally rejected in Shi‘ī legal system indicating that Satan was the first one who did it: *Wa lays a min maḍhabena al-qīyās u avvalo man qasa howa alkhannaso*, more information can be attained in Muddarresī Ṭabāṭabā’ī works on the Shi‘ī legal sources. *Muqaddami-yī bar fiqhī Shī‘i* translated by Fikrat M.A. in Mashhad: bunyād-i pajhuhish hā-yi Islāmī Āstān-i quds-i Razawī.

385 For this look at some classical logical texts such as Al-Muẓaffar, M.R. (1375 SH). *al-Mantiq*, Qum: Dār al-‘Ilm. and for an older example see ’Ibn Shahīd alithānī, H. (1415 AH), *Ma‘ālim al-uṣūl*, Beirut: Dār al-Fikr al-‘Arabī.

386 ’Ibn Sīnā, H. (1364 SH). *al-Najāt*, Tīhrān: Murtaḍawī, p.31; ’Ibn Sīnā, H. (1381 SH). *Al-’Ishārāt wa al-Tanbīhāt*, Qum: Būstān-i Kitāb, v.1, p. 233; ’Ibn Sīnā, H. (1381 SH). *Al-’Ishārāt wa al-Tanbīhāt*, Qum: Būstān-i Kitāb. p. 71; Ṭūsī, M. (1375 SH). *Sharḥ-i Ishārāt wa al-Tanbīhāt*. Qum: Nashr al-Balāghih, v.1, pp. 233&4.

*'...naming Syllogism as Proof (*al-burhān*) is misguidance, ignorance, shenanigans, and deception'*³⁸⁷

He argues that according to the Holy Qur'ān what Satan did – and was soon rejected by Allah³⁸⁸ - was not a mere analogical reasoning, as philosophers claim, but it was an absolute deductive argumentation in a firm logical framework (*burhān*):

*'It is explicit that Satan's syllogism (*al-qīyās*) was in an argument form (*bi šūrat al-burhān*)'*.³⁸⁹

The problem of syllogism, for Mīrzā Mahdī, not only emerges from the material of premises – as usually declared by philosophers – but is also involved with its format besides its material:

The Form (*şurah*) of Syllogism (*şurat al-qīyās*)

The format of Syllogism is unable to enhance any cognitive value in its conclusion compared with its presupposed premises. This is because what is supposed to be obtained in the result, with a higher cognitive value, is already reached in its major premise. Take this famous example:

Minor: Socrates is a human

Major: Every human is mortal

Result: Socrates is mortal

To arrive at a correct conclusion, or an authentic logical syllogism, the major premise of the syllogism should always uphold a universal quantifier, included in all cases, in order to form a general law to cover the minor part. But the problem is that, in this case, if every single example has been counted in order to achieve a universal quantifier, then the minor premise should have been included among them as well. So, in the Socrates example, for instance, if we know that every human is mortal – and we should know with certainty in order to announce it in a correct major premise – then we should have already subsumed Socrates as one in the existing case of the major premise; otherwise our major premise would have been considered as a partial quantifier and failing to result in any conclusion. It means, then, that Socrates is already included in the major part of the syllogism and the instruction itself has nothing to add in its conclusion. This is a problem

387 Miṣbah al-Hudā p.5. For the primary source see Al-Barqī, A. *Al-Mahāsin*, vol.1, p.211. and for original text see the appendix 4.32; Miṣbah al-Hudā p.5. For the primary source see Majlisī, M. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol.2, pp.299. and for original text see the appendix 4.33.

388 It refers to many verses of Qur'ān where the very famous of Satan's disobedience has been frequently narrated in different wordings, For the primary source see *Al-Qur'ān*, Chapter al-A'rāf, Verse 12. and for original text see the appendix 1.33; *Al-Qur'ān*, Chapter Ṣād, Verse 76. and for original text see the appendix 1.34. Satan's syllogism may be formed this way (a) I am created of fire and Adam is created of mud, (b) fire is better than the mud, (Result) Adam does not deserve my prostration.

389 Miṣbah al-Hudā p.8.

caused by the major part of the syllogism which is the main condition for having a true rational syllogism. The conclusion is that no matter what is used as the material in the premises, the format of syllogism is cognitively barren in its quintessence.

This idea is well-explained in later *tafkīkī* accounts. The best example can be found in ‘The Problem of Syllogism’ by Alī Ridā Rahīmīyin where the differences of the usage of syllogism in legal analogies and philosophers’ arguments are fully examined.³⁹⁰ Yet again, Mīrzā Mahdī and his followers are not the first, nor are they the last, in the list of those who expressed the idea of the cognitive-infertility of deductive reasoning systems. There are many philosophers who have also pointed out this issue³⁹¹. Siyyid Yahyā Yathribī is a good contemporary example from outside *tafkīkī* area.³⁹² For a classical work on the conflicts around syllogism (*qīyās*) one can read Qazālī’s work and many commentaries on it.³⁹³

The Material of Premises (*māddat al-qīyās*)

This part of the problem is more of a concern for Mīrzā Mahdī. The materials used in the ‘logical syllogism’ in philosophical contexts – indeed for the sake of theological purposes – have a more damaging effect because they are likely to compare Allah with his creatures in order to arrive at a correct conclusion. Mīrzā persists that the problem which caused the injunction on the use of ‘analogical reasoning’ in sharia law does exist in ‘deductive reasoning’. Mīrzā assumes that it is not just the two legal statuses which are compared with each other, but it is Allah who is put in comparison with his own creatures, and, it is Mīrzā’s doctrinal borderline:

‘And also syllogism is based on the ascribing and describing to Almighty Allah what he did not describe to himself’³⁹⁴

For the same reason, he continues in his open critiques the most important example of the logical argument for the existence of God, known as the Causal Proof (*burhān al-‘illīya*):

‘...logical syllogism which is based on the Causality (*al-‘illīya*) and being caused (*ma‘lūlīya*) is based on ascribing (*qīyās*) “necessary”

390 Rahīmīyān, A. (1385 SH). *Mas`alih-yi ‘qīyās*. Tīhrān: Munīr.

391 Muṭahharī, M. (1374 SH). *‘Āshnāyī ba ‘Ulūm-I Islāmī*. Tīhrān: Ṣadrā, v.1 ; Anderson, S. (1385 SH). *Falsafi-yi John Stuart Mill*, Tīhrān: Tarh-I Naw, v.1, p.209.

392 He believes we do not have a up to dated and efficient Philosophy. Yathribī S.Y. (1388 SH). ‘*Ittifāq khud nemī-uftad*’, *Journal of Khirad-nāmih hamshahrī*, 33; Yathribī S.Y. (1384 SH). ‘*Naqdī bar qā‘idi-yi al-wāhid wa aṣl-i sinkhīyyat*’, *Journal of Bāztab-I Andīshih*, 75.

393 See Qazālī, *Tahāfut al-falāsifah*. In this significant book he numerates 20 contradictions between Islamic instructions and Philosophical argumentations; such as *hādīth* and *qidam* (initiation and eternality/perpetuating), knowledge of God; does it belong to the details, bodily/materiality afterworld... he also mentions self-contradictions within Philosophical bases as it is Mīrzā Mahdi’s method and I named it refutation level. it is interesting that there are even some scholars who had written books against philosophy under the same name of *tahāfut al-falāsifah*, such as Qutb al-dīn Rāvandī; Alā al-dīn Tūsī; Khājih-Zādīh ...

394 Miṣbah al-Hudā p.5.

*(wājib) to “possible” (mumkin), and light to darkness, [whereas] Causality is essentially invalid (bāṭil)...*³⁹⁵

The last sentence indicates that he does not believe in Causality, in its philosophical context. It can be said that for Mīrzā Mahdī Causality constitutes likening God to the creatures (*tamthīl*), which is totally rejected. Any so-called rational argument remains analogical for him and if, only if, it works as a true knowledge in the realm of Human Science, it will not be applicable in the field of theology, simply because there is no mediocre connection (*had-i wasaṭ*) that can be used in this syllogism. According to the Logical definition of syllogism, when the mediocre connection is lost, *qiyās al-burhān* cannot be formed: it is just an analogy or *tamthīl*. Obviously, Allah has nothing in common with his creations that can be scaled in the same syllogism. This comparison is absolutely ineffective. Yet again, this genre of criticism has a lot of sympathy, both from the perspective of Islamic intellectual history and Western Philosophy, and indeed from other viewpoints³⁹⁶.

In addition, it is interesting that he posits the syllogism against ‘*aql*’. He maintains that human beings have been gifted a light of ‘*aql*/ by God which enables them to distinguish between true and false. It sheds light on problems which are included under its territory as such as in the case of syllogism. He tacitly raises the question of how is it acceptable that one starts sifting and evaluating different syllogisms to see if they are true or false? How is it possible that something which is supposed to enlighten other issues is now being enlightened? And, how is it that one uses another power to verify the authenticity of something called evident and a valid reason (*al-burhān*)? Simply, if it was a real evident reason (light), it essentially could not be checked by any other light. Syllogism is absolutely not an authentic proof, because it is always being checked and there are many syllogisms that we know are not true.

The way that Mīrzā criticizes the syllogism helps us to understand the notion of ‘*aql*’ in his thought. It is clear that, for him, the light, proof, or *burhān*, should be something infallible (*al-hujjat*): something beyond any doubt, something as an ultimate enlightening tool. He considers that syllogism is not as true a light to stand for such an internal guide (*hujjat al-bāṭinīyyah*), or divine proof, as ‘*aql*’:

*‘And [‘aql] is a proof that syllogism in fundamental principles (*uṣūl*) and derivative principles is absolutely repulsive and impure, as it is the act of Satan, because we are not sure about its falsity’*³⁹⁷

He continues and hardly posits syllogism against the revelation for the same reason:

395 Ibid.

396 It's not difficult to find Ghazalī and other ‘ash’arī perspectives in line with many of Mīrzā Mahdī’s ideas, this comparison though, is beyond the scope of this research. Many similar objections to Aristotle and Plato can be found in the incoherence of the philosophers.

397 ibid.

‘The first principle on which the principles of the Prophet and his Progeny PBUH have been established is ‘*aql*/ which is explicit for every intellectual (‘*āqil*)... and is against the literal syllogism which is the idiomatic ‘*aql* (*al-aql al-iṣṭilāḥī*) in its Human knowledge....’³⁹⁸

3.3.3 Ontological Divergence, Epistemic Chasm; the Notion of Intellect and Knowledge in Islamic Philosophy

Epistemological issues are inextricably linked to ontological ones; consequently one should first delve into Mīrzā Mahdī’s ontological points of view about the light of intellect to find out its epistemological role in his thought. As discussed in previous sections, ontological foundations are given a high platform in his methodology. He recognizes ontological debate over the materiality of ego as the most fundamental basis of argumentation by philosophers and mystics. He endeavours to show that the reality of ego, which each individual can potentially conceive – indeed, when freed from all pre backgrounds – is quite different from what philosophers depict or mystics found as an immaterial intelligence, as a higher level of human being. For Mīrzā, ego is a material and completely dependent worldly creation. This notion can evidently be traced in the texts, too. It is important again, as a methodical strategy, that he attempts first to criticize philosophy as an insider, and then to show the contradictions between the Scripture and philosophy from an outsider’s perspective. The same method can be seen in his discussion on the ontology of ‘*aql*. His discussion begins with a critique of philosophical interpretations of intellect and then moves forward to the scriptural proofs and documents.

Mīrzā Mahdī draws a line between the two systems and asserts that the text stands far apart from what philosophers and mystics inferred or deduced. In Gilbert Ryle’s terms³⁹⁹, category mistakes and philosophical nonsense, Mīrzā accuses philosophers of ‘making technical mistakes’. He actually believes that the miracle of the Qur’ān is rooted in the contrast drawn within the Qur’ān with Hellenistic knowledge. He says in the introduction of *Abwāb al-Hudā*:

398 Miṣbah al-Hudā, pp.4&5.

399 Here are his words:

I hope to prove that it is entirely false, and false not in detail but in principle. It is not merely an assemblage of particular mistakes. It is one big mistake and a mistake of a special kind. It is, namely, a category-mistake. It represents the facts of mental life as if they belonged to one logical type or category (or range of types or categories), when they actually belong to another.) The dogma is therefore a philosopher’s myth. In attempting to-explode the myth I shall probably be taken to be denying well-known facts about the mental life of human beings, and my plea that I aim at doing nothing more than rectify the logic of mental-conduct concepts will probably be disallowed as mere subterfuge. Gilbert, R. (1949). *The Concept of Mind*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

*'Introduction: It has been clarified in its place that the main aspect of the miracle of the Glorious Qur'an is its noble knowledge and maxims, in contrast with the old Philosophical knowledge'*⁴⁰⁰

Modern Islamic Philosophy has two main branches: 'Fundamental Reality of the Being' (*iṣālat al-wujūd*) and 'Fundamental Reality of the Quiddity' (*iṣālat al-māhiyya*). As it is clear from the names, the division is rooted in the originality, whether from the 'Being' or the 'Essence'.⁴⁰¹ It is a fundamental ontological division, however; mainstream Iranian philosophers maintain that the originality goes back to 'Being'. As it is clear the dispute is rooted in the concept of Being. The primordial question about the reality of being. By 'Fundamental Reality of the Being' (*iṣālat al-wujūd*) the differences in the word as we see are secondary and accidential. It means the whole being is one creature with different manifestations. In this picture of the being, it looks like that one phenomenon is manifested in different levels, colors and types. The whole being is one and united as it is. There is no difference in reality. It is our weakness which puts limits to see this reality as one incoherence. On the other hand, in 'Fundamental Reality of the Quiddity' (*iṣālat al-māhiyya*) camp the being is nothing but these differences. This calls for further research to comprehend all the different approaches. Bearing this in mind, the following analysis examines the main epistemic ideas about knowledge and intellect from the most eminent philosophers. Classical works by famous philosophers such as Mullā Ṣadrā, Sheikh 'Ishrāq, Mullā Hādī Sabziwārī alongside eminent modern figures like 'Allāmah Tabāṭabā'i, Murtadā Muṭahharī, Mahdī Ḥā'irī Yazdī, Jawādī Āmulī, Miṣbāḥ Yazdī, and Fayyādī are examined. Among all these great names, Mullā Ṣadrā is given a higher standing for his effective works in congregating the two main Islamic philosophies namely Peripatetic/Aristotelian Philosophy (*Mashshā*), and *Illuminationism* ('Ishrāq), in his *ascendant philosophy*, well known as '*Hikmat al-Muta'āliyyah*'. As it is mentioned above It is clear that the '*Ṣadrāyan School*' still holds dominance over the minds of Muslim philosophers.⁴⁰²

400 Abwāb al-Hudā, p.2.

401 Ṣadr al-Din Shīrāzī, M. (1981) *al-Hikmah al-Muti'ālīyyah fī al-Asfār al-'Aqlīyyah al-'Arba'ah*, Beirut: Dār 'iḥyā' al-turāth al-'Arabī; Tabāṭabā'i, S.M.H. (1394 SH). *Nihāyah al-Hikmah*, Qum: 'Intishārāt-I Mu'assisah-yi Farhangī Pajhūhishī-yi 'Imām Khumiynī; Tabāṭabā'i, S.M.H. (1399 SH). *Bidāyah al-Hikmah*. Qum: 'Āl-I 'Aḥmad; Miṣbāḥ Yazdī, M.T. (1394 SA). 'Amūzish-I Falsafih. Qum: Mu'assisah-yi Amūzishī wa Pajhūhishī-yi Imam Khumiynī; Mutahharī, M. (1382 SH). *Sharh-i Manzūmeh*. Tīhrān: Ṣadrā. And for western references see Madelung, W, 2000. "To See all things in things in the sight of God: Nasīr al-Dīn al-Tūsī's attitude to sufism", in N. Pourjavady and Z. Vesel 2000: 1–11; Corbin, Henry (2014) [1993]. History of Islamic Philosophy. Translated by Liadain Sherrard; Philip Sherrard. Abingdon, Oxford: Routledge ,History of Islamic Philosophy (Routledge History of World Philosophies) by Seyyed Hossein Nasr and Oliver Leaman [eds.]

402 Almost all philosophical textbooks and courses are still structured based on Ṣadrā's articulation of being and quiddity. For a recent academic survey on Ṣadrā's literature, life and

Despite the fact that epistemic means are considered to be self-evident in almost all classical sources of Islamic Philosophy⁴⁰³, at advanced levels, they gradually delve into extensive and perplexing analytical explanations⁴⁰⁴. They accept that epistemic means cannot be defined.

Mullā Ṣadrā, at the beginning of his chapter on ‘*aql* and *ma’qūl* (what is comprehended) clearly asserts:

‘Seemingly the knowledge is one of the facts that their being (innīyyatuhā) is their quiddity (māhīyyatuhā), and these kind of facts cannot be defined, because definitions are made of ‘kind’ (jins) and ‘differential’ (faṣl), and these are general issues whereas each being is recognized by its ‘being’, and it is also impossible to define

impact Sajjad Rizvi works are of the best references. Some of his pupils have not accepted Mullā Ṣadrā in his time, namely: Mullā Rajab and Mullā Bāqir Sabziwārī, Āqā Ḥusayn Khunsārātī, Abd al-Razzaq Lāhijītī, Muḥammad Bāqir Sabziwārī. Amongst his pupils Fiyd̄ al-Kāshānī has been more influenced by him. In the second round of students, names such as Muḥammad Bīd-ābādī, Mullā Alī Nūrī, and also later Muḥammad Almāsī (grandson of Majlisī) who took drastic majors in publicizing Mullā Ṣadrā’s Philosophy. There are many famous names of philosophers come after as the provocateurs of Ṣadrā’īan School of thought: Mulla Hādī Sabziwārī, Āqā Alī Mudarris-i Tehrāni, Mahdī Āshṭāyānī, Abo al-Hasan Sha’rāni, and from contemporaries’ names like Siyyid Muḥammad Ḥusayn Tabātabā’ī, Mahdī Hā’irī-yi Yazdī and Siyyid Jalāl Ashtāyānī. There are even more effects reported in Indian Philosophers beside some Western Scholars.

403 For instance, see: Ṣadr al-Din Shīrāzī, M. (1981) *al-Hikmah al-Mutī’ālīyyah fī al-Asfār al-‘Aqlīyyah al-‘Arba‘ah*, Beirut: Dār ‘ihyā’ al-turāth al-‘Arabī, v.3, p.278: There is nothing in the world most known than knowledge because it is a sensual (*nafsānī*) intuitive (*vijdānī*) feeling that the live knower finds it from its essence initially without a misconception or falsity and what this is its nature rejects to be known by something more evident and clear. Also see Ṭabāṭabā’ī, S.M.H. (1394 SH). *Nihāyah al-Hikmah*, Qum: ’Intishārāt-I Mu’assisih-yi Farhangī Pajhūhishī-yi ’Imām Khumiynī. Chapter 11: The existence of the knowledge is intuitively necessary to us and similarly its concept is evident for us. And Mišbāh Yazdī, M.T. (1394 SA). *Amūzish-I Falsafih*. Qum: Mu’assisih-yi Amūzishī wa Pajhūhishī-yi Imam Khumiynī, v.1, p.136: The concept of the Knowledge is one of most evident concepts and not only does not need to be defined but also it is impossible to define it. Mas’aliyah-yi ’ilm, p.28; Hā’irī-yi Yazdī, M. (1384 SH). Kāwush-hāy-i ‘Aql-i Naẓarī, Tīhrān: Mu’assisih-yi Pajhūhishī-yi Ḥikmat wa Falsafih-yi Irān, p.117; Ṣadr al-Din Shīrāzī, M. (1981) *al-Hikmah al-Mutī’ālīyyah fī al-Asfār al-‘Aqlīyyah al-‘Arba‘ah*, Beirut: Dār ‘ihyā’ al-turāth al-‘Arabī, v.3, p.278. or more recent examples see the chapter of ‘Ilm in ‘As’adī, ‘A.R. (1391 SH). *Āqāhāz-I Ḥikmat: Darsnamih-yi Falsafih bar ‘Asās-I Bidāyah al-Hikmah ‘Allāmih ṬabāṬabāyī*. Tīhrān: ’Intishārāt-I ’Ilmī wa Farhangī.

404 The examples of this can be found here: Fayyādī, Gh.R. ed., (1394 SH). *Ta’līqat ‘alā Nahāyat al-Hikmah*. Qum: Mu’assisih-yi Amūzishī wa Pajhūhishī-yi Imam Khumiynī, v.1, p.143; Ṣadr al-Din Shīrāzī, M. (1981) *al-Hikmah al-Mutī’ālīyyah fī al-Asfār al-‘Aqlīyyah al-‘Arba‘ah*, Beirut: Dār ‘ihyā’ al-turāth al-‘Arabī, v.3, pp.507,448,447&382.

it by ‘Complete Description’ (rasm al-tām), because there is nothing better known than knowledge’.⁴⁰⁶

Mullā Ṣadrā refers to Shiykh ’Ishrāq to show that the evidence of knowledge is supported by great philosophers, even from an alternative side of ’Ishrāq:

*‘The Martyred Shiykh, the author of the book *Hikmat al-’Ishrāq*, attests that the knowledge is manifestation, and manifestation is the essence of the light itself’.*⁴⁰⁷

’Allamah Ṭabāṭabā’ī clarifies the impossibility of definition (*lā yuḥad*) in Mullā Ṣadrā’s words:

*‘There are different ideas about the knowledge between scholars, and some of them say it cannot be defined, as what is found per se (*umūr-i wijdānī*) is self-evident and cannot be known by darker substances, and knowledge is one of them because what is not knowledge is known by knowledge, and if knowledge ought to be known by them: it will lead to a Circular reasoning’⁴⁰⁸*

’Allāmah stipulates that knowledge is evident in the opinion of many philosophers:

*‘We find the existence of knowledge essential, and likewise, its concept is evidential for us’*⁴⁰⁹

The same can be seen in Fayyādī and Mullā Hādī Sabziwārī’s words⁴¹⁰. Mīsbāh Yazdī, also, in his commentary on Ṭabāṭabā’ī’s *Nahāyat al-ḥikmah*, highlights that nothing is clearer than knowledge and it can only be found by itself, by its signs and effects:

406 Mas’aliyah-i ‘ilm, p.28. For the primary source see Ṣadr al-Din Shīrāzī, M. (1981) *al-Hikmah al-Mutī’ālīyyah fī al-Asfār al-‘Aqlīyyah al-‘Arba‘ah*, Beirut: Dār ‘iḥyā’ al-turāth al-‘Arabī, v.3, p.278.

407 Mas’aliyah-i ‘ilm, p.35. For the primary source see Ṣadr al-Din Shīrāzī, M. (1981) *al-Hikmah al-Mutī’ālīyyah fī al-Asfār al-‘Aqlīyyah al-‘Arba‘ah*, Beirut: Dār ‘iḥyā’ al-turāth al-‘Arabī, v.3, p.258.

408 Mas’aliyah-i ‘ilm, p.29. For the primary source see Ḥillī, H. (1407 AH). *Kashf al-Murād*, Qum: Mu’assisah al-Nashr al-Islāmī, p.241.

409 Mas’aliyah-i ‘ilm, p.32. For the primary source see Ṭabāṭabā’ī, S.M.H. (1394 SH). *Nihāyah al-Ḥikmah*, Qum: ‘Intishārāt-I Mu’assisah-yi Farhangī Pajhūhishī-yi ’Imām Khumiynī, chapter 11.

410 Mas’aliyah-i ‘ilm, p.31. For the primary source see Mīsbāh Yazdī, M.T. (1394 SA). *’Amūzish-I Falsafah*, Qum: Mu’assisah-yi Amūzishī wa Pajhūhishī-yi Imam Khumiynī, p.33; Fayyādī, Gh.R. ed., (1394 SH). *Ta’liqat ‘alā Nahāyat al-Ḥikmah*. Qum: Mu’assisah-yi Amūzishī wa Pajhūhishī-ylmam Khumiynī, v.4, p.917; Mas’aliyah-i ‘ilm, p.35. For the primary source see Sabziwārī, M.H. (1369 SH). *Sharḥ al-Manzūmah*, Tīhrān: Nāb, p.160.

*'Defining knowledge by no means is by kind (jins) and differential (faṣl), ...the evident concept does not need any definition yet it is impossible to define it at all, but its definition is a means to mention its characteristics and signs.'*⁴¹¹

However, the clear fundamental epistemic meaning, which was not supposed to be found but by itself, uncovers a lot of perplexing explanations in order to be defined and analogized. The analyses are needed to resolve the fundamental problem of reality, which has continuously been the most disputable epistemological problem from ancient eras to modern times.⁴¹² Philosophers put forward analyses based on ontological interpretations of different levels of being (*wujūd*) to show the reliability of Human knowledge. How do we know that what we know is real and true? How can we trust it? How can one testify to the Reality of one's knowledge?

The Ṣadrāyīan School – as the mainstream branch of Islamic philosophy – answers the question of reality this way:⁴¹³

The concept of Knowledge in its essence is based on the presences (*hudūr*). All kinds of knowledge are divided into two types: acquired knowledge '*ilm al-ḥuṣūl*'⁴¹⁴ and presential knowledge '*ilm al-hudūr*'.⁴¹⁵ Acquired knowledge is secondary and eventually goes back to presential knowledge as it is the real knowledge or more accurately, it is the knowledge. Although there are different interpretations of the process of knowing based

411 Mas'alihi-yi 'ilm, p.30. For the primary source see Fayyādī, Gh.R. ed., (1394 SH). *Ta'līqat 'alā Nahāyat al-Hikmah*. Qum: Mu'assissih-yi Amūzishī wa Pajhūhishī-yi Imam Khumiynī, p.351

412 It goes back to the early debates between sophists and philosophers and continues to the modern era. For instance, Stephen Hawking locates his main question over the reality in his works. The most influential books in modern philosophy in Iran Ṭabāṭabā'i, S.M.H. (1399 SH). *Bidāyah al-Hikmah*. Qum: 'Āl-I 'Ahmad. is also merely an attempt to answer the same question; the question of reality.

413 The Contribution of Corbin and Nasr should be taken into consideration: Corbin, H. (1986). *Temple and Contemplation*, Oxford: Taylor & Francis. For instance, draws an exact outline of what one can expect as a result of a Shi'a thought drenched with Sadrāyīan School. (آنکه)

Nasr, S.H. (1997). Sadr al-din shirazi and his transcendent theosophy background, life and works, Tahrān: Institute for humanities and cultural studies; Rizvi, Sajjad H. (2007). Mullā Ṣadrā Shīrāzī: His Life and Works and the Sources for Safavid Philosophy. Oxfordshire: Oxford University Press; Rizvi, Sajjad H. (2009). Mulla Sadra and Metaphysics. Oxfordshire: Routledge; Kalin, I. (2010). Knowledge in Later Islamic Philosophy: Mulla Sadra on Existence, Intellect, and Intuition. Oxfordshire: Oxford University Press; Ṣadr al-Din Shīrāzī, M. (1981). *al-Hikmah al-Mutī'ālīyyah fī al-Asfār al-'Aqlīyyah al-'Arba'ah*. Beirut: Dār 'ihyā' al-turāth al-'Arabī; Suhrevardī, Sh. (1392 SH). *Hikmah al-'Ishrāq*. Tahrān: Bunyād Ḥikmat 'Islāmī-yi Ṣadrā.

414 Ayer, A.J. (1955). *The Foundations of Empirical Knowledge*. London: Macmillan; Moser, P.K. (1996). *Empirical Knowledge: Readings in Contemporary Epistemology*. Lanham, Md: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers; Bonjour, L. (2000). *The Structure of Empirical Knowledge*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.

415 Ḥā'irī Yazdī, M. (1992). *The Principles of Epistemology in Islamic Philosophy: Knowledge by Presence*, New York: State University of New York Press; Ḥā'irī Yazdī, M. (1983). *Knowledge by Presence*. Tehran: Cultural Studies and Research Institute; Kalin, I. (2011). *Knowledge in Later Islamic Philosophy: Mulla Sadra on Existence, Intellect, and Intuition*. New York: Oxford University Press; Nasr, H. & Leaman, O. (2001). *History of Islamic Philosophy*. London: Routledge.

on Causality (*'illiyah*), for instance, they all return to the presential knowledge: when we know something, in fact we are connected and, more precisely, united with it in our mind. The substance in its lower level exists in our minds and is united with us, it actually presents us (*ṣūrat al-dhihnī*)⁴¹⁶. Our real knowledge about the exterior world can be trusted as it comes back to our knowledge about ourselves, which is the most trusted and even undoubted knowledge of us⁴¹⁷. Needless to say, this epistemic analysis twists in the famous Philosophical ontology: the unity of the knower, the knowledge, and the known –and in a more mystical terms, the unity of existence (*wahdat al-wujūd*) which is one of the most controversial issues in philosophy and mysticism from a *Tafkīk* perspective. The most trusted knowledge we have is about ourselves, and our being. We have (presumably) no doubt about ourselves⁴¹⁸. So, if something is united with us, is part of us, then we should have no doubt about it as we have no doubt about ourselves. Our knowledge is us, and we are our knowledge. The remaining problem is how to justify this process, the process of unification through which all outsider substances are absorbed and become united with the knower. Is it possible in reality, or, is it just a theory? Do we find ourselves united with our knowledge? In the outside world we clearly do not find ourselves united with other material substances; therefore, if there is any unity, it should be another level of being (non-material) for all substances in order to become united with each other; that level, surely, is bereft of any potential faculty (*quwwah*), or material (*māddah*), it should be just a being. It is in that level that substances presence each other in a perfect presence (*huzūr al-tām*)⁴¹⁹. Subsequently, the knower should have the same level of being (*wujūd al-dhihnī*) in order to be united with outsider substances in the form of *ṣūrah al-dhihnī*. This analysis is quite appealing because it fits fully into the vital theory of Different Levels of Being (*tashkīk marātib al-wujūd*) in Mullā Ṣadrā's thought. He demonstrates this in his different works:

'...there is an unanimity among all philosophers (*ḥukamā*), except a very rare group of literalists (*zāhirīyyīn*), that there is another level of being for each substance apart from this type of apparent being, and what is found manifested (*zuhūr al-makshūf*) for all

416 Mas`alih-yi `ilm, pp.108&109. For the primary source see Ṭabāṭabā'i, S.M.H. (1394 SH). *Nihāyah al-Hikmah*, Qum: 'Intishārāt-I Mu'assisih-yi Farhangī Pajhūhishī-yi 'Imām Khumiynī, Chapter 11, section 1&15 that referred to Ṣadr al-Din Shīrāzī, M. (1981) *al-Hikmah al-Muti'āliyyah fī al-Asfār al-'Aqlīyyah al-'Arba'ah*, Beirut: Dār 'Ihyā' al-turāth al-'Arabī.

417 For detailed explanation of this process see Ṭabāṭabā'i, S.M.H. (1394 SH). *Nihāyah al-Hikmah*, Qum: 'Intishārāt-I Mu'assisih-yi Farhangī Pajhūhishī-yi 'Imām Khumiynī, chapter 11, section 1&2.

418 For this see Ṭabāṭabā'i, S.M.H. (1394 SH). *Nihāyah al-Hikmah*, Qum: 'Intishārāt-I Mu'assisih-yi Farhangī Pajhūhishī-yi 'Imām Khumiynī, chapter 11, section 1, where he says: 'and one of the kinds of knowledge is the knowledge of us of ourselves to which one refers to him/herself by 'I' and does not neglect him/herself in any occasion... and it is not by presence of our quiddity in a conceptual presence or acquired knowledge'.

419 For instance, see Ṭabāṭabā'i, S.M.H. (1394 SH). *Nihāyah al-Hikmah*, Qum: 'Intishārāt-I Mu'assisih-yi Farhangī Pajhūhishī-yi 'Imām Khumiynī, chapter 11, section 1, where he says: 'acquiring knowledge is bereft of material and deficiencies of faculties.'

people is another being or manifestation which is called ‘conceptual being’ (*wujūd al-dhihnī*).⁴²⁰

*‘Knowledge in our opinion, as it has been mentioned many times,
is the non-material presence’*⁴²¹

The same definition can be found in other classical sources⁴²². Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā’ī, in his chapter about ‘*aql* (intellect), ‘*āqil* (intellectual) and *ma’qūl* (intelligible), emphasises the same aspect and expands on the relationship between acquired and present knowledge:

*‘We have knowledge of outsider substances in a way that they present us in their quiddity per se (*tahdūrū ‘indanā bi-māhīyyati-hā bi ‘aynihā*), not in their outsider being (*lā bi wujūdātihā al-khārijīyyah*) ... and this is a kind of knowledge which is called acquired knowledge.’*

Here he clarifies more and expands on the unity between knower, knowledge, and known:

*‘by acquiring knowledge we mean achieving the known (*ḥuṣūl al-ma’lūm lanā*), because the knowledge is exactly the known substance, because we mean by knowledge nothing but achieving the known for us, and achieving and acquiring is nothing but its existence, and its existence is itself, and there is no meaning for acquiring knowledge for the knower but the unity of the knower with the known.*⁴²³

420 Mas`alih-yi ‘ilm, p.47. For the primary source see Ṣadr al-Din Shīrāzī, M. (1981) *al-Hikmah al-Muti’ālīyyah fī al-Asfār al-‘Aqlīyyah al-‘Arba‘ah*, Beirut: Dār ‘Iḥyā’ al-turāth al-‘Arabī, v.1, p.263; Mas`alih-yi ‘ilm, p.51. For the primary source see Jawādī ‘Āmulī, ‘A. (1393 SH). *Rahīq-i Makhtūm*. Qum: ‘Asrā’, v.1 and v.4, pp.351&352.

421 Mas`alih-yi ‘ilm, p.75. For the primary source see Ṣadr al-Din Shīrāzī, M. *al-Hikmah al-Muti’ālīyyah fī al-Asfār al-‘Aqlīyyah al-‘Arba‘ah*, v.3, p.382; Mas`alih-yi ‘ilm, pp.73&74. For the primary source see Ṣadr al-Din Shīrāzī, M. *al-Hikmah al-Muti’ālīyyah fī al-Asfār al-‘Aqlīyyah al-‘Arba‘ah*, v.3, pp.447,448&507.

422 Mas`alih-yi ‘ilm, p.48. For the primary source see Jawādī ‘Āmulī, ‘A. (1393 SH). *Rahīq-i Makhtūm*. Qum: ‘Asrā’, v.4, p.15; Mas`alih-yi ‘ilm, p.75. For the primary source see Muṭahharī, M. and Ṭabāṭabā’ī, S.M.H. (1332 SH). *‘Uṣūl-i Falsafī wa rawish-I Rīālīsm*, Tīhrān: Ṣadrā, v.2, p.38.

423 Mas`alih-yi ‘ilm, p.77. For the primary source see Ṭabāṭabā’ī, S.M.H. (1399 SH). *Bidāyah al-Hikmah*. Qum: ‘Āl-I ‘Aḥmad, chapter 11, section 1&2.

This analysis could potentially resolve the problem of Reality, if one could easily testify to the unity between what he/she knows (finds in his mind) and the outside world; otherwise, the problem will not be removed, but only moved from one place to another, a darker position, in our mind. Yet, many philosophers have mentioned the insufficiency of the theory⁴²⁴, and eventually have implied knowledge as a self-evidential reality. Here is one clear example from Mullā Ṣadrā:

*‘...how can knowledge be projected by other things, for knowledge is a projector of things, if it is so, what is essentially the projector (*al-kāshif bi al-dhāt*) should change to something which is secondarily projected (*monkashifan bi al-‘arad*).’*⁴²⁵

Based on the same ontological approach of different levels of being towards knowledge, similar epistemic analysis is provided to explain the functionality of intellect. Being as one and united with impervious facts at different levels of intensity is articulated from the highest level of being to the lowest levels of quiddity. Perfection and progress are actually the being (*wujūd*), per se. An existence is perfect when ascending to the higher level of being, when it becomes more and more bereft of lack (*‘adam*)⁴²⁶. Existents are united in being, yet, have reached different levels. The entire being is graded from (1) the highest level of being which is God and is inaccessible, (2) independent intellect (*‘aql al-mojarrad*) which is non-material, (3) egos or souls (*nufūs*), (4) natures (*ṭabāyi*), (5) corporal forms (*ṣuwar-i jismānī*), (6) primal matter (*hayūlā-yi owlā*), (7) time (*zamān*), and (8) movement (*hārkat*).⁴²⁷ These eight levels are in line and make three different worlds. To become intellectual, human beings should pass throughout different levels in the perfected journey from the vegetative (*nabātī*) level in the womb to the animal (*haywānī*) level as an infant, and finally, if succeeded, to the intellectual level.⁴²⁸ According to Mullā Ṣadrā, this is the highest level of humanity and only a few people are eventually able to reach this pinnacle.⁴²⁹ Human beings who ascend to this level must be of the highest level of piety and purity, they are absorbed in divine essence (*fānī*). This is the level of annihilation (*fanā*).⁴³⁰

424 Mas`alih-yi ‘ilm, p.86. For the primary source see Muṭahharī, M. (1392 SH). *Sharḥ-I Mabsūt-I Manzūmeh*. Tīhrān: Ṣadrā, v.3, pp.307-14 & v.1, p.406; Mas`alih-yi ‘ilm, p.94. For the primary source see Muṭahharī, M. (1393 SH). *Maqālāt-i Falsafī*, Tīhrān: Ṣadrā., v.3, p.156; Muṭahharī, M. (1370 SH). *Dars-hā-yi ‘Ilāhīyyat-i Shafā*, Tīhrān: Ḥikmat, v.1, p.34; Jawādī ‘Amūlī, ‘A. (1393 SH). *Rahīq-i Makhtūm*. Qum: ‘Asrā’, v.2, p.302.

425 Mas`alih-yi ‘ilm, p.156. For the primary source see Mafātīḥ al-ghayb, p. 261, for more examples from Mullā Ṣadrā see Sharḥ-i Uṣūl-i Kafī, 2/71,73, 2/82, 83, 96,97,135,52p. 142; Muṭahharī, M. *Sharḥ-i Manzūmeh*, pp.1/264 ,267, 2/88,9; 2/90-1; Miṣbāḥ Yazdī, M.T. ‘Amūzish-I Falsafih dars-i 23.

426 Ṣadr al-Din Shīrāzī, M. *al-Hikmah al-Muti‘ālīyyah fī al-Asfār al-‘Aqlīyyah al-‘Arba‘ah*, v.9, pp. 121,1382, 297, 1353, 363.

427 Ibid, p.121.

428 Ibid, v.8, pp.136-7.

429 Ibid, v.9, pp. 98,377,383.

430 Ibid, v.9, pp. 377, 383.

In this context, Intellect is a level of being. There is nothing supplementary to be attached to the soul of an intellectual. On the contrary, the soul, itself, is now enhanced to the level of intellectualism, to the world of intellects, it is intellectual or more precisely, is intellect. The same ontological unity between knowledge, knower, and known crystallizes between intellect, intellectual, and the intelligibles. In a fully mystical account, in this category, an intellectual finds all creatures within his/her soul. This is because intellect is the first creation and the entire world, which is nothing but intellectual, is embodied in it.⁴³¹ Mullā Ṣadrā explicitly asserts that all these levels are beams of God's light. They are created in 'His being' not by 'His creation', and are based abidingly on His sustainability. He does not make them sustainable, and this is what is renowned as unity and manifestation.⁴³² As a result, one becomes intellectual when his/her soul rises to the level of intellect; in that level, the soul, which is in fact intellect, contains all intelligible concepts (*ma'qūlāt*).

Mīrzā explains the same idea about the certainty and reality of the knowledge in his *Mafātiḥ al-ghayb*:

‘Knowledge [in philosophy], which is either conception (*taṣawwur*), or assertion/credulitus/assensus (*taṣdīq*), is certain (*jāzim*), exact (*muṭābiq*), firm (*thābit*), cannot be defined (*lā yuhad*) ...’⁴³³

3.4 If Philosophy is wrong, what is right? Epistemological Functionality of ‘aql in Mīrzā Mahdī Iṣfahānī’s thought

Outline

This section attempts to find out how Mīrzā Mahdī looks at ‘aql; its importance, ontological notion, various functionalities, and epistemic differences between philosophy

431 Ṣadr al-Din Shīrāzī, M. (1366 SH). *Sharḥ Uṣūl al-Kāfi*. Tīhrān: Mu'assisih-yi Muṭāli'āt wa Tahqīqāt-I Farhangī; Ṣadr al-Din Shīrāzī, M. *al-Hikmah al-Muti'āliyyah fī al-Asfār al-'Aqlīyyah al-'Arba'ah*, v.8, pp.131-2.

432 Ṣadr al-Din Shīrāzī, M. *al-Hikmah al-Muti'āliyyah fī al-Asfār al-'Aqlīyyah al-'Arba'ah*, v.9, pp.140-1. A good modern explanation of this mystical ontology of Islamic Philosophy can be found in Henry Corbin's works. For instance, see Corbin, H. (1998). *Alone with Alone*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press. where an absolute mystical picture of shiā doctrine is presented to the Western reader. There are also other academic figures to be taken as examples: 'Amīr Muizzī, M. A. (2015). *The Silent Qur'an and the Speaking Qur'an: Scriptural Sources of Islam Between History and Fervor*. New York: Columbia University Press; Shāh Kāzimī, R. (2006). *The Light of the One: The Universality of the Qur'an and Interfaith Dialogue*. Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society.

433 Mas'aliyah-i 'ilm, p.29, For the primary source see Ṣadr al-Din Shīrāzī, M. (1363 SH). *Mafātiḥ al-Ghayb*. Tīhrān: Mu'assisih-yi Muṭāli'āt wa Tahqīqāt-I Farhangī, p.261.

and his scriptural system. It also discusses how Mīrzā Mahdī delineates his revelatory intellectualism between scripture (*matn* or *vahy*) and self-experience (*vijdān*). By re-defining, or recovering the scriptural origin of the notion of ‘*aql*’, he depicts the functionality of ‘*aql*’ in faith. The role of ‘*aql*’ is nothing in knowing God (*ma’rifah*) whereas it is vital in believing in Him (*‘imān/i’tiqād*). Jurisprudential functionality of ‘*aql*’, however, will be discussed in the next chapter. As far as has been achieved here, Mīrzā believes that one can only experience the presence of ‘*aql*’ individually, yet at the same time, many *ḥadīths* corroborate this self-experienced conception. Also discussed is how he infers his ideas from the Scripture. In other words, in terms of epistemology, how he marries this self-experienced conception with the text, without becoming a mystic, or how he argues for it without being a philosopher. It is crucial to elaborate the boundaries between these two proofs in Mīrzā’s thought to find out how he ties ‘*aql*/with the Scripture without forming another philosophical framework, entering into new mystical territory, or falling into an abyss of irrationalism. It is time to focus attention on the known aspects of ‘*aql*/ to find out its precise functional role and exact definition in Mīrzā Mahdī’s thought.

The first step is to delve into the essence of intellect from Mīrzā’s perspective and see how different his understanding is from that of the philosophers. What we see are two entirely different definitions and functions of ‘*aql*’.

3.4.1 Redefining ‘*aql*’

As discussed earlier,⁴³⁴ intellect, in its philosophical reading, is the higher level of being to which each individual can potentially evolve. This fact can be seen in all classical and modern works under the title of ‘the unity of intellect, intellectual, and intellectualized’ (*‘ittihād-i al-‘aql-i wa l-āqil-i wa al-ma’qūl*).⁴³⁵ To the contrary, Mīrzā maintains that ‘*aql*’ is a distinct entity which can be given to, or, taken from a human being, and this is the most important ontological difference between the two systems. This ontological chasm is the main cause of further epistemological disputes. According to his reading, the light of knowledge and the light of intellect (*nūr al-‘ilm wa al-‘aql*) are originally the same. Therefore, his arguments about ‘*aql*’ are not separated from ‘*ilm*’. ‘*Aql*, everywhere in his

434 See Chapter 4.3.

435 For more details on this see Rafī‘ī Qazwīnī, A. (1396 SH). *‘Ittihād-i ‘āqil u ma’qūl*, Qum: ‘Alif-Lām-Mīm; Ḥasan Zādīh ‘Āmulī, H. (1386 SH). *‘Ittihād-i ‘āqil wa Ma’qūl*, Qum: Büstān-i Kitāb; Miṣbāh Yazdī, M.T. (1394 SA). *‘Amūzish-I Falsafih*, Qum: Mu’assissih-yi Amūzishī wa Pajhūhishī-yi Imam Khumiynī.V.2, pp.213-9; Muṭahharī, M. (1382 SH). *Sharḥ-i Manzūmeh*. Tīhrān: Ṣadrā, v.2, pp.58-9; Muṭahharī, M. (1365 SH). *Sharḥ-I Mukhtaṣar-I Manzūmeh*. Tīhrān: Hikmat, v.2, pp.72-91; ‘As’adī, ‘A.R. (1391 SH). *‘Āghāz-I Hikmat: Darsnamih-yi Falsafih bar ‘Asās-I Bidāyah al-Hikmah ‘Allāmih Tabātabāī*. Tīhrān: ‘Intishārāt-I ‘Ilmī wa Farhangī, p.394. For more classical sources see Ṭabāṭabāī, S.M.H. (1394 SH). *Nihāyah al-Hikmah*, Qum: ‘Intishārāt-I Mu’assissih-yi Farhangī Pajhūhishī-yi ‘Imām Khumiynī; Ṭabāṭabāī, S.M.H. (1399 SH). *Bidāyah al-Hikmah*. Qum: ‘Alī ‘Ahmad; Ṣadr al-Din Shīrāzī, M. (1981) *al-Hikmah al-Mutī’ alīyyah fī al-Asfār al-‘Aqlīyyah al-‘Arba’ah*, Beirut: Dār ‘Iḥyā’ al-turāth al-‘Arabī; Miṣbāh Yazdī, M.T. (1394 SA). *‘Amūzish-I Falsafih*, Qum: Mu’assissih-yi Amūzishī wa Pajhūhishī-yi Imam Khumiynī.

works⁴³⁶, is redefined as an external luminous substance which enables its owner ('āqil, intelligent) to recognize good from bad, in a specified way, which is an expansion in its power. On the other hand, in its philosophical concept, intellect is merely able to recognize general affairs, and this will be discussed in following sections. His own words on the issue read as follows:

*'The second gate of guidance, is on knowing the intellect; and we say that the intellect, to which the word al-'aql is indicating, is divine knowledge., It is an exterior light which is apparent in its essence for each intellectual person, when the goodness and badness of things appear to him/her, by which such details are known: the one who is trustworthy is recognized from the one who is lying to God, the true adviser from the betrayal of a fraudulent person. Whereas in human science it is just enabling the ego to extract theories from necessities, and this is the reason that intellectualized realities for them are nothing but general concepts.'*⁴³⁷

It is essential to note that from Mīrzā's perspective the problem with human science is keeping the roots of intellect and knowledge in the dark essence of human ego. And this directly goes back to ontological bases of intellect and knowledge in philosophy where the 'man', his 'knowledge', and 'what he knows' is united. This is the root of problem: the essence of human is dark, and, hence, the essence of his knowledge would not be out of darkness. More accurately, the limits of ontological bases of ego penetrates to epistemological means with enlightening mission. While epistemic means are defined and sought there, no infallible proof will be found. Intellect will be polluted by thought. This is because the darkness in a human's ego creates the dark fruit of the imagination, contemplation, philosophy, and certainty. Mīrzā explains how philosophers mixed up 'aql with ma'qūlāt (intellect with intellectualized realities):

436 Here are some examples from his different works in which knowledge and intellect are taken into consideration in one order: 'Isfahānī, M.M. (1396 SH). Anvār al-hidāyah, Qum: Mu'assisih-yi Ma'ārif-I 'Ahl al-Bayt, pp.92&119; 'Isfahānī, M.M. (1398 SH). al-Uṣūl al-Wasīṭ Miṣāḥ al-Hudā. Tīhrān: Āfāq, pp. 8-207; 'Isfahānī, M.M. (1387 SH). *Miṣbāḥ al-Hudā bi Damīmih-yi Ijāz al-Qur'ān*. Qum: Būstān-I Kitāb, p.468. Finally, and more clearly in 'Isfahānī, M.M. (1387 SH). *Abwāb al-Hudā*. Tīhrān: Muṇīr. you see chapters describing the notion of these two epistemological tools together, in Chapter two: cognition of 'aql (intellect) and 'ilm (knowledge) and educating. Or, in chapter seven he says that authentic proofs are again 'aql (intellect) and 'ilm (knowledge) and Lord. and, chapter thirteen is titled as recognition of the real notion of these two lights. It can be seen almost everywhere in his literature that the light of 'ilm and the light of 'aql are together and in contrast to other dark creatures.

437 Abwāb al-Hudā, P.6.

'Against Greeks who defined 'aql as the soul's ability to extract theories from necessities, which in their terminology means exactly conceptions and assertions, the Legislator indicated to 'aql, that it is from 'ilm, to inform them what the real light of knowledge is... to let them understand that they had turned their faces from reality to ignorance and negligence, and to know that these conceptions and assertions do not contain the light of knowledge in their essence. And that the light cannot be known by anything but light, and other realities by light, too. Naming the darkness as knowledge is utter ignorance, and so, when intellectualized realities (ma'qūlāt) become their intellect and knowledge, the more these conceptions and assertions take them far from the real light of 'aql and intellect. The more they become certain, the more they become worn...'⁴³⁸

For Mīrzā, there is no similarity between the notion of intellect, within a philosophical context, and what is inferred from Scripture. He rejects the philosophical division of intellect into the 'discursive' and 'experimental', ⁴³⁹ and lists the main differences between the two definitions:

'The Prophet PBUH posited the intellect as the principium of his religion... and described this intellect as the interior proof of God (hujjat Allāh al-bātinah). It is evident that the intellect in which philosophers believe is not essentially impeccable (lays-a ma'šūm-an bi al-dhāt), but is open to mistakes, and yet its essence is the essence of divergence. The result of deducing theories (istikhrāj al-naṣariyyāt) from necessities (darūrīyyāt) is acquired knowledge and certainty, and there is no guarantee that this certainty is true or false: although the false results of thinkers are far more likely to survive. Thus, how can something like this be the proof of God against His worshippers and principium of divine religions.'⁴⁴⁰

438 Ibid, P.36&37.

439 Mīrzā Mahdī's Handwritten treatise, pp. 3,4

440 Ḥalabī, M. Ma'ārif-I 'Ilāhiyih, Lesson 13, Khurramshahr: Shams. / Library of 'Astān-I Quds-I Raḍawī(1161860).

The word ‘*hujjah*’ (proof) is a common term by which intellect has frequently been described in *ḥadīth* collections and leans towards the infallibility of intellect. Theologically, God has two proofs: (1) exterior proof - prophets, (2) interior proof - intellect. Mīrzā supports his argument by quoting different *ḥadīths* that are in literal accordance with the titles he has chosen for each part of his treatise. For this part, which is titled, ‘‘*aql* is the principium of religion’, he cites some *hadīths* with a common content from the Prophet saying that: ‘*al-‘aql aṣl-o dīn*’: literally, Intellect is the principium of my religion.⁴⁴¹

This is also another example defining the position of ‘*aql*’ in his thought:

*‘And I say that when intellect (‘aql) is the proof of God and knowledge (‘ilm) His sublime sample, it is impossible to remove their authority. So, anything which is not perceived (ma ‘qūl) or known (ma ‘lūm), is only right when intellect or knowledge illuminates it or points to it, otherwise it is wrong. If anybody claims something beyond intellect and knowledge, where intellect and knowledge do not define it or indicate to it, his claim is necessarily delusive. In this way, Divine Knowledge is distinguished from human science. For the followers of Exifun who say that they have witnessed what is beyond intellect and knowledge, and there is no true way to prove this claim, it is merely glamour and delusive.’*⁴⁴²

It is explained in first chapter that Mīrzā always begins his arguments by demonstrating and simplifying them in a way that can be read independently and understood without textual support. Indeed, his ideas are extracted from the text, but he attempts to deliver them independently from the text. Then, in the next step, he starts narrating *hadīths* to confirm that what is discussed (and hopefully conceived so far), finds its roots deep within the scripture, and in reality, is deduced from it. Following this method, after discussing the characteristics of intellect and its relationship with the human soul, Mīrzā starts citing narrations to show that what he has inferred – and hopefully is perceived by the readers – can be found exactly within the text.

[It is narrated] in al-Kāfī, from some of our transmitters, from Aḥmad b. Muḥammad, lacking the first transmitter – that he said that Imam Ṣādiq said: the pillar of mankind is ‘aql. Intelligence, understanding, remembrance, and knowledge all are from ‘aql. Mankind becomes completed by ‘aql. ‘Aql leads it, sheds light and paves the way for it. Mankind will be knowledgeable, remembering, understanding, intelligent, when it is backed by the light of ‘aql. Then, it will understand by this light the how, why, and where. It will be able to distinguish the one who truly advises from the one who deceives. When

441 Nūrī, M. *Mustadrak al-Wasā’il wa Mustanbaṭ al-Masa’il*, vol.1, p.173. and for original text see the appendix 4.34.

442 *Abwāb al-Hudā*, p.69.

this is understood, mankind will realize what the true path is, what it conveys, and what disconnects it, so, it purifies the unity with God the Glorious, and admits His obedience. Then, it will have fulfilled what is lost, and be finding what is coming. It knows where it is, and why it is here, where it came from, and where it is going: all of these are supported by ‘aql.’⁴⁴³

‘It is also narrated in *Kiṣāl*, in Kumail’s narration, that Imam ‘Alī PBUH said: the knowledge hastened to them clarifying the realities, therefore, they joined the spirit of certitude. They gained what transgressive people lost, and became familiar with what ignorant people were afraid of. They lived in the world with bodies whilst their souls were attached to the sublime world.’⁴⁴⁴

‘And from Bihār, in the chapter about the characteristics of scholars, it is narrated from Nahj al-balāghah, that the Imam PBUH said: indeed, the most adored worshipper of God is the one who is blessed by Him against his/her ego and becomes doleful and worried, and, as a result, the light of guidance appears in his/her heart. So, he/she is prepared for afterworld to come, approaches what is considered faraway, and eases what is hard. He/she looks and realizes, and remembers a lot, approaches clear water and drinks copiously.... not concerned about anything but one issue, they are no longer blind, do not associate with unworthy people.’⁴⁴⁶

3.4.2 Luminous Essence of Intellect

Regardless of what philosophers think about the epistemic challenge of Reality and the solutions they put forward to resolve this crucial question, for Mirzā Mahdī, their attempts are barren, insufficient, and fallacious. This is the contemplation which he stigmatizes as ‘human knowledge’, and contrasts with his own understanding of the revelation which he calls ‘divine knowledge’. Mīrzā looks for the main problem with Islamic philosophy in its epistemology. In a stark epistemological criticism, he rejects all rival epistemological terms, and makes the fact clear that, in Islam – meaning in scripture and not in philosophy or mysticism – the authority of all authorities is based upon the authority of intellect:

‘Because the authority of all authorities goes back to the authority of ‘aql, and this is what has been discussed between uṣūlīs and akhbārīs...’⁴⁴⁸

His basic method of demonstrating the self-contradiction of Philosophical intellectualism (Refutation/step one) can be followed here in this critical quotation from his *Ma ‘arif-i kabīr*:

443 Abwāb al-Hudā, P.39. For the primary source see Al-Kuliynī, M. *al-Kāfi*, vol.1, pp.25. and for original text see the appendix 4.35.

444 Abwāb al-Hudā, P.40 For the primary source see Shiykh al-Ṣadūq, M. *al-Khiṣāl*, vol.1,pp.186. and for original text see the appendix 4.36.

446 Abwāb al-Hudā, p.40. For the primary source see Majlisī, M. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol.2, pp.56. and for original text see the appendix 4.37.

448 Mīrzā Mahdī’s Handwritten treatise, p. 2

'And the presence (*ḥudūr*), the acquirement (*ḥuṣūl*), the conception (*taṣawwur*), and the assertion (*taṣdīq*) are all explored (*yankashif*), and this is not the knowledge (*al-‘ilm*), for the knowledge is something else.'⁴⁴⁹

These concepts (*ḥudūr*, *ḥuṣūl*, *taṣawwur*, *taṣdīq* ...) cannot be the real knowledge, simply because they themselves need to be defined, and what dependently needs to be defined cannot be the original light of knowledge. He exposes the dichotomy between the Philosophical concepts of knowledge and its revelatory usage to show that it is not accepted by the revelation either (Demonstration/step 2). Knowledge in its divine terminology refers to a distinctive exterior light '*nūr al-‘ilm*' that illuminates every knowable dark substance. He clearly asserts:

'But Knowledge in the divine term is a light which is intrinsically manifested and is present to anyone who knows and finds substance by it, even when he is ignorant of the existence of that reality,..., but in its humanistic term it is an image found with the soul or exists within it. And as a result, it is divided into acquired (*ḥuṣūlī*) and presential (*huzūnī*)'.⁴⁵⁰

In contrast with Philosophy, knowledge remains self-evident to him. He does not provide any analytical explanation about the light. It is not clear how we get to know things; hence, fundamentally there is no exterior way to the light but the light:

*'...and [one who knows] finds it [the light of knowledge] in its other perfection which is its refusal to be illuminated, explored, known, or conceptualized per se. This is because he finds the essence of it illuminating and exploring as a subject which contradicts being an object.'*⁴⁵¹

He applies the verbs "finding" (*wijdān*) and "exploring" (*kashf*) to his terminology to explain the occasion where one finds the light and is faced with it (*wajada*). It seems as if he is changing the words to evade answering an epistemological problem here: How do we know the existence of this light if, in its essence, it refuses to be known? Shall we be equipped with a new epistemological instrument (*wijdān*) to know the light of knowledge? It is not to say that he is applying a new epistemological meaning, as he uses the term knowing ('*arafa*) repeatedly in the same texts. Using the term '*wajada*', which sounds more original, he might have tried to avoid Philosophical conceptualism and draw attention to the nature of that light which is exploring and finding (*al-wajd/ al-kashf*). Thus, any extra concept, in order to elaborate or depict it, is redundant and misleading; you cannot find it while you are thinking about it. Even names by which we address the light should be as pure and clear as possible (*wajd*, *kashf*); it is perhaps in

449 *Abwāb al-Hudā*, p.142.

450 *Abwāb al-Hudā*, p.142.

451 *Abwāb al-Hudā*, pp.33&34.

this context that he uses more clear-cut words. Essentially, names do not (should not) contain any independent concept; they are just indicators to the intentions (*ma'āni*). This can be seen in his words from *Ma'ārif-i kabīr*:

*'Then the individual notifies that this (knowledge) is a light which he finds, but he is not capable of defining and describing it to one who does not find it inside.'*⁴⁵²

Here, he stipulates that one who finds the light cannot explain it to others. He actually finds it inexplicable and indefinable. It can be seen (by itself) but cannot be defined. To show the light, one cannot do anything but notice it for others (*tadhakkur*), and they must find it by themselves and see it directly. While they are thinking about it they become far from it. He asserts that the mere role of the Prophets and all revelatory texts is to notice the light of knowledge (*mudhakkir*). This is because nothing, including the revelation, is able to define it or enlighten it. All definitions and concepts are simply referring to something else. Accordingly, he draws a line between the revelatory pedagogy and its Philosophical one. Education, in its revelatory usage, is an attempt to allow people to notice the light of knowledge, by which they will be able to face the reality and understand it. And, this cannot be fulfilled before washing away all misleading images and self-made concepts from the mind. He asserts:

*...but education in divine knowledge is different from the one in human knowledge. Education in divine knowledge is noticing the divine light, which is the light of intellect ('aql) and knowledge ('ilm), and its circumstances and guiding people to realize these lights and to know them by themselves, not by anything else, and to know other facts through them. It is to help people come out of the darkness of imaginings and assertions which are intrinsically dark...so the role of the teacher is mentioning/notification*⁴⁵³

Although the existence of the light of knowledge is self-evident, people often neglect it. All they need is to be aware it, here he explains:

'There is no way, except by giving an example, to obviate the negligence of whomsoever does not find [the light] and help him to come closer: If there was no night beside the light of the sun, it would be impossible to know its light as a result of its continuity,

452 *Ma'ārif-I Kabīr* p. 134.

453 *Abwāb al-Hudā*, p.16.

intensity of illumination, and subtleness in comparison with illuminated substances. This is the same with the light of knowledge. One in his negligence – once the heart is asleep – has no consciousness about himself and others, and when he becomes conscious he finds that there is a light between him and his intellectualities which is the light between him and them. When he knows it, he should look at it by itself and then find it as an abstract light

⁴⁵⁴

It is also worthy of mention that in his epistemology, three main elements of the knowing process (the knower, the known, and the light of knowledge) stand distinctively separate from each other, which loudly trumpets a deep chasm between his ontological interpretation of the Islamic Scriptures (segregating, *baynūnīyyah*) and that of his philosopher and mystic opponents' (unification, *wahdah* or '*aynīyyah*). To him, it is one of the pivotal differential attributes of the '*ilm*, to be defined as an 'exoteric light', whereas for Philosophers the entity of this light, in its essence, is united with the soul of the '*ālim* (the knower), and more meticulously with the entire *wujūd* (whole existence). Mullā Ṣadrā's words can be taken as an example here:

*'The truth is that the reality of the light (*nūr*) and existence (*wujūd*) is one, the existence of everything is its appearance, and based on this the existence of substances is also one of the levels of the light...'*

⁴⁵⁵

The divergence between the two schools can be seen here in Mīrzā's words, when he suspends any true realization of this light of the '*ilm* in its exoteric facet. He asserts that whoever finds it, finds it outside of himself:

...but he [*‘ālim*] finds the light but is not able to describe, define, or demonstrate it, except by exoteric finding '*wijdāni-hī al-khārijī*'.

This is the most important part of his epistemology in which he receives his strongest criticism of being an *akhbārī*, which basically implies anti-rationalism.

⁴⁵⁶

454 Ibid, p.33.

455 Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī, M. (1392 SH). *Tafsīr-I ‘Ayih-yi Nūr*, Tīhrān: Mawlā, p.31.

456 As I have explained earlier there is no allegation of being *akhbārī* in his life time. This has not happened until contemporary era. See section 3.2 in which I have tried to illustrate Mīrzā Mahdī's exact intellectual position in *akhbārī-uṣūlī* discourse. For these see 'Irshādīnīyā, M. (1382 SH). *Naqd wa Barrīsī-yi Nazarīyyī-yi Tafkīk*. Qum: Bustān-i Kitāb, pp.62-70; 'Irshādīnīyā, M. (1386 SH). *Az Madrisī-yi Ma ‘ārif tā Anjuman-i Ḥujjatīyi wa Maktab-i Tafkīk*, Qum: Bustān-i Kitāb, pp. 38-60; Mūsavī, S.M. (1382 SH). *Ā’īn wa Andīshi*. Tīhrān: Ḥikmat, pp.137&153. here Mūsavī compares Mīrzā's idea with Asha'ri anti-rational ideology.

He believes that the first deviation on the path of divine guidance occurred in usage of the intellect and knowledge. Humankind left direct contact with this divine gift behind and wasted its time making delusive concepts around it.

*'...the light of intellect ('aql) cannot be rationalized, conceived or imagined, and the more you imagine it, the more you veil it, and it has no place, body, boundary, quality or category. It is also disparate from action and selfhood: it is an intrinsic divine proof which is not inside you, neither is it segregated from you.'*⁴⁵⁷

As mentioned above, it is crucial for him as a part of his epistemology, which tightly ties into his ontology, to distinguish between 'aql as a distinctive light, 'āqil, as the intellect, and *ma'qūl* as the dark intelligible substances illuminated by 'āqil or known by the light of 'āqil. Yet again, the light of intellect cannot be discerned by any other means except by itself, as was the case in the light of the knowledge. Once one is distracted by other things, one cannot find it, even when engaged in contemplating the light itself. The only way to notice its existence is to notice it:

*'But the certain cognition of the light of the intellect [happens] when someone considers the light itself and does not get distracted by illuminated substances i.e. good and evil acts, and pays attention to that light by that light, then he finds it as exoteric light in its inherent illumination of others.'*⁴⁵⁸

The light of the intellect and knowledge are explored by them, not by others. They indicate to their essence by their essence and they and their explorations are heterogeneous and also differ from the soul and the spirit because they are entirely dark and explored by the light of the intellect and the knowledge.⁴⁵⁹

He uses 'distraction by illuminated substances' in his texts to show that engaging with the concept during contemplation does not help us with any access to the reality. In this context, he receives -not in his lifetime- one of the most slanderous labels of non/anti-rationalism.⁴⁶⁰ This accusation, in contemporary era indeed, echoes the controversial term of *lā-fikrī* (not-thinking), which appeared, first, in his famous pupil's legacy, Shiykh Maḥmūd Ḥalabī.⁴⁶¹ The term was eventually publicized widely as anti-rationalism. To my reading, this term has not been used by Mīrzā Mahdī in his literature. According to

457 'Isfahānī, M.M. (1396 SH). *Anvār al-hidāyah*, Qum: Mu'assisih-yi Ma'ārif-I 'Ahl al-Bayt, P.95.

458 Abwāb al-Hudā, p.55.

459 Ibid, p.19.

460 Ibid.

461 Ḥalabī, M. (n0 date). Ma'ārif-I 'Ilāhiyih, Khurramshahr: Shams. / Library of 'Astān-I Quds-I Raḍawī (1161860), p.207.

Mīrzā's text, all he intends to do is to make distinction between philosophical conceptualism and real rationalism. Here, in this context, one can find the real meaning of his attempt for *re-defining intellect and knowledge*. For him, philosophical contemplation, especially in the realm of *knowing God* (*Ma'rifat Allāh*), is rather 'distraction'. His method in his legacy, which is packed full of thinking, arguing, refuting, inferring and deducing, stands far from what we conceive, nowadays, of non-rationalism. In short, his legacy stands against integration of Hellenistic philosophy into Islamic theology, but not against any kind of thinking.

3.4.3 Ultimate Proof, Absolute Authority

It is essential to discover the real essence and the role of 'aql in Mīrzā's thought. There is no doubt remaining for anyone who reads his works that he believes in an independent authority of intellect. This has been highlighted many times and can easily be found everywhere in his works, however, the exact functionality of – his – intellect will be examined later.⁴⁶²

Mīrzā refuses to accept 'logical deduction' as an intellectual process, because there are many wrong conclusions in it, so it is fallible; and Intellect, as unanimously agreed, is an impeccable proof of God. The ultimate light, by which everything is enlightened, cannot be verified, let alone falsified.

'The result of positing this intellect [the philosophical one] as the principium of religions inflames the prophets and messengers [of Allah], because no persuasive reason remains for responding to their call. This is because when one reaches this kind of certainty, and has no doubt that one is certain – one still cannot rest assured when looking back on the false certainties experienced in the past. So he/she can be excused for accepting the prophets' invitation because of his/her fear of misguidance, as is the case in pseudo prophets and thinkers (ahl-i al-nażar), but this cannot be the cornerstone for religion, as it is necessary that the truthfulness of the Prophet's invitation is based on a rigid and lucid proof which essentially refutes any doubt or deviation...' ⁴⁶³

462 For the role of 'aql in faith see following part 6, and for the role of 'aql in jurisprudence see next chapter.

463 Mīrzā Mahdī's Handwritten treatise, pp. 5,6

According to Mīrzā’s scriptural conception, all creations are categorized in two types of (a) luminous (*nūrāni*), and (b) tenebrous (*zulmāni*) substances. The soul of the human being is a tenebrous substance which, intrinsically, is powerless and dark. It is only by the grace of divine light (which is luminous) that one can acquire knowledge and become illuminated. This light is called the ‘light of knowledge’ (*nūr al-’ilm*), or intellect (*nūr al-’aql*). It is an innate proof (*hujjat al-bātinīyyah*) which stands beside any exoteric proof (*hujjat al-zāhirīyyah*): the Prophet, and Imams. On the other hand, the dark nature of the human’s ego, if not illuminated by the light of knowledge or intellect, is completely dark and can potentially become muddled by concepts such as philosophy or mysticism.

‘When it is ascertained by divine knowledge that the soul (nafs) is not solitary (muajarrad), indigent, and bereft of light, then the basis of the invitation of the Prophet PBUH and ascendance of the Qur’ān will indicate to Glorious Allah and wake people from the sleep of negligence and ignorance about their poverty. This way they will be able to witness their Lord and find that the Prophet is true....’⁴⁶⁴

He evidently says that intellect and knowledge are authentic on their own, i.e. not based on anything else, they show the right, and more importantly, there is no reason behind their authority but themselves, There is no proof above them, nothing to define them, nor to make them known or to validate them. **Therefore, these epistemic means are self-evident and self-authentic.** Take this short, deep, phrase form *Abwāb al-Hudā* as an example:

‘aql and ’ilm (intellect and knowledge) are authentic in their essence. They themselves are the reason for their authority, because they are the disclosers of the wrong, introducers of the right...’⁴⁶⁵

3.4.4 ‘Aql and The Prophet

The following passage echoes the predominance and superiority of ‘aql as an interior proof (*hujjat al-bātinīyyah*) in verifying the legitimacy of prophets as the exterior proof (*hujjat al-zāhirīyyah*). It is an essential sign which implies both Mīrzā Mahdī’s anti-ash’arīsm and non-akhbārī tendencies. He stipulates that ‘aql is the absolute judge in distinguishing between false prophets and true ones. This clearly shows that intellect comes first, before religion, and works as an entrance gate for it.

464 *Abwāb al-Hudā*, P.74. For the primary source see Majlisī, M. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol.75, pp.296. and for original text see the appendix 4.38.

465 *Abwāb al-Hudā*, p.39.

*'The twenty fourth gate of guidance: To know that the authority of abnormal phenomena (*kharq-i ādāt*) appertains to the prophets and Allah's vicegerents, and if they appear on an ordinary person's hand it is a test for the people and that person: so we say that one of the wonderful things of Divine Knowledge in prophecy and Imamate is how Allah tests people in His Book by descending [revealing or telling the story of] Sāmerī's act. It is evident that extraordinary affairs are just a proof from Allah and a test for people [to see if they are able] to verify the truth of the claimant by [their] 'aql. [It will be true only] if 'aql verifies [the claim], and if 'aql recognizes that the claimant is not of the dominion of prophecy or succession, then the extraordinary affairs will be nothing but a test and assessment.'*⁴⁶⁷

Mīrzā's expansion on the reason behind the self-authority of 'aql is of high importance. His argument rings a bell with the classical arguments between *ash'arīs* and *mu'tazelīs*. *Mu'tazelīs* maintain that there should be an ultimate inference from outside religion to distinguish true religious claims from false ones. This factor is intellect.

He also brings *Sūfīs* into discussion with their false prophetic claims and categorizes them as being against 'aql. For him, false prophets and *Sufis* have the same methodical problem. His text continues:

*'So, if thousands of extraordinary affairs appear on the hand of a Sufi, they do not disclose his guardianship [authority]. Because rendering unto others [infallible and non-authentic sources] is confuted, let alone following their absolute anti-rational claims. This calls for disproving the most self-evident realities, denial of essential goodness and badness, trustworthiness of any religion or denomination, and confuting all prophets in their invitation.'*⁴⁶⁸

467 *Abwāb al-Hudā*, P.90-91. For the primary source see Al-Qur'ān, Chapter *Tā hā*, Verse 85-91. and for original text see the appendix 4.39. *Abwāb al-Hudā*, P.90-91. For the primary source see Majlisī, M. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol.1, pp.94. and for original text see the appendix 4.40.

468 *Abwāb al-Hudā*, pp.90&91.

Here Mīrzā digs into details of the relationship between ‘aql and the exterior proof (prophet) and points to one of the delicate intimations of the connection between these two proofs.

‘Aql and ‘ilm (intellect and knowledge) are authentic in their essence; they themselves are the reason for their authority, because they are the disclosers of wrong, the introducers of right. And the first right, as we discussed, is what indicates to them and reveals the veil of ignorance and negligence over their faces, which defames the wrong. He is a reliable consultant, he is the benevolent Prophet, and his mission is evident from this perspective: this is to know him as the messenger of God to which the Lawmaker has indicated. [According to this], the Prophet’s mission is to call the innate proof against all people and to bewilder them, and make them confess that they were in ignorance and negligence, and away from the world of light.... and that they are in dire need of the indicator and prophet. ... and this noble method and new way to perfection of the human being could not be fulfilled but through indicating to what they really find, not with conception or contemplation, and the gate to all these gates is to known as ‘aql; to witness it evidently, the soul will ascend to know the reality of ‘ilm and finding the realities with it.’⁴⁶⁹

3.4.5 ‘Aql and Scripture

Not only does Mīrzā identify the role of the Prophet as an indicator to the rules and principles of ‘aql, he also goes one step further and asserts that ‘the entire basis of the Qur’ān, as the Prophet’s manifesto, is based upon indicating to ‘aql’. In fact, the purpose of scripture is to disclose ‘aql’s decrees. Chapter thirteen of *Abwāb al-Hudā* is dedicated to this subject, and the title of the chapter is also a sound sign:

‘Chapter Thirteen: to know that the knowledge of the Qur’ān is ‘aql, which is the interior proof from Allah the Glorious, the Beneficial (and this is one of the greatest gates of guidance), and we say: the basis

469 Ibid, p.39.

of the Qur'ān is [founded] on indicating to 'aql, thereby showing that real knowledge is indicated to, ignorance is removed, and the proof is created by Glorious Allah; and then, the gate of knowing the reality of being will be opened, and by these lights the gate of knowing the Glorious and Almighty Allah will be opened, and knowing His creature and indicators...⁴⁷⁰

The whole process between scripture and 'aql is elucidated in following passage:

Scripture indicates to 'aql (by mentioning its signs. As it is discussed above nothing can define 'aql even the text or Prophet, it can only be indicated and found)

If something (any sign, light, scripture, proof, indicator, or in one word epistemological mean) be able to define (enlight) 'aql, it means that, this mean is the real proof not the 'aql. Talking about *hujjiyat-u al-'aql* (*authenticity of 'aql*) entails being basic and fundamental. It is not scripture that is barren in defining 'aql, this is 'aql that cannot be defined. The ultimate attempt of scripture is to indicate to 'aql. It is interesting that 'aql also contributes in indicating to scripture. This is 'aql that shows us which scripture is valid and which one is not. This is why without 'aql following scripture never counted valuable within scripture itself.⁴⁷¹

The intellectual ('āqil) finds 'aql by its sign; in fact, notices its existence.

He/she finds its decrees true and right.

As a result, he/she comes back to the scripture and realizes that it should be true and right as it is indicating to a true and right reality.

This is how 'aql turns into being an ultimate proof for verifying the texts, revelation and the prophets.

'Therefore, the foundation of Qur'ānic knowledge is based upon indicating to this light which is the authority and differentiator between true and false. Therefore, ['aql] will stand - per se - as the

470 Abwāb al-Hudā, pp.90&91.

471 There are several ḥadīths mentioning that there is no result in following īmāms -let alone their scriptures- without using 'aql. Actually, this is 'aql by which scripture can be used in worshipping process. The best example is the whole chapter Kitāb al-'Aql in Al-Kuliynī, M. (1363 SH). al-Kāfi, Tahrān: Dār al-Kutub al-'Islāmīyah. with several ḥadīths in the same issue.

point of reference for any authorization for each intellectual ('āqil)...

*As a result, it becomes clear for all intellectuals the falsity in which they were bound before, and the trueness through which they are noticed by their own 'aqil, and this 'aqil – per se - will be the proof to them that the person who indicated to this 'aqil and invited to its decrees is absolutely right*⁴⁷²

3.4.6 Finding the Details

One of the most important differences between Mīrzā's definition of 'aql and that of the philosophers⁴⁷³ emerges in the functionality of 'aql in finding the details. Contrary to Islamic Philosophers who believe that 'aql is only capable of finding 'general concepts' (*mafāhīm al-kulīyyah*), Mīrzā thinks that 'aql finds each reality (that is potentially recognizable for 'aql) directly and in its very detail, which means that 'aql looks at each issue, and delivers its verdict case by case, validating or confuting it; indeed, the issue should be within its dominion. This difference has two main roots:

- (1) Mīrzā does not believe in 'general concepts' as philosophers do. 'General concepts' are the outcome of 'mental mood of existence' (*wujūd al-zihhnī*), which Mīrzā negates.⁴⁷⁴
- (2) The essence of 'aql for him is a functional light which acts directly and distinguishes independently. This grace is given to the light, or in other words, is posited in it, to enable its input into the recognition process.

'... and arguing for Him [God] is not like arguing for conceptual issues and verifying (L. assensus) them via a mood (L. modus) as is the case in philosophy. But, arguing for Him is based on nothing but indicating to the realities known by 'aql and 'ilm, as these two discover the details...' ⁴⁷⁵

472 Abwāb al-Hudā, p.34.

473 Jahāmī, J. (1998), Mawsūah Moṣṭalahāt al- Falsafah 'ind al- 'Arab. Beirut: Lebanese School of Publishers, p.31; Al-Muzaffar, M.R. (1375 SH). al-Mantiq. Qum: Dār al- 'Ilm, p.63; Misbāḥ Yazdī, M.T. (1394 SA). 'Amūzish-I Falsafih, Qum: Mu'assissih-yi Amūzishī wa Pajhūhishī-yi Imam Khumiynī, v.1, pp.188& 189; 'Āmirī, M. (1375 SH). Rasā'il-I 'Ab-ul-Hasan 'Āmirī. Tīhrān: Markaz-I Nashr-I Dānishgāhī, p.294; Fārābī, M. (1382 SH). Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikmah, Tīhrān: Society for the National Heritage of Iran, p.178; Ḥusīnzādīh, M. (1391 SH). 'Aql Az Manzar-I Ma'rīfat Shinasī. [see bibliography for online source]

474 See the previous chapter on the philosophical essence of intellect.

475 Abwāb al-Hudā, p.27, the paragraph discusses the role of intellect and knowledge in terms of knowing God as you can see the original text in appendix 2.16.

And this is a good example of the role of ‘*aql*’ in discovering the details; Mīrzā first cites a narration from *al-Kāfi* which says that ‘*aql*’ is capable of distinguishing a liar about God from one who is truthful.

‘In al-Kāfi, the narration is chained to Ibn-i Sikkīt that he asked Abi al-Hasan PBUH what is the authentic proof⁴⁷⁶ of the people nowadays (ma I-hujjah ‘ala I-khalq al-yawm)? The Imam responded: Intellect, by which veracity about God is ratified, and mendacity about God is known to be confuted’

Then after this narration he emphasizes that it shows that ‘*aql*’ is the discoverer of the details: it means that not only does ‘*aql*’ recognize the criteria of true and false, but it verifies the true case from the false one in reality.

*‘I say that this dignified narration is an indicator that the intellectual light (al-nūr al-‘aqīl) discovers in detail the trustworthiness of the trustworthy beside the lies of the liar.’*⁴⁷⁷

3.4.7 How is ‘*aql*’ Perceived?

Mīrzā considers ‘*aql*’ as an exterior independent reality (light) which only can be found through its signs. This is a light which shows *good and evil* to the ‘*āqil*’. This clearly means that he rejects ‘*aql*’ to be a level of being - which can be reached by ‘*āqil*’, as it is believed in the Islamic philosophy.⁴⁷⁸ Conversely, it is a reality to be found. In other words, no one turns to ‘*aql*’, but finds him/herself ‘*āqil*’: they realize that they possess it. One can find the light only after he/she is able to observe things by it. But, because people are often in ignorance of it, they need something to notify them. They have it, they obey its rules, but they are in need of signs in order to notice its existence. This is where Scripture can play its precise role in terms of referring to the signs of ‘*aql*’. Imagine that you are watching something, while you are watching you are not able to realize that you are enable to watch because of the light; so, you need a notice to turn your attention to the

476 Among the translations of the term *hujjah* (reason, proof, argument, abomination) I have used *authentic proof*, because the main function of *hujjah* is to prove and show the accuracy of a truth in an authentic way, so authentic proof is the best translation. Al-Kuliynī, M. *al-Kāfi*, vol.1, pp.24. and for original text see the appendix 4.41.

477 Ibid, P.36. Here he also mentions that the same concept of finding the details by ‘*aql*’ is stipulated in narrations. You can follow more in this discussion in the original text in the appendix 2.2.

478 For the unity of intellect and intellectual and what is reasonable see:
‘Ibn Sīnā, H. (1363 SH). *al-Mabda’ wa al-Maād*, Tīhrān: Mu’assisih-yi Muṭāli‘at-I ‘Islāmī-yi of Tīhrān University; Muṭahharī, M. (1382 SH). *Sharḥ-i Manzūmeh*. Tīhrān: Sadr al-Din Shīrāzī, M. (1981) *al-Hikmah al-Mutī‘ālīyyah fī al-Asfār al-‘Aqlīyyah al-‘Arba‘ah*, Beirut: Dār ‘Iḥyā’ al-turāth al-‘Arabī; Ashtīyānī, M. (1367 SH). *Ta’līqīh bar Sharḥ-I Mandhūmih-yi Ḥikmat*, Tīhrān: Tīhrān University.

light by which the observation is happening for you. Something to ask that how did you see? Did you notice that you are watching? This notification does not define the light for you, the light exists by itself (*al-* ‘*aql*), and you were able to watch (*al-* ‘*āqil*) things (*al-**ma’qūlāt*) by it (*bi al-* ‘*aql*). Scripture, in fact, does not define anything, but merely indicates to the signs of ‘*aql* and helps the ‘*āqil* to notice its existence. This is why they feel it, they find it, or, know that they have it, even though they may once have missed it. It is like a light that you notice its existence only when you have lost it, and become lost in darkness.

*‘And the basis of this knowledge [divine one], as you have become generally aware, is based on knowing the light, and tenebrous realities by light, not by imagination and intellectualism (ta’aqqu). For example; the link between the light of ‘aql and people is similar to a lantern by which people are illuminated. It elucidates for them the reality of salvation and adversity; but they are in ignorance of it, and engaged with what is emanated from it, seeking it by imitations, delusions, conjunctions, and [so called] certainties which are right and wrong, so, they go astray bereft of consciousness or knowledge.’*⁴⁷⁹

People often focus on what is illuminated by the light and ignore the reality of the existence of the light itself. They mix up what is known (*ma’lūm*) or what is intellectualized (*ma’qūl*) with what has given them knowledge or understanding. Mīrzā insists that they should pass through signs and focus their attention on the existence of such a light.

‘We say that each intellectual (‘āqil) finds the light that illuminates the goodness and badness of deeds. This light is self-luminous for him/her when it is argued by verifying deeds. And ignorance of it is a kind of objective ignorance (muzū’ī).⁴⁸⁰ As is the case in anger or severe carnality that leads to committing bad deeds, eventually

479 *Abwāb al-Hudā*, p.33&34.

480 The term ‘*muzū’ī* stand against the term ‘*ḥukmī*’. The term *muzū’ī* literary issue, refers to the questions about specific case, not the general concept or issue, whereas the term *ḥukm*, literary verdict, refers to the inquiries connected to the general issue and not a particular case. Sometimes the problem is that we do not know the verdict (*shubhah-tu l-muzū’īyyah*), and sometimes we do not know whether this case is included under that verdict or not (*shubha-tu l-ḥukmīyyah*). Mīrzā believes that the problem with ‘*aql* in its philosophical background is a kind of *shubhah-tu l-muzū’īyyah*, because they do not know its role, its verdict. In fact, they do not make mistake in terms of recognizing true case from wrong one, instead, they do not know at all what the true ‘*aql* is.

when anger or lust are abated, one finds the enormity of what has been done by looking at the deeds – per se – not the essence of the light. This is the meaning of the self-luminosity of light used by ‘āqil and being ignorant of it, focusing on the illuminated substance instead of being notified by the luminous substance (‘aql).⁴⁸¹

As mentioned above, Mīrzā thinks that the deep epistemic problem with Islamic Philosophers in terms of knowledge and intellect is that they have wrongly mixed up illuminated substances with the light of knowledge and intellect. This is why they confuse their thought with real knowledge and consider their own certainties and logical argumentations as the ultimate proof, whereas what these could potentially be, at their best, are actually illuminated facts.

In brief, thoughts and logical argumentations are tenebrous realities which can potentially be illuminated by the luminous reality of intellect or knowledge; they can in many cases be false, and this means that they are not authentic proofs. Not all thoughts are knowledge, neither are all contemplations real intellectualization.

‘Explanation: I say that notifying ‘āqil of this light, itself, is exactly removing the veil of ignorance and negligence for all intellectuals... this is to pull intellectuals out of the darkness of their ambiguous certainty, from darkness to the light....’⁴⁸²

After comparing ‘aqil with other luminous and tenebrous substances such as light, anger, and lust, Mīrzā begins to narrate numerous *hadīths* in order to assert that what has been introduced is exactly in line with Shī‘ī narrative literature, and actually derived from them. As discussed before,⁴⁸³ this is his common method in order to help his readers first to experience the text, and then to discover what has been found in the Scripture. This is exactly how ‘aqil deals with the text. I would say that this is how he thinks that the texts should be read and understood. Three of these narrations are quoted here:

In *al-Kāfi*, in a chained narration to Ibn-i Sikkīt who asked Abi al-Hasan PBUH: what is the authority over the people nowadays (*ma l-hujjah ‘ala l-khalq al-yawm*)? The Imam

481 *Abwāb al-Hudā*, p.26.

482 Ibid.

483 See section 5.1.

responded: Intellect, by which truth about God is verified and ratified, and mendacity about God is known to be confuted.⁴⁸⁴

In *al-Kāfi* in a chained narration to Abī Abd Allah PBUH in a dignified narration he said: when the intellect is ratified by the light... by saying that: he knows who is advising from who is cheating him.⁴⁸⁵

In *al-Bihār*, in the ‘*aql*’ chapter, from Ikhtīṣāṣ, narrated from Imam Ṣādiq PBUH who said: Allah has created ‘*aql*’ out of four substances, from knowledge, power, light, and volition. So, it is created by knowledge, and eternized in heaven.⁴⁸⁶

3.4.8 Knowledge, Intellect, and Certainty

One the biggest questions about Mīrzā’s epistemic system is the difference that he recognizes between knowledge and certainty (*qat‘*). For most *uṣūlī* scholars, certainty is authentic from the insider perspective, though it might not be true from an outsider point of view. True or false, what matters is that it cannot be verified from inside. This can be seen in almost all *uṣūlī* works in *qat‘-u-żan* (certainty and conjecture), the best one probably is *Farā’id al-uṣūl* by Shiykh Murtazā Anṣārī, as the most referenced classical work, in *uṣūl al-fiqh*. There is a profound chapter in *Farā’id* -which is echoed in the main stream-⁴⁸⁷ called *hujjīyyt-u qat‘-i al-qatṭā‘* (the authority of the certainty of the one who frequently become certain). Almost all *uṣūlīs* believe that in this case (becoming certain even frequently) one can rely on his certainty.⁴⁸⁸ The reason behind this allowance is the essence of certainty, which, for *uṣūlīs* comes from inside; it means that although from outside their perspective the person is wrong in his certainty, but there is no way for him to understand, because he has no mean outside his mind. But for Mīrzā the story reads a little different, as he himself mentions, if when looking back on the past, false certainties cast doubt upon present certainties, then no certainty remains to be verified, but, if it resists after all doubts, then it is certainly authentic for the person. This is exactly the issue of authority (*hujjīyyah*) which is tied to the role of intellect and knowledge.

It has been clarified in all *uṣūlī* discourses that talking about certainty (*qat‘*), has nothing to do with reality (*wāqi‘iyah*). One may be excused for being certain about something absolutely wrong in reality. Certainty is authentic, not realistic. There are many occasions in jurisprudence on which certainty is excused, because there is no other choice.⁴⁸⁹

484 Ibid, p.36.

485 *Abwāb al-Hudā*, p.36. For the primary source see Al-Kuliynī, M. *al-Kāfi*, vol.1, pp.25. and for original text see the appendix 4.42.

486 *Abwāb al-Hudā*, p.37. For the primary source see Majlisī, M. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol.1, pp.98. and for original text see the appendix 4.43.

487 For example, see: Khurāsānī, M. (1409 AH). *Kifāiyah al-’Uṣūl*, Qum: Mu’assisih-yi ’Āl al-Bayt li’ihyā’ al-Turāth; Ibn Shahīd alithānī, H. (1415 AH), *Ma’ālim al-uṣūl*, Beirut: Dār al-Fikr al-’Arabī; Muẓaffar, M. (1390 SH). *Uṣūl al-Fiqh*, Qum: Dār al-’Ilm. All have discussed the same issue. This topic can be found also in classical *uṣūlī* work even before Shiykh Anṣārī, see: Qumī, A. (1363 SH). *Qawānīn al-’Uṣūl*. Qum: Hawzi-yi ’Ilmīyyih.

488 Anṣārī, M. (1398 SH). *Farā’id al-Uṣūl*. Qum: Majma‘ al-Fikr al-’Islāmī.

489 Qumī, A. (1363 SH). *Qawānīn al-’Uṣūl*. Qum: Hawzi-yi ’Ilmīyyih.

Mīrzā does not unpack this issue in jurisprudence as much as he does in theology, the problem arises for him when this approach permeates from jurisprudence to theology, from *fiqh* to *kalām*.⁴⁹⁰ This exceptional *qat'* which is permitted under certain circumstances in *fiqh*, becomes a vital factor and plays the main role.

He refuses to accept certainty as a proof of God, simply because it can behave in a true and false manner. God's proofs should be always true, as the Prophet and intellect are always true. In contrast, for *uṣūlīs*, specially, those who are influenced by philosophy, the mere certainty (*qat'*) is authentic in theology.⁴⁹¹ With this important terminological shift – from authority of certainty (*qat'*) to authority of intellect ('*aql*), Mīrzā highlights the role of intellect in the text and tries to raise the question that certainty is not a proof. Nowhere does Allah define the term *qat'* as an authentic proof within the text. As a result, certainties based on non-authentic sources – such as philosophical ones – are not acceptable. The bases of religion cannot be posited upon such a thing:

'The duty of the prophet PBUH is to remove disagreements between people; considering this, positing the bases of religion upon 'acquired knowledge' (al-'ilm al-huṣūlī) and an argumentation process (sir al-borhānī) looks like founding it on the kernel of disagreement, and this is nothing but letting people down in ignorance to which no Muslim even adheres.'

Many anti-*takfīkīs* have responded to this argument, that having a disagreement is not enough to reject a system of thought. It does not mean that all disputes will suddenly disappear. Mīrzā's followers, as expected in every emerging school, started challenging each other and have lots of disagreements on their own issues.⁴⁹²

Conversely, for Mīrzā's followers, disagreement is not the main issue. What is crucial for a system of thought is its authority. If a system is authentic, it is of no importance to find disagreement among its followers, or details, which are never resolved.

Nevertheless, this answer is a clear retreat from what Mīrzā held in the passage above.

'The role of prophets is to evoke the precepts of intellect (ithārat-o aḥkām al-'aql)... and how is it possible that intellect is signified by 'idiomatic argument' (al-burhān al-iṣṭilāḥī)? It is not because the precepts of the idiomatic intellect – even after a period of five

490 This has been discussed previously, and will be put into more detailed examination as case study on some certain jurisprudential elements in next chapter.

491 Ākhūnd-I Khurāsānī can be mentioned as the best example for a philosopher-*uṣūlī*-jurist see Khurāsānī, M. (1409 AH). *Kifāiyah al- Uṣūl*, Qum: Mu'assisih-yi 'Al al-Bayt li'l-iḥyā' al-Turāth. discourse on *qat'*.

492 The last chapter is dedicated to this issue.

thousand years of perfection – are still in contradiction with the precepts of intellect to which the legislator Prophet (ṣāḥib al-sharia) has indicated.’⁴⁹³

3.5 Epistemic Role of ‘aql in Faith

Outlines

The first step in discussing the epistemological functionality of ‘aql in Mīrzā’s system is to distinguish between (1) *Ma‘rifah*, which should be translated as ‘the cognition’ rather than ‘the Knowledge’, as the latter refers more to *al-‘ilm*, and (2) *‘Imān* which is simply faith. Studying the literature of Mirzā there is no doubt that he does not recognize any role of ‘aql in the process of knowing Allah (cognition). The term *ma‘rifat Allah*, which is a prevalent term in his works, refers to this fact. In this part I will examine the exact function of ‘aql on both sides (cognition and faith), and try to show that in his opinion ‘aql is given a completely passive role in faith, whereas it has absolute dominion when it comes to faith. This functionality is a little different from what is better known as experimental intelligence or practical intellect [*actio L.*]. It plays a crucial epistemic role in the doctrinal realm, whereas practical intellect is confined to physical actions, like exercising Sharia law.

3.5.1 Comparator ‘aql, Inimitable Allah

Mīrzā explains how the process of ‘knowing God’ is completely different in the two systems as a result of variances in the definition and functionality of ‘aql within the scripture and what philosophers have construed:

‘The twentythird gate of [gates of] *Abwāb al-Hudā*, the way of knowing Glorious God in divine knowledge, is opposite to what it is in human science. In human science, Knowing God, which happens through *vajh*, (dimension, face, aspect), starts with the acquisition of philosophy and culminates in rendering it to the hands of shiykhs, in order to pass on, with his help and training, the mood of incorporeality (*al-fanā’*) and observation (*al-mo‘āyinah*). And it is impossible to reach the absorption and observation except through incorporeality, and incorporeality will not be available without submitting to the shiykh or spiritual master (*al-quṭb*). So, the ascension (*al-me‘rāj*) is incorporeality which is the arbitrary step in the hands of the trainer to the level of observation and incorporeality in the being that, in their assumption, is Glorious God. But the gate to divine knowledge is the perfect knowledge about ‘aql and knowledge, hence it is by the perfect conception of these two that one can know Glorious God, and that He is unlike them. It will be

493 Mīrzā Mahdī’s Handwritten treatise, pp.7&8.

understood then that the main veils to knowing God are intellectualizations (*al-ma'qūlāt*), knowledge (*al-ma'lūmāt*), and delusions (*al-muhūmāt*). Knowing God in the real cognition, is by nothing but Him, and on this turns His will and volition. According to this, the Prophet or Imam are just guides to the way of knowing Him. Therefore, the final destination in divine knowledge is in finding the inefficiency of intellects, knowledge, and delusions, and the inevitability of bewilderment, and [finally] taking His Majesty out of 'negating' and 'anthropomorphism' (*khurūjī-hī min al-ta'til va al-tashbih*).⁴⁹⁴

He emphasizes again that the role of '*aql*' and knowledge is to show the inadequacy of all possible means and tools in knowing God. It is because when they are known as inadequate, there will remain no chance for other means to define or introduce God, because there is nothing more powerful or illuminating than intellect and knowledge.

'The path in divine knowledge is the light, which is the 'aql, which is the gate of knowledge, and for this reason prophets provoke the treasures of intellects (dafā'in al-'uqūl) and preach to people the Book and wisdom, to take them out of the darkness to the light with God's permission, and guide them to the true path of His Majesty. They know by 'aql and knowledge the eminence of His lofty position which cannot be known by anything else, and this leads to glorifying Him, and eliminating the delusions, and demolishing the information which are attained from physical and spiritual parents. Hence the path in divine knowledge is 'aql and knowledge, they are proofs for the authenticity of invitation [Islam], and contrary to human knowledge, [as an example] Sufi's apprehension (al-mukāshifah) has no reasoning behind it, except the certainty which is not impeccable, and the Sufis' method is completely insane; to render yourself to the hands of others and let them manipulate you...' ⁴⁹⁵

The main point that should be highlighted in these texts is that, for Mīrzā, the role of '*aql*' in the process of knowing God is merely admitting to the insufficiency of all means, including '*aql*' itself. He stipulates that what shows the falsity of the philosophers' conception of intellect is the exertion of this epistemic role in an inapplicable position. Hence '*aql*' is refused entry to this field; what they have used and named as '*aql*' is not

494 *Abwāb al-Hudā*, pp.89&90. For the primary source see Al-Kuliynī, M. *al-Kāfi*, vol.1, pp.82. and for original text see the appendix 4.44.

495 *Abwāb al-Hudā*, p.90. For the primary source see Majlisī, M. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol.11, pp.60. and for original text see the appendix 4.45.

the true ‘*aql*’. In other words, if they had applied true ‘*aql*’, they would have realized that it is absolutely blind in knowing God. What is being used as the human epistemic means in philosophy is thought, which is not true intellect, and as a result, what is assumed to be proved as God is an utter delusion. God cannot be known by human means. This is Mīrzā’s main epistemological critique about philosophy and mysticism using human epistemic means, the reason behind stigmatizing ‘human science’ thorough his works.

‘The result of argumentations in divine knowledge is astonishment (al-valah) and bewilderment (al-hiyrah), and this is why He is called ‘Exalted Allah’, and He is the Almighty’⁴⁹⁶

Mirzā refers precisely to the root of the word ‘Allah’ which is derived from ‘wa-la-ha’, literally bewilderment and astonishment. This name, which is the superior name amongst all Allah’s names, bridges the connection between the literal meaning of the word and the unapproachability and uniqueness of His essence as His pivotal attribute. Allah in this context indicates to an essence in which all efforts at knowing it will, undoubtedly, result in puzzlement and bafflement. So, the first step of knowing Him, for those who use their intellect properly, is to become flummoxed. Bewilderment is not only the consequence of the shortage of ‘*aql*’, it is, in fact, the natural result of God’s unique nature:

‘... He is impossible to be known, to be conceptualized. His essence and his being cannot be intellectualized. His creation of [luminous realities] life, and being [which is] according to His will is unknown, [besides] creation of tenebrous realities, their existence, and maintenance. [It is impossible to know how] He is absolutely unlimited, and is utterly separated from His creation by an essential divergence. These are all known only to Himself, not by anything else, as He is the Introducer of His essence, and His actions in the levels which have no end.’⁴⁹⁷

As discussed earlier, Mīrzā always supports his doctrine with plenty of *ḥadīths* in his works, but after giving logical explanations. This is his usual method of showing the epistemic independence of theological bases from anything, including scripture. In other words, a discussion on knowing Allah, as the most fundamental basis of Islam, should not be established upon the Prophet or Imams’ sayings, Qur’ānīc verses, or any other outsider signs: it should be found by itself. This is why Mīrzā first talks about the inapproachability of Allah through philosophical debates and then narrates *hadīths*. The

496 *Abwāb al-Hudā*, P.8. For the primary source see Majlisī, M. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol.74, pp.317. and for original text see the appendix 4.46.

497 *Ibid.*

role of *hadīths*, in this regard, is just a reminder and the facts should have been found earlier, personally and independently.

Some of the *hadīths* on *ma’rifat Allāh* from his works are quoted below, and more will be discussed in part 6.3 of this chapter.

Before reading narrations cited by Mīrzā in his different works is good to consider some notes:

Narrations are chosen from his different works, but again narrations cited in *Abwāb* are quoted in full here. As discussed in chapter 2.1, *Abwāb* is Mīrzā’s last work and stands as a compendium of his ideas. He presents his final conclusion in each subject and does not give many references in it, therefore, for his scriptural references one should look at his voluminous works such as *Asās ma’ārif al-Qur’ān*.

There are around 80 *hadīths* cited by Mīrzā in *Asās ma’ārif al-Qur’ān* just on the issue of knowing God. Each bunch of these *hadīths* points to one of the fundamental principles of *al-ma’rifat al-fitriyyah*, like pre-world existence, incapability of humans in knowing Him, He is the only introducer of himself, and so on. It tries to cover principal *hadīths* in a way that almost all different angles of the main issue are touched upon.⁴⁹⁸

The *hadīth* collections, which are the references of the narrations, are mentioned at the beginning of the chains. This is to show Mīrzā’s narrative method in choosing different sources, beside the abundance of such narrations in Shī‘ī collections.

‘In *al-Kāfi*, in a dignified narration, Na’thal the Jew, said: Oh, Muhammad! Describe your Lord for me. The Prophet said: “The Creator is not described except by how He described Himself, and how a Creator is described. The One whose senses are impotent in perceiving Him, reaching the intellects, confining thoughts, and eyes with which to catch Him, glorified from what describers tell about Him,... and describers do not touch His attitude.’⁴⁹⁹

*It is interesting that in this hadīth, like similar hadīths from Imams, Allah has been described extensively, with the description in some cases exceeding one page, but the point is that, as highlighted in bold by the Prophet and Imam at the beginning of each of them, Allah cannot be described by others, and all they do is quote His attribute, as introduced by Him.*⁵⁰⁰

498 Arabic sources of narration are given in the appendix to facilitate the reader with the origins.

499 *Asās ma’ārif al-Qur’ān*, V.1, P.295. For the primary source see Al-Kuliynī, M. *al-Kāfi*, vol.1, pp.127. and for original text see the appendix 4.47.

500 This fact refers to one of the important *Kalāmī* principles about ‘detention of Allah’s attributes’. For other similar *hadīths* on this see: *al-Kāfi*, v.1, pp.100. and for original text see the appendix 4.48.

“Allah is inapproachable for ‘aql, as it is hidden from eyes”. This title is mentioned in numerous *hadīths*, and Mīrzā cites plenty of them, around 80 alone in his *Asās ma‘ārif al-Qur’ān*. They are chosen from different collections of Shī‘ī sources, and this diversity is of importance. *hadīths* are cited from different well-respected Shī‘ī compilations by the most prominent scholars, such as *al-kāfi*, *al-Tawḥīd*, *al-‘Ilal*, *al-Mahāsin* and so on.

‘In Tuḥaf al-‘uqūl, form Imam Ḥussayn PBUH: ... “He is hidden from ‘uqūl (intellects) as He is hidden from eyes...”.’⁵⁰¹

‘In al-Tawḥīd, through the chain of narrators from the Commander of believers who said: ... He is known without a quality... and He is not measured by ‘uqūl, and cannot be touched by thoughts...’.⁵⁰²

‘In al-‘Ilal: through the chain of narrators from Imam Rida PBUH he wrote: “... He is not grasped by ‘uqūl (intellects), and is not reached by thoughts...”.⁵⁰³

In some narrations, asking for a description Allah incited anger among Imams which reflects on the importance of the issue for them. See this one from the first Imam Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib cited by Mīrzā in his Asās ma‘ārif al-Qur’ān from al-Tawḥīd of Shiyykh al-Ṣadīq:

‘In al-Tawḥīd through the chain of narrators from Imam Ṣādiq PBUH, he said: “while the Commander of believers [Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib] was preaching in Kūfah mosque a man approached to him and said: Oh, Commander of believers! Describe your Glorious Lord for us to enhance our faith and love towards him. So, the commander of believers became angry with him and said loudly: “Congregation Prayer”. The people gathered and the mosque was packed full. The Imam stood up, his hue was changed, and then he started: Praise to God from whom eyes are confined, so He cannot be described visually, and from an essence which is not known to anyone but

501 *Abwāb al-Hudā*, p.308. For the primary source see ’Ibn Shu‘bah, H. *Tuḥaf al-‘Uqūl*, vol.1, pp.244. for original text see the appendix 4.49.

502 Ibid, p.306. For the primary source see Shiyykh al-Ṣadīq. *al-Tawḥīd*, vol.1, pp.289. for original text see the appendix 4.50.

503 Ibid. For the primary source see Shiyykh al-Ṣadīq. *‘Ilal al-sharāyi’*, vol.1, pp.9. for original text see the appendix 4.51.

Him who is known to His creatures. He is absent from substances when intellectuals (al-mutiwahhimīn)⁵⁰⁴ speculate, because of His transcendence, and His Glory ascended over final contemplations of thinkers....”⁵⁰⁵

‘In al-Tawḥīd, through the chain of narrators, Imam Ṣādiq PBUH said: “only he knows Allah that Allah has introduced [Himself] to him, and whoever does not know Him by Him, actually does not know Him, and knows someone else. There nothing between Creator and creature, ...the cognition of Allah is not gained but by Allah, and Allah is bereft of His creature, and His creature is bereft of Him”.

⁵⁰⁶

*‘In al-Iḥtijā, from Amīr al-mu’minīn PBUH in one of his sermons: “He [Allah] is the indicator to Himself by proof, and the one who leads to the cognition of Him”.*⁵⁰⁷

*‘In al-Ṣabāḥ prayer: “Oh, the One who indicates to Him by His essence”.*⁵⁰⁸

*‘In Abū Ḥanzah al-Thumālī prayer: “I know you by you, and you indicated and invited me to yourself, and I could not know you if you were not”.*⁵⁰⁹

504 Here is a delicate linguistic point: the word *al-wahm* in Arabic has two opposite meanings: delusion and speculation, the usage of this word in Imam’s narration -when it comes to thinking of God- is an interesting irony: speculating here in this realm is nothing but delusion, the more you think, the less you understand. So, *motawahimen* are those, who, at the same time, thinking and getting deluded, and that is why I have deliberately translated the word to *intellectuals*, which here is equivalent to deluded.

505 Ibid, pp.295-296. For the primary source see Shiykh al-Ṣadūq, *al-Tawḥīd*, vol.1, pp.48. and for original text see the appendix 4.52.

506 Ibid, p.273. For the primary source see Shiykh al-Ṣadūq, *al-Tawḥīd*, vol.1, pp.192. for original text see the appendix 4.53.

507 Ibid, p.274. For the primary source see Ṭabarī, A. *al-’Iḥtijāj*, vol.1, pp.200. for original text see the appendix 4.54.

508 Ibid. For the primary source see Majlisī, M. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol.84, pp.339. for original text see the appendix 4.55.

509 Ibid. For the primary source see Majlisī, M. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol.95, pp.82. for original text see the appendix 4.56.

3.5.2 Pre-known God and the Role of Reminders (*mudhkkir*)

The next crucial step is to raise the fundamental question of knowing God and to see how Mīrzā answers this question; ‘does God remain unknown?’ And if no, how is He known? The importance of this question lies in the borders of Mīrzā’s scriptural method and that of mystics (‘*urafā*). It is clear that according to theoretical mysticism (*al-‘irfān al-naẓārī*) God is an ‘Absolute Unseen’ (*ghayb al-muṭlaq*). For ‘*urafā*, Allah is named the ‘Hidden Mysterious’ (*ghayb al-maktūm*), or ‘Unknown of the Unknown’ (*ghayb al-ghayb*), as well as ‘Concealed Unseen’, or ‘Mystery of Mysteries’, and in a more Sufi term, ‘Unknown Phoenix’ (‘*anqā-yi ghayb*).⁵¹⁰ This terminology is pinned on the unapproachability of God. Briefly, according to mystical bases, it is impossible to know Allah before reaching the level of annihilation (*fānā*). He is known only for the scarce number of His saints or friends (*awliyā Allāh* or *awḥadī-yi mi al-nās*) who were able to attain that status. In fact, the creature is not capable of finding Him, unless the combination occurs on the basis of annihilation as a result of a long, tough abstinence and ascetic mortifications.

Mīrzā watches the dividing lines between mysticism and his understanding of the text. He strongly asserts that not only can Allah be known, but also He is simply known to everyone. The first meeting occurred in the pre-existing world (*al-‘ālam al-dhar*), so people were familiar with him in their hearts, and so that He can easily be remembered in this world by the signs and reminders. The focal point, however, is that He is often neglected (*maghfūl*) or forgotten and should be remembered. Even ‘*aql*’ itself is often forgotten and needs to be reminded, but when noticed, it works independently:

510 It is available in all classical mystical works such as Mutaharī M. Āshnā’ī bā mabānī-i ‘irfān, Mīrzā Javād Ḍalīl’s Works such as *Risālah liā’-u ’allāh*, al-Murāqibāt; Suhriwardī, Y. (1378 SH). *Risālah ’Iṣtilāḥāt al-Ṣūfiyyah: lil-Shiykh Muḥyi-ddīn Muḥammad ibn ’Alī ibn ’Arabī*. Tīhrān: Bīdār. and **Abd-u al-Razzāq Qāsānī and works**: al-Qāshānī, ’A. and Pendlebury, D. (1991). A Glossary of Sufi Technical Terms. London: Octagon Press; al-Qāshānī, ’A. (1426 AH). *’Iṣtilāḥāt al-Ṣūfiyyah*. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al- Ilmīyyah; al-Qāshānī, ’A. (1370 SH). Sharḥ-I Fuṣūṣ al-Hikam. Qum: Bidār; al-Qāshānī, ’A. (1426 AH). *Laṭā’if al-’Ālam fī ’Ishārt ’Ahl al-al- ’Ilhām*. Cairo: Maktabah al-Thiqāfah al-Dīniyyah, v.2, p.535. **and for ibn-i ‘arabī’s works**: Claude. A. (2000). Ibn ‘Arabī, the voyage of no return. United Kingdom: Islamic Texts Society; Claude.A. (1993). Quest for the Red Sulphur: The Life of Ibn ‘Arabī. Hungary: Islamic Texts Society; Christian.B. (1991). Le soufisme: al-taṣawwuf et la spiritualité islamique. France: Maisonneuve et Larose; Chittick, W.C. (2000) ‘Time, Space, and the Objectivity of Ethical Norms: The Teachings of Ibn al-’Arabī’. Journal of Islamic Studies, 39(4), pp.581–96; Corbin, H. (1998). Alone with the alone: creative imagination in the Ṣūfism of Ibn ‘Arabī. United Kingdom: Princeton University Press; Corbin, H. (1969). Creative imagination in the Ṣūfism of Ibn ‘Arabī. Princeton: Princeton University Press; Chodkiewicz, M. (1993). An Ocean Without Shore: Ibn ‘Arabī, the Book, and the Law. United States: State University of New York Press; During, J. (1975). Islam: le combat mystique. France: R. Laffont; Elmore, G. (1998). ‘New Evidence on the Conversion of Ibñ Al-’Arabī to Ṣūfism’, Journal of Arabica, 45(1), pp. 50–72; Elmore, G. (1999). Islamic Sainthood in the Fullness of Time: Ibn Al-’Arabī’s Book of the Fabulous Gryphon. Germany: Brill; Izutsu, T. (2016). Sufism and Taoism: A Comparative Study of Key Philosophical Concepts. California: University of California Press.

*'It is clear that 'āqil does not need anything but a reminder to be aware of it, although he/she is ignorant of it in his/her awareness.'*⁵¹¹

The remembrance and other parts of the introduction procedure proceed under His absolute control, and remain utterly out of human epistemic dominion. This is absolutely necessary and epistemologically indispensable because of His essence that stands far beyond human epistemic scope. Allah is not the whole nature to be unified through annihilation as is the case in mysticism, nor is He at a higher level of being, to be reached or known by contemplation in philosophy. His unique separate essence can only be remembered, seen, and found by His own reminding (*tadhakkur*).

*'Chapter fifteen of Abwāb al-Hudā mentions the first-nature cognition, and we say that: one of the novel aspects of divine knowledge is indicating to this innate cognition, against what has resulted from old philosophical argumentations. This cognition uproots the substance of any misgiving, and by this Allah has fulfilled his promises, as what is being sought by everyone is to know his/her creator, and the creator is admired intrinsically, and this has been the main dispute all over the world, to find out who he is. Many people denied Him and thought that it is the nature, the world, and the matter that created substances. Some admitted that there is a wise intelligent creator, but diverged in knowing Him. Greek philosophers viewed Him as being possible to be known through face/dimension/aspect (*vajh*), so they imagined Him from an aspect and proved perfections for Him based on their intellect. The followers of Exenophanes see it possible to know Him by annihilation into Him and disputed over His perfections, knowledge, power, will, and volition. And then the Prophet came and the Qur'ān was ascended to him, and reminded the first-nature cognition and the basis of religion was established on that cognition. Allah Glorified and Exalted says: "So set thou thy face steadily and truly to the Faith:*

511 Asās ma'ārif al-Qur'ān, V.1, P.314. For the primary source see Majlisī, M. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol.3, pp.278. and for original text see the appendix 4.57.

*(establish) Allah's handiwork according to the pattern on which He has made mankind: (let there be) no change in the work (wrought) by Allah: that is the standard Religion: but most among mankind understand not". So the Prophet PBUH annunciated that this cognition is steady in the hearts as every baby is born to this pattern, except that the parents veil what they know by their teachings, and this is why the Qur'ān notifies of Glorious God in misery and adversity. Entangled in misery and adversity one finds his/her heart, knowing the Lord and negating it not, instead, escaping to Him'*⁵¹²

For Mīrzā, Allah is not an 'Absolute Unseen', 'Hidden Mysterious', 'Unknown of the Unknown', or 'Concealed Unseen'. Neither is He the 'Mystery of Mysteries'. To the contrary, He is the most elemental knowledge for everyone. Knowing Him does not even need such a long mortification, austerity, or tough abstinence as is unavoidable in the method of mystical practices. Human beings already know Him. All they need is a reminder (*mudhakkir*).

*'One of the greatest gates of guidance in knowing Glorious Allah and approaching Him is to know that one finds the Lord near (qarīb), responsive (mujīb), and without the labour of acquisition (taklluf al-tā'lim), abstinence, or asceticism.'*⁵¹³

'Whoever knows 'aql and its principles and is familiar with the first-nature/innate-posed cognition (al-ma'rifat al-fitrīyyah) does not become lost from divine knowledge, but knows that the greatest and most magnificent sign is Glorious Lord, and he/she does not confuse God with the knowledge which is mere conception, consciousness, and life. This is because he/she knows his/her Lord and is familiar with Him based on innate cognition. He/she knows Him in His sublime perfections. And through his/her Lord knows that

512 Abwāb al-Hudā, pp.41-42. For the primary source see Majlisī, M. Bihār al-Anwār, vol.3, pp.281. and for original text see the appendix 4.58.

513 Abwāb al-Hudā, p.42.

*knowledge is one of His signs, because knowing God comes before the knowing of knowledge, (because he/she found his/her Lord within the negligence, cut from all other than God, and this the secret why He takes them into calamities and disasters, in order to make them seek Him as a sincere shelter). And this is one of the astonishing facts of the divine realities; that religion is based upon this sublime cognition to protect people from being misled while finding the knowledge and life.*⁵¹⁴

As is obviously reflected in the quotations above, Mīrzā gives a high platform to the term ‘al-ma‘rifat al-fitriyyah’ and places it at the heart of his thought. For Mīrzā this is a fundamental Qur’ānic term which has strayed from its true meaning and should be understood in its actual concept, as reflected in the Imams’ commentaries. This is the Qur’ānic way of knowing God:

*‘Whoever wants to gain cognition through the Qur’ān should take the novel path that is presented by the Prophet and is ascended within the Book, and should remove the veil from fitrah to let the cognition appear, in order not to mix up the ‘reality of being’ with Allah, as Greeks and followers of Exenophanes did.*⁵¹⁵

This is a predominant term in Imamate narrative literature. Although it has frequently been mentioned by earlier Shī‘ī scholars,⁵¹⁶ – and has not been neglected narratively – it has not been given such prominence until now. Yet, the main problem with the term is not its narration, which is unanimously accepted, but rather about its construal.

The famous term of *fitrah* has always been used in a pro-philosophical context by scholars, even those who had an anti-philosophical tendency such as ‘Allāmah Majlisī.

514 Ibid, p.42&43.

515 Ibid, p.43.

516 The best example can be found in *Bihār al-anwār* where Majlisī narrates a bunch of the similar narrations in one chapter. See *Bihār*, V. P.

⁵¹⁷ This interpretation shows either (1) the dominance of philosophy over a Shī‘ī ambiance, especially, in later periods, when it caused an unconscious following, or (2) originality of their understanding which stands against Mīrzā’s understanding. Whatever the case, for almost all Shī‘ī scholars the term *ma‘rifat al-fitrīyyah* implies the ability to know God, a potential by which mankind has been equipped in order to argue for God and prove Him. This was the common understanding grasped by them. It is obvious that this interpretation does not really refer to *ma‘rifat* (cognition), but rather to an ability to argue and eventually arrive at the level of cognition. In short, it does not mean you have it, or you know it; it only means that you can achieve it, and you are able to know it, either by intellectualization (*ta‘aqqu*), or asceticism (*rīyāqat*). This interpretation is still suggested by mainstream scholars, especially under the dominance of philosophy over the classical *hawzavī* lessons. ⁵¹⁸

Diverging from the mainstream, Mīrzā, for the first time, tries to read the branch of related *hadīths* on the issue of *ma‘rifat al-fitrīyyah* in their literal meaning, rather than taking them in a philosophical context. For him, they talk about an evident independent, epistemological system in *tawhīd*. Firstly, he tries to quote plenty of these narrations in order to show that they are *mutawātir*, ‘frequently narrated’, protecting them from the label of ‘one-narrated’ (*khabar al-wāhid*). Being a ‘one-narrated’ *hadīth* means being practically isolated and theoretically obsolete. ⁵¹⁹ Only in one chapter of his *Asās ma‘ārif al-Qur’ān* which is on *ma‘rifat al-fitrīyyah*, does he cite around 80 verses next to more than 60 *hadīths* on this issue. Some of them are mentioned below. The contest over these *hadīths* turns more around the meaning of them, hence it is more-or-less accepted that they receive sufficient support in terms of citation and the chain of narratives. ⁵²⁰

Mīrzā maintains that these narrations are very explicit on the pre-innate knowledge (*fitrī*) of God, and stipulates that this knowledge has been used beforehand in the world of pre-

517 A very detailed survey of Shī‘ī ulamā’s commentaries on these *hadīths* can be found in Bīyābānī ‘Uskū’ī, M. (1385 SH) ‘Ma‘rifat-u-llah Fitrī ’Ast: Āyāt wa Rawāyāt’, *Journal of Safinah*, 13. As Bīyābānī reports, there are vary scares number of interpretations that can be considered non-philosophical, for instance the one by Mullā Ṣāliḥ Māzandarānī, brother in law of Majlisī and his assistant in collecting *Bihār*. See series of Bīyābānī’s articles in *Safinah Magazine*. There are seven articles investigating the ideas of different scholars chronologically. Bīyābānī also delves into *hadīths* and Qur’ān on the issue of ‘ālam al-dhar and *fitrāh* there are much more articles on knowing God for him in the same service. Bīyābānī ‘Uskū’ī, M. (1388 SH) ‘Insān dar ‘Ālam-I Dhar: ’Ārā’ wa ’Aqwāl Dānishmandān-I Qarn-I 14’, *Journal of Safinah*, 25, pp.88-111; Bīyābānī ‘Uskū’ī, M. (1388 SH) ‘Insān dar ‘Ālam-I Dhar: ’Ārā’ wa ’Aqwāl Dānishmandān-I Qarn-I 11-13’, *Journal of Safinah*, 23, pp.114-143; Bīyābānī ‘Uskū’ī, M. (1388 SH) ‘Insān dar ‘Ālam-I Dhar: ’Ārā’ wa ’Aqwāl Dānishmandān-I Qarn-I 4-8’, *Journal of Safinah*, 22, pp.74-92; Bīyābānī ‘Uskū’ī, M. (1387 SH) ‘Insān dar ‘Ālam-I ’Azillih wa ’Arwāh: ’Ārā’ wa ’Aqwāl Dānishmandān-I Qarn-I 14 wa 15’, *Journal of Safinah*, 18, pp.7-24; Bīyābānī ‘Uskū’ī, M. (1388 SH) ‘Insān dar ‘Ālam-I Dhar: ’Ārā’ wa ’Aqwāl Dānishmandān-I Qarn-I 14’, *Journal of Safinah* 24, pp.94-104; Bīyābānī ‘Uskū’ī, M. (1386 SH) ‘Insān dar ‘Ālam-I ’Azillih wa ’Arwāh: ’Ārā’ wa ’Aqwāl Dānishmandān-I Qarn-I 11-13’, *Journal of Safinah*, 17, pp.10-29; Bīyābānī ‘Uskū’ī, M. (1386 SH) ‘Insān dar ‘Ālam-I ’Azillih wa ’Arwāh: ’Ārā’ wa ’Aqwāl Dānishmandān-I Qarn-I 4-8’, *Journal of Safinah*, 16, pp.10-22.

518 See ‘allame tabatabaii and Jawādī Amuī’s exegesis under the verse of *fitrāh*

519 For a detailed explanation of this method of Mīrzā see 3.5 in this chapter; ‘making a *hadīth* network’.

520 See *Safinah magazine*, Bīyābānī attempts to show that they are *mutawātir*, whereas in other sources philosophers think about them to be one-narrated *hadīths*.

existence. Plenty of narrations give more detail of the event. According to these *ḥadīths*, Allah had introduced Himself to all mankind equally and all people became familiar with Him as their Lord, before they entered this world. So, they know Him and have seen Him by their heart. People have encountered His sublime status and, willingly or unwillingly, acknowledged His lordship. Although the occasion and the process of introduction itself are forgotten, deep effects of the encounter are engraved in their hearts. This is the meaning of ‘innate disposition’. It means that they have it in their heart though He is often neglected and should be reminded.

3.5.3 Knowing God in Shī‘a *ḥadīths*

3.5.3.1 Precise Role of the Signs

Before reading the *ḥadīths* that Mīrzā cites in order to support his interpretation, it is vitally important to highlight the epistemic point that the citing of *ḥadīth* by Mīrzā does not mean that knowing God relies upon narrations. Actually, it is not a narrative process. It is essential to define the exact role of narrations. As it has repeatedly been mentioned before, based on what Mīrzā presents in his system, knowing God is not – and cannot – be based on anything including the Qur’ān or *ḥadīth*, and no one has an active role in the process, including the Prophets or Imams. Therefore, they all are just reminders. Narrations, in this regard, play a reminder role, as is the case in terms of all signs and indicators. Yet again, Allah comes first, and He is the most evident reality by which all other facts can be known and found.

‘And He is the introducer of Himself from contingent realities whose origination and lasting is actualized by Him....’⁵²¹

He is the witness of the trustworthiness of others, and the process is not vice versa. To highlight this fact, Mīrzā names one of his chapters in *Abwāb al-Hudā* after this title:

‘Chapter nineteen of Abwāb al-Hudā: to know that Allah to be glorified is the greatest witness to the trustworthiness of what the Qur’ān and the Prophet call to’⁵²²

Mīrzā cites many *ḥadīths* to support this idea that nothing can illuminate Allah and introduce Him, including intellect or knowledge:

521 *Abwāb al-Hudā*, P.57.

522 *Ibid*, P.60.

*'In al-Kāfi and al-Tawḥīd: through the chain of the narrators from Maṇṣūr Ibn Ḥāzim, he said: I said to Imam Ṣādiq PBUH that I had a debate with people and said to them that the Glorious God is more glorious, dignified, and sublime than is known by His creature, but His creature is known by Him. The Imam said God bless you⁵²³.'*⁵²⁴

He remains in no doubt that knowing Allah comes first:

*'The servant, reaches the deep understanding of the essence of all creatures, [only] after knowing the uniqueness of the Lord, and this is why the servant looks at the reality of substances by His light, and why [prophets] attempted to push people towards perfect ma‘rifat, and knowing substances through knowing their Glorious Lord'.*⁵²⁵

3.5.3.2 Narrations on ma‘rifat Allah

In Asās ma‘ārif al-Qur’ān we find Mīrzā’s explanation on knowing God (*ma‘rifat Allāh*):

'In Maḥāsin: through the chain of narratives to Imam Ṣādiq PBUH, under this verse of the Qur’ān: "And when Your Lord summoned the descendants of Adam, and made them testify about themselves". [Imam] said: it was viewing (mu‘ayinah) Allah. So, the viewing [itself] is forgotten and the testimony was engraved on their hearts, and if it were not the case no one would know who his

523 In another *ḥadīth* cited in *al-Kāfi*, Imam says that: “you are right”. Mīrzā cited this narration in his *Asās ma‘ārif al-Qur’ān*, V.1, P.276. For the primary source see Al-Kuliynī, M. *al-Kāfi*, vol.1, pp.168. and for original text see the appendix 4.59.

524 *Asās ma‘ārif al-Qur’ān*, V.1, P.273. For the primary source see Shiyykh al-Ṣadūq. *al-Tawḥīd*, vol.1, pp.285. and for original text see the appendix 4.60.

525 *Asās ma‘ārif al-Qur’ān*, V.2, P. 478. For the primary source see

*creator and sustainer is. This is Allah's saying: "And if you asked them, who created them? They would say, God".*⁵²⁶

This ḥadīth is an explanation by the Imam of the most important verse in the Qur'ān about ma'rifat al-fitrīyyah. The complete verse reads as follows:

*"And when Your Lord summoned the descendants of Adam, and made them testify about themselves. Am I not your Lord?" They said, "Yes, we testify." Thus you cannot say on the Day of Resurrection, "We were unaware of this".*⁵²⁷

Although the verse is explicit as a kind of confrontation between God and Adam's descendants, the real meaning of the meeting and its details have been always subject to inquiry among Shī'ī scholars from different branches.

The main question about the most important verse on *fitrah* in Qur'ān are:

*The real meaning of viewing God, whether it is a unique knowledge as a result of facing Him, or it is rather a type of symbolic meeting which leads to a sense of intrinsic awareness about the Creator, as is believed to be the case for all creatures, mentioned in several verses.*⁵²⁸

Is the result of the meeting, as aforementioned, a real introduction, or does it just refer to a faculty (potential) of knowing God?

The time and the place: does the term 'then' refer to a specific time, or is it a general report of the occurrence of a symbolic awareness? And, the place, was it in the pre-existence world, ('ālam al-dhar) as a real place for this gathering?

The term 'descendants' refers to whom? How did it happen? And many similar questions...

526 Asās ma'ārif al-Qur'ān, V.1, P.268. For the primary source see Al-Barqī, A. *Al-Mahāsin*, vol.1, pp.281. and for original text see the appendix 4.61.

527 Al-Qur'ān, Chapter Al-A'rāf, Verse 172. and for original text see the appendix 4.62.

528 See for instance: Al-Qur'ān, Chapter al-Isrā, Verse 44. and for original text see the appendix 1.23; Al-Qur'ān, Chapter Nūr, Verse 41. and for original text see the appendix 1.12. It can even be interpreted to this type of Al-Qur'ān, Chapter Al-i 'imrān, Verse 83. and for original text see the appendix 1.25. This concept is clearer here in this Al-Qur'ān, Chapter Fuṣilat, Verse 11. and for original text see the appendix 1.26.

Mīrzā tries to say that these questions are answered within plenty of ḥadīths and therefore should not be taken out their context and explicit scriptural interpretation.

‘From al-Kāfi, “in Imam Ṣādiq’s PBUH response to someone’s question on *ma’rifah*: “I asked him about *ma’rifah* – it is made by whom? He said that it is made by Allah, there is no hand of people in it”.⁵²⁹

‘From al-Khiṣāl by Shiykh al-Ṣadūq, through his chain of narrators: “Imam Ṣādiq PBUH says: People do not need to know until Allah teaches them. When He has taught them, then they need to know”.⁵³⁰

‘From al-Kāfi, through its cited chain to “Abd al-’A’lā, he said: I said to Imam Ṣādiq PBUH, God bless you, are people equipped with a tool by which they accede to *ma’rifah*? He said: no. I asked: then are they due to gain *ma’rifah*? He said: no, it is for Allah to introduce. “God does not burden any soul beyond its capacity”, “God never burdens a soul beyond what He has given it”.⁵³¹

‘From al-Tawḥīd by Shiykh al-Ṣadūq, from Ḥasan b. Zīyād, he says that “I asked Imam Ṣādiq PBUH about the faith; do people have any role in it? He replied no, indeed not, but it is from Allah and his grace”.⁵³²

In Mīrzā’s interpretation, when the Imam says that people have no role in this process, it means that their ‘*aql*’ has no role in it, because the most eligible epistemic means which can presumably be nominated for knowing Allah is ‘*aql*’, and there is no doubt about the insufficiency of other means such as eyes or ears. The next ḥadīth makes a clear note on this:

529 Asās ma’ārif al-Qur’ān, V.1, P.267. For the primary source see Al-Kuliynī, M. al-Kāfi, vol.1, pp.163. and for original text see the appendix 4.63.

530 Abwāb al-Hudā, p.19. For the primary source see Shiykh al-Ṣadūq. al-Tawḥīd, vol.1, pp.412. and for original text see the appendix 4.64.

531 Asās, V.1, P.267. For the primary source see Al-Kuliynī, M. al-Kāfi, vol.1, pp.163. and for original text see the appendix 4.65.

532 Abwāb al-Hudā, pp. 19, 20. For the primary source see Al-Barqī, A. Al-Maḥāsin, vol.1, pp.199. and for original text see the appendix 4.66.

'In Maḥāsin: through the chain of narrators, form Imam Ṣādiq PBUH, he said: Allah did not ask people to [gain] knowledge, and has not posited a way for them to it.

The next *hadīth* deals more with the role of Imams, prophets, and more generally, the signs of Allah. This is a famous narration in which Imam Ṣādiq is arguing with a well-known persistent atheist of the time, Ibn Abi al-'Awjā'. Within the argument, the Imam starts mentioning the signs of Allah that seemingly have been ignored by Ibn Abi al-'Awjā' hitherto. According to this Shī'ī report, Ibn Abi al-'Awjā' intimates that he felt that Allah is about to appear quite visibly between him and the Imam as a result of the Imam's notification (*tadhakkur*), implying the high level of his awareness and cognition.

*'In al-Tawḥīd, within the conversation between Imam Ṣādiq PBUH and Ibn Abi al-'Awjā', he says that: "The Imam was continuously numerating the [signs of] Allah's power in my soul, which I could not rebuff, until I thought He would be projected between me and him".*⁵³³

Mīrzā focuses on the role of the signs, Imams and Prophets, in the process:

*'This narration indicates to this fact that the notification of Prophets prepares the heart for admitting Allah's acts, when they invite [people] to open the gate for witnessing His graces and knowing Him.'*⁵³⁴

Mīrzā comes to a general conclusion about the process of knowing Allah and the faith:

'It becomes clear from what we have mentioned that finding or losing lights [luminous realities] occurred under Allah's permission and is graded. To these levels the Qur'ān has made different references such as a lock, sealing, rusting, misting, blindness, and aberrance. This is due to His justice and fairness, and because of people's negligence the maxims of their intellects which are Allah's

533 Ibid, pp. 21-2. For the primary source see Shiyykh al-Ṣadūq. *al-Tawḥīd*, vol.1, pp.125. and for original text see the appendix 4.67.

534 Ibid, P.21.

*innate authorities for and against people, and [because of] them behaving like animals or even worse.*⁵³⁵

And in his other words:

*'The knowledge and faith are in hands of Allah. He bestows them to His servants, and takes from them, increases and decreases based upon their desire, intentions, and actions...'*⁵³⁶

3.5.4 'Aql and 'khorūj 'an al-haddiyin'

After clarifying that the endeavour of 'aql in the process of *ma'rifat Allāh* is for naught, Mīrzā indicates that, alternatively, 'aql finds an active role in the process of faith (believing in God). This role is found both by 'aql and within the Scripture, and there is no doubt about it whatsoever. That is to say that when the cognition (*ma'rifa*) is given, it is 'aql's turn to encourage the intellectual person ('āqil) to follow *ma'rifa*, which means to grasp it and believe in it. This is the practical role of 'aql well known as *al-'aql al-'amal* (practical intellect).

However, this is not the whole story. We have studied a lot of statements everywhere in Mīrzā's words. These are in fact an epistemic verdict of 'aql:

'Aql recognizes that it does not know the Lord.

'Aql finds that it is not the Creator.

'Aql recognizes that what is intellectualized (*ma'qūl*) cannot be the (or a) creator.

These assertions raise another question on *ma'rifat al-'aqlān*: Does 'aql have a kind of cognition in terms of knowing Allah? In other words, isn't it that 'the testimony of 'aql on its shortage of knowing Allah' entails a type of cognition? This level is called '*khorūj 'an al-haddiyin*' in Shī'ī *kalāmī* discourses,⁵³⁷ and is famous as the 'denial cognition' (*ma'rifat al-salbīyyah*). The term 'denial' means that 'aql will not declare who the creator is, it just says instead: (1) I cannot see Him, and (2) I know how it cannot be. It denies the Creator's similarity to anyone and proves His solitariness. But, the very point is that this assertion, even when called denial, is a kind of description. How can 'aql state that 'He is not, if it cannot state that He is'? The term literally means 'coming out from the two limits', which refers to the two borders of 'anthropomorphism' and 'agnosticism'. More precisely, what

535 Ibid, p.21. For the primary source see *Al-Qur'ān*, Chapter al-Furqān, Verse 43; Chapter Al-A'rāf, Verse 179; Chapter Ibrāhīm, Verse 4. and for original text see the appendix 4.68/4.69/4.70.
536 Ibid, this phrase is written in the footnote from another manuscript. You can see that original text in the appendix.

537 This term finds the roots in early shia narrations from Imams which can be found in hadith collections such as: 'Ibn 'Abi Jumhūr, M. 'Awālī al-la'ālī, vol.1, pp.304. and for original text see the appendix 4.71; Shiykh al-Ṣadūq, *al-Tawḥīd*, vol.1, pp.107. and for original text see the appendix 4.72; Al-Barqī, A. *Al-Mahāsin*, vol.1, pp.240. and for original text see the appendix 4.73; Shiykh al-Ṣadūq, *Al-Tawḥīd*, vol.1, pp.243. and for original text see the appendix 4.57.

'*aql*/ finds is that He exists, and He cannot be akin to anything understood by '*aql*'.⁵³⁸ But it seems that these two statements are contradictory:

I do not know Him

He is not similar to anyone I know

The (a) statement admits that the level of *ma'rifah* is naught, whereas (b) is certainly in need of cognition. Philosophy's respond to this question is simple and clear. God's existence is, and should be, proven by '*aql*. Yet for Mīrzā's followers (*tafkīkīs*) there is an intense debate over the meaning, limits, and interpretations of the '*ithbāt al-thāni*' principle. This question leads to a more controversial issue well-known as '*ithbāt al-thāni*', 'proving the existence of the Creator' which is the foremost subject in apologetic Islamic philosophy and its utmost purpose. The problem with this issue is rooted in the independence of '*aql*; Does it independently realize the inevitability of the existence of a creator? Or, simply, can '*aql* prove God? And, is '*aql* capable of finding out the dissimilarity of such a creator on its own? Does not this knowledge then entail a level of *ma'rifah* of Allah? *Tafkīkīs* have no doubt about the disability of '*aql* in *ma'rifat Allāh*, but their argument is to find out the level of '*aql*'s discovery in '*ithbāt al-thāni*'. Their discussion has two sides, first; to find out what Mīrzā believed in this regard, and secondly, putting Mīrzā aside, what can be construed from *hadīths* on this issue.⁵³⁹ A group (which I have called scriptural *tafkīk*) maintains that once you attempt to prove a creator by your '*aql*', you are actually trying to prove Allah, which is actually a philosophical procedure. For them, it is impossible to prove a creator and then align that proven creator with Allah. This is exactly what has taken place in Islamic philosophy in adjusting 'intellectually-found-creator' with 'religious-notified-Allah'.⁵⁴⁰ They believe that talking about Allah is the same as proving Him, and the term 'denial' does not make any change. There are not two levels of proving His existence and proving His attributes. Once He is found, He is proved with all His attributes, including His Unity. He will be found with all His attributes once-and-for-all by Himself, and '*aql* is paralyzed in finding or talking about Him, as well as denying any attributes from His Highness. These are all in need of knowledge of Him.⁵⁴¹ By contrast, the other group, (that I have called analytical *tafkīk*) maintain that although *ma'rifa Allāh* is absolutely out of '*aql*'s access, this level of cognition is not included in the *ma'rifah Allāh* category, and can be touched by '*aql* independently, as a level of *ma'rifat al-'aqlānī*. It is absolutely true that each individual without considering *ma'rifah Allāh* cannot think about Him, but everyone, at the same time, finds that he/she knows that Allah cannot (and is not) similar to anyone.⁵⁴² The response from the scriptural *tafkīk*, however, is that this finding of '*aql*' happens when *ma'rifah Allāh* is already exposed to mankind by Allah. One may think that one finds this reality by his/her '*aql*', whereas it is his/her *ma'rifa* that is revealing it. This is not actually

538 The famous expression for this level in Persian is 'nīst, nīst', which means that 'He is not the naught'.

539 This will be touched upon more in next chapter about post-Mīrzā trends.

541 one of the most famous book: Birinjkār, R. (1396 SH). *Mabānī-yi Khudāshināsī-yi adyān dar Falsafih-yi Yūnān wa 'Adīyān-I 'Ilāhī*, Tīhrān: Naba'.

542 One of the best advocates of this group is Muḥammad Bīyābānī Uskū'ī.

543 Rīdā Birinjkār and Siyyid Muḥammad Banīhāshimī can be named as the most prolific advocates of this theme.

the ‘*aql* per se. ‘*Aql* is under the influence of *ma’rifa*, even unconsciously, and all these conversations are taking place behind *ma’rifa*. This innate *tafkīkī* debate is of high significance in understanding the *tafkīkī* scriptural system, alongside its problems. Different approaches towards the problem can be articulated as:

Philosophers: ‘*aql* finds a Creator, which is the one introduced and presented by religions. One’s faith is perfect only if this intellectually-found creator is worshipped. This is the meaning of *ma’rifah*. There are plenty of *ḥadīths* that indicate to this fact, besides, ‘*aql* itself pronounces this reality loudly.

Analytical *tafkīk*: *ma’rifat Allāh* is certainly out of ‘*aql*’s reach. However, ‘*aql*’ is capable of proving that there should be ‘a creator’. It is then up to Allah to introduce Himself. ‘*aql*’s duty then will be following Him.

Scriptural *tafkīk*: *ma’rifat Allāh* is certainly out of ‘*aql*’s access, and ‘*aql*’ has no idea about Him, neither is it able to prove ‘a creator’. The reality is that ‘*aql*’ has no cognition of Allah even after *ma’rifat Allāh* is bestowed. It is actually the result of *ma’rifat Allāh* that all doubts about the similarity of Allah with other creatures are removed. What remains for ‘*aql*’ is mere obedience.

The debate seems to be ceaseless because each one of these three group finds its own argument reinforced by *ḥadīths*. As mentioned above, *ḥadīths* do not allocate the same epistemic role to ‘*aql*’. They sometimes state that ‘a creator’ is proven by ‘*uqūl*’(intellects), and sometimes even declare that *ma’rifah Allāh* is certainly presented to them. These *ḥadīths* are problematic, both in confrontation with philosophers, and within *tafkīks* themselves. The result is entirely dependent on how one wants to interpret them. The challenge, yet again, is to find a resolution between these contradictions; between those dedicating *ma’rifah Allāh* entirely to Allah, and those that designate a level of recognition to ‘*aql*’. To my knowledge, it is clear from Mīrzā’s words that there is a level of ‘*khorūj ‘an al-haddiyyin*’ recognized by ‘*aql*’. Although the scale of preference for him is always weighted towards *ma’rifah Allāh*, it is obvious from his words that ‘*aql*’ realizes that it is not the Lord, as it recognizes that the other substances and creatures that are discerned by it cannot be the Lord either. So, there is a level of cognition designated for it, but, it is not clear enough whether he thinks that this happens after, or before, *ma’rifa Allāh*. And here lies the root of his followers’ disputes. He does not mention any contradictory *ḥadīths* in *Abwāb al-Hudā*, and simply focuses on *ma’rifat Allāh* as the axis of procedure. However, in *Asās ma’ārif al-Qur’ān*, where he is expected to expand his opinions, he quotes plenty of contradictory *ḥadīths* and interprets them. This *ḥadīth* is a noteworthy example, because ‘*aql*’ and *ma’rifat* are both mentioned in it:

‘In al-’Iḥtijāj: from Imār al-mu’minīn PBUH: “the foundation of worshipping Allah is knowing Him, and the quintessence of knowing Him is [believing in] His unity, and the basis of His unity is denying attributes from Him. He is Glorious to be described by [any] attribute, because ‘*uqūl* assert that anything described by attributes should be created, and ‘*uqūl* testimony of the ‘*uqūl* that He Glorified is Creator and not a creature’.”⁵⁴⁴

544 *Asās ma’ārif al-Qur’ān*, v.1, p.304. For the primary source see Ṭabarī, A. *al-’Iḥtijāj*, vol.1, pp.200. and for original text see the appendix 4.75.

Reading the *hadīth*, one can easily distinguish two possibilities within the text, both of the essentiality of *ma'rifah*, and testimony of '*aql*. However it is not clear from the text when '*aql's cognition occurs. Mīrzā's explanation and preference is then highly significant. He, I think, tries to keep the balance between the two rivals. He starts with highlighting the *ma'rifah* and then expands on the role of '*aql*. After citing the *hadīth*, he writes:*

'It is clear that worshipping is consolidated by cognition, and cognition is the principle, origin, spirit, and foundation of worshipping. To know Allah is exactly to know His Unity, and His Unity is distinguishing Him, and '*aql* and '*ilm* are proofs that everything which is known or intellectualized is evidently of the creature, and one described by attributes and known by them is the same'⁵⁴⁵

*He specifies that the Unity of Allah as His main distinctive attribute is achievable by '*aql*. It is a significant achievement that '*Aql* finds the Uniqueness/Unity of Allah besides His Solitariness. And, I think, for Mīrzā, this should have happened after *ma'rifah*, because he gives a higher platform to the beginning of narration where the main axis is distributed to *ma'rifah*.*⁵⁴⁶ *He cites plenty of *hadīths* in the same context of which some are really explicit in the role of '*aql*:*

*'In al-Nahj: in a sermon by him PBUH⁵⁴⁷: “‘uqūl are not informed about the limits of His attribute, and are not concealed from the necessity of His knowledge’ ...”*⁵⁴⁸

*The text of *hadīth* is saying that although ‘uqūl are not capable of knowing Him, they are not cut from the primary level of knowing Him, which is the necessary level. The problem becomes worse when a meticulous look is taken to other *hadīths* in the field. In almost all cases, what ‘uqūl have been cut off from is the profound levels of *ma'rifat Allāh* - which is called ‘*ma'rifat al-iktināhīyya*’, literally ‘the innermost cognition’, and not the primary or basic levels. ‘Innermost cognition’ basically should refer to the deep*

545 Ibid, p.304.

546 I have intimated at the beginning of this thesis that '*aql* and '*ilm* in Mīrzā's literature have the same root and are emanated from the same source. They are actually the one light with different realms of functionalities. So, they are often considered one together in this thesis.

547 The famous work of Sharīf al-Raḍī, M. (1414 AH). *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Qum: Mu'assisah Dār al-Hijrah, in which he collected the sermons, letters and preaches of the first Imam 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib.

548 Ibid, v.1, p.308. For the primary source see Sharīf al-Raḍī, M. *Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol.1, pp.308. and for original text see the appendix 4.76.

understanding of His attributes. A level from which, presumably, ordinary people are deprived. This implies that what ‘aql has access to, is a simple proof of His existence which is considered to be the first level of ma‘rifah. As for a reader who has followed this thesis up to here, this kind of cognition about Allah is definitely against Mīrzā’s scheme. ma‘rifah Allāh, in Mīrzā’s reading, is available to anyone, once and for all. It has no length or width. It is simple and unique.

Mīrzā cites numerous narrations of this type and then comments on them. Having several examples, three of them are quoted below:

“‘uqūl are limited from the depth of Your Majesty”⁵⁴⁹

“‘uqūl do not reach the Glory of Your Dignity”⁵⁵⁰

“Praise to Him,...the One, His Highness, who rebuffed the ‘uqūl, so they do not find a way to reach the end of His sublime status...”⁵⁵¹

He cites 37 similar ḥadīths occupying 25 pages on the same detailed issue. Mīrzā comments on them and he makes no reference to the so-called ‘ma‘rifat al-‘iktināhīyya’ in his long commentary. He does not even distinguish between the two levels of ‘aql’s cognition as discussed above. This is the embodiment of what he has seemingly grasped from the group of ḥadīths:

The basis of religion is constructed upon ‘aql.

‘Aql is known by itself, not by anything else.

It is a light which one finds after childhood as the first grace of Allah after life.

By ‘aql one distinguishes good from bad, and right from wrong.

People are in ignorance of it, though they possess it; all they need is a notification.

‘Aql is the criterion by which man is praised or reproved.

‘Aql is barren in knowing Allah.

549 Ibid, p.311.

550 Ibid.

551 Ibid, p.309. For the primary source see Majlisī, M. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol.94, pp.145. and for original text see the appendix 4.77.

‘Aql, per se, is a proof of Allah as it declares that Allah cannot be known by any other means.

‘Aql reaches the level of bewilderment in knowing Allah.

‘Aql discovers that what humans have called ‘aql is not ‘aql, it is devilishness instead. (it connotes the philosophical employment of ‘aql)

Mīrzā’s comments read as follows:

The conclusion of it is that the holy religion is based upon the authority of ‘aql, which you learnt is not known or described by others. The light which humans find after childhood, by which goodness and badness are manifested to them, is the first grace of Allah to his servants after life. Seemingly, the intellectuals (‘uqalā) do not need anything by a reminder, because they are already aware of it, though they are in ignorance of knowing it while they know it. Because they know the goodness and badness of their acts, and of others by it, they praise or reprove themselves, and others, by it. Whoever is intellectual notices, after being notified, that the essence of ‘aql is to illuminaite itself and others. It is made clear that He cannot be known by ‘aql, let alone be intellectualized, known, conceptualized, or truly imagined, while He is being known, observed, met, attained by Himself in such a sublime knowledge, observation, meeting, and attainment that is beyond conception in all possible ways. So, he knows that introducing and describing Allah for others by information, conceptions, and contemplations is nothing but aberrance, and misguiding, because He is known by others. Therefore, describing Him is heresy, thinking about Him is infidelity to ‘aql and is a blasphemy through straying from it. ... ‘Aql is a proof of Allah that states that the bewilderment of a human in knowing Allah and discovering, per se, that human beings are in ignorance of the knowledge of ‘aql, and what they have called ‘aql, is in fact devilishness. The activity of the soul in inferring theories from essentialities is the exact act of ignorance and how it is not that the result of their inference is describing Allah and defining Him

*by information, intellectulizations, conceptions, and contemplations, whereas Glorious Allah is dignified to be known by 'aql and 'ilm let alone with other realities.'*⁵⁵²

552 Ibid, v.1, p.315-6.

Chapter Four

The Epistemic Role of ‘*aql*’ in Mīrzā Mahdī Isfahānī’s Jurisprudential System⁵⁵³

⁵⁵³ This chapter has been presented once under the title ‘Temperate Reason, Moderate Jurist; The effects of the modulation of the function of reason in Mīrzā Mahdī Isfahānī’s jurisprudential system’ in the second workshop of the Sharī‘a Project, Convened jointly by the University of Exeter and the University of Leiden, 18th–19th, April 2013, University of Exeter, Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies.

Signposting

In this chapter I will try to show that Mīrzā's position towards *uṣūl al-fiqh* is not the same as the one of *akhbārīs*. This is clear from his own words. Mīrzā, interestingly, recognizes philosophy as the main reason behind delusion and hesitation spread over any issue in Islam, indeed by Sunnīs. The second important argument is that he posits Shī'a 'ulamā against Sunnīs' misgiving. I have tried to support this behavior by some assumptions. In this context, Mīrzā gives the focus to rectify the role of 'aql in *uṣūl*, and tries to prove that this is exactly what predecessors of Shī'a 'ulamā tried to do, especially Shiyykh Murtaḍā al-Anṣārī famous as the Shiyykh al-a'ẓam. The result of this modulation is a moderate sharia law (*al-fiqh*) which he calls *al-'uqalā'ī* (reasonable), against the one which is drenched with philosophical argumentations and perplexing logical conceptualizations, *al-'aqlānī* (rational). Mīrzā brings his most fundamental terminology into discussion, 'reasonable innate disposition' (*al-fitrat-u l-'uqalā'īyyah*). His *uṣūlī* principles can also show the consistency of his methodology in *kalām* (theology) and *uṣūl al-fiqh* (principles of jurisprudence).

Chapter's Main Questions

1. Where does Mīrzā stand between *akhbārīsm* and the Shī'a *uṣūlī* system?
2. Does he apply the same *revelatory* methodology in his *uṣūlī* works and his ideological ideas? (focusing on the function of intellect)
3. How does he define the function of intellect in his alternative *uṣūlī* system?

Apart from pro/anti-philosophical debates, the effect of Mīrzā's epistemological modulation on his *legal system* is of great interest from an *uṣūlī* perspective. His ideological way of approaching *uṣūl al-fiqh* is an interesting topic that urged me to attach this *fiqhī-uṣūlī* chapter to the previous ideological parts. One of the main purposes of the chapter is to highlight the possibility of the emergence of a reforming movement within Shī'a legal thought which emanates from an *uṣūlī* tradition and remains loyal to its fundamental principles. This achievement is productive both within seminaries and with academic scholars with insider and outsider perspectives. What Mīrzā does in his *uṣūl* is a kind of modulation for which I prefer to use the term '*traditional reformation*'. It is a reform because he redefines the function of 'aql, the focal element of the development of *uṣūl al-fiqh*⁵⁵⁴, and it is traditional because it calls for originality and scripturalism. The problem with typical reforming movements is that they often neglect principles by giving a strong and uncontrolled platform to the 'aql which is not accepted and as a result leaves

554 For the key role of 'aql in *uṣūl al-fiqh* see the introduction and first chapter of '*Scriptural Islam*' by Robert Gleave.

them out of mainstream.⁵⁵⁵ What distinguishes his *uṣūl al-fiqh* from typical reformist movements is that, despite reducing the functionality of ‘*aql*’, the output of the system revealed in his *fīqhī* opinions is tempered, moderated, and *common sense-oriented*.

Themes and Background

Even a cursory look at the syllabuses of theology courses in Iran’s universities (in all compulsory ideological modules, for all students, in every faculty, e.g., Engineering, Archaeology, Medical, etc.) clearly shows the overwhelming effects of the integration of philosophical ideas and methods into Shī‘ī doctrinal discourses. To study Shī‘ī Islamic discipline (*Kalām*), one has no choice but to study philosophical arguments. This is simply the natural result of the rationalistic bolster provided by philosophy to cement the permanent demand of any rationalistic doctrine. The procedure seems so natural that one never stops to ask whether scriptural sources contain any substantial alternative system, epistemologically or ontologically. To expect any rationalism beyond Islamic philosophy and its logical literature is to fall into the abyss of irrationalism. It is not surprising then, that even if a novice tries to look up the term *kalām* in a relevant dictionary, in order to find a tangible translation of the term, s/he will inevitably come across this phrase: ‘Muslim Scholastic Philosophy’⁵⁵⁶. Can one imagine what would be left of Shī‘ī doctrine if it were not intermingled with the philosophical framework? Is it imaginable at all? Also, in a jurisprudential field, what would remain after extracting philosophy from the *Shī‘ī uṣūlī* system? Undoubtedly, the shadow of Islamic Philosophy eclipses not only the atmosphere of Shī‘a ideology, but also stretches to the very detail of its *uṣūl al-fiqh*; from hermeneutical subjects (*mabāḥith al-alfādh*) to non-textual subjects such as the reasoning-independent subject (*mostaqillat al-‘qiyāya*) where the function of ‘*aql*’ (intellect) is barely examined⁵⁵⁷. This is where the effect of Greek logic and philosophy is most apparent.

Criticising and even utterly rejecting philosophy has a visible record in the history of Islamic theology, but with regards to *uṣūl al-fiqh* the same cannot be said of an attempt to discover the real effects of the philosophical methods on the current *uṣūlī* system, in terms of its methodology, entrances (*madākhil*), and outcomes. The only major challenge to the *uṣūlī* system was made, briefly, by the *akhbārīs*. As already mentioned,⁵⁵⁸ the roots of the problem go back to the question of dominance of intellect over Scripture; but the way that *akhbārīs* approach this issue is different from that of Mīrzā. There has been a lasting trend against philosophy that can be tracked amongst shī‘ī *uṣūlīs*, even by

555 Āyat-u Allāh Ṣādiqī is one the good examples who has been felt out of favor with the common circle of ‘ulamā and rejected eventually. Āyat-u Allāh Ṣānī‘ī another example who is known as *reformist* Āyat-u Allāh is abandoned though embraced by the youth and modern enlightened layers of Islamic society. See Ḥāfi‘abd-u Al-Baghī, M. (1386 SH) ‘Murūrī bar didgaha wa nazrat-i Āyat-u llāh Ṣan‘ī’. *Journal of shahrvand*, 24; Furātī, ‘A. (1393 SH). *Ru‘hāniyat wa tajad*. Qum: Pajhūhishgāh-i ‘Ulūm wa Farhang-i Islāmī, pp.385-395.

556 Khudāparastī, F. (1384 SH). *Farhang-I Mu‘āṣir-I Fārsī*, Tīhrān: Farhang-i Mu‘āṣir.

557 In this regard see ’Intīdhāmī, M. (1384 SH). *Pish-fard hāy-i falsafī dar ‘ilm-i uṣūl*, Qum: Būstān-i Kitāb.

558 See Paul walker statement in 3.5 in chapter 3.

prominent figures such as Shiykh Murtadā Anṣārī⁵⁵⁹ and Sayyid Muḥammad Husayn Tabāṭabā’ī Burūjirdī⁵⁶⁰. However, it is still not clear – at least to me, and I believe it worth drawing to the attention of both academia and seminaries – to what extent the *fiqh*-oriented or faint-*uṣūlī* approach of Grand Ayatollah Burūjirdī was influenced by his well-known anti-philosophical tendency. It is not apparent, either, to what extent Grand Ayatollah ‘Abd al-Karīm Hā’irī Yazdī, the founder of the *ḥawza*, was influenced by the anti-philosophical and anti-mystical instructions of the School of Sāmirrā’, which is well known for its Scriptural and anti-Philosophical inclination.⁵⁶¹

This chapter, from a broader perspective, can be seen as an attempt to find the effects of any possible anti-philosophical trend on the system of *uṣūl al-fiqh*, and it approaches this issue in Mīrzā’s *uṣūlī* system as a contemporary case study of an anti-philosophical jurist.

Revelatory Method

Although Mīrzā’s intellectual biography has been discussed in detail in chapter three, a short and intense survey with a focus on his jurisprudential characteristics is needed here. Mīrzā is well-known as the major impetus behind the modern Scriptural School, famous as *Maktab-i Ma’arif-i Khurāsān* (but better known as *Maktab-i Tafkīk*, literally Separation School), which attempts to separate scripture from philosophical and mystical interpretations. He is among the first ten prominent pupils of Grand Ayatollah Mīrzā Muḥammad Husayn Na’īnī (d. 1355/1936) who formed Nā’īnī’s first teaching circle in Najaf⁵⁶² in 1322/1904. He was granted a notable authority for *ijtihād* (*ijāzah*, traditional authorisation for issuing jurisprudential verdicts) from Nā’īnī in 1338/1920 which was annotated later by outstanding figures of the *ḥawza*, namely Āqā Dīyā’ Arāqī, ‘Abd al-Karīm Hā’irī Yazdī, and Sayyid Abu ’l-Hasan Isfahānī⁵⁶³. Reaching the highest levels in formal seminary instruction (*fiqh* and *uṣūlī*), and even after a long period of tough ascetic practices, unlike most other scholars Mīrzā was not convinced by intuitive mystical methodology nor by philosophical rationalism. The outcome of this epistemological perplexity is elaborated here, in his words about the concept of knowledge and intellect:

‘And the presence (*ḥudūr*), the acquirement (*ḥuṣūl*), the conception (*taṣawwur*), and the assertion (*taṣdīq*) all are explored (*yankashif*),

559 A major part in his most famous work ‘Anṣārī, M. (1398 SH). *Farā’id al-Uṣūl*, Qum: Majma’ al-Fikr al-’Islāmī. is actually dedicated to answering the Akhbārīes and to challenge their opinions, especially mabāḥith al-’aqlīyyah and the authenticity of the explicit meaning of words (*ḥujjīyat zāwāhir al-Qur’ān*).

560 His anti-philosophical approach is famous within seminaries, for some surveys see Rizvi, Sajjad H. (2012) “Only the Imam Knows Best” The Maktab-e Tafkīk’s Attack on the Legitimacy of Philosophy in Iran’, Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, 22.

561 A detailed survey on the School of Sāmirrā’ is accessible in Chapter Two where the intellectual biography of Mīrzā Mahdī is discussed.

562 For a detailed intellectual biography of Mīrzā and his relationship with Na’īnī see chapter 1.

563 You can see the original text of the Hā’irī’s *ijāzah* which was granted to Mīrzā for *ijtihad* in the appendix.

*and this is not the knowledge (al-'ilm), but the knowledge is something else.*⁵⁶⁴

For Mīrzā, these concepts: *hudūr*, *husūl*, *taṣawur*, *taṣdīq*..., which are considered as the most common terms in *uṣūl al-fiqh* and all other classical lessons both within the seminaries and academia, cannot be the real knowledge, simply because they need to be defined, as they have been in all philosophical works with the exception of the *uṣūlīs*. Consequently, what needs to be defined cannot be the origin of the light of knowledge by which everything is defined, illuminated, and known⁵⁶⁵. Knowledge in its divine terminology refers to a distinctive exterior light, '*nūr al-'ilm*', which illuminates every knowable dark substance. He clearly asserts:

*'Knowledge' in the divine term is a light which is intrinsically manifested and is present to anyone who knows and comprehends objects by it, even when he is ignorant of the existence of that reality,, but in its humanistic term it is a concept which is found with the soul or exists within it, and as a result it is divided into acquired (*husūlī*) and presential (*hudūrī*).⁵⁶⁶*

In short, the 'revelatory knowledge' (*ma'ārif waḥyānī*) comprises independent methodology and outcomes. As discussed in chapter three, Mīrzā first started his lessons in Mashhad by spreading Nā'īnī's *uṣūlī* ideas. The strong point of Nā'īnī's system for Mīrzā was that it could potentially challenge the predominating philosophical system of Akhūd-i Khurāsānī, as presented in his famous classical textbook of *kifāyah*. The next stage for Mīrzā was to focus more on the root of the disputes and to dig into the real meaning of the major fundamental epistemological concepts: knowledge and intellect (*al-'ilm wa al-'ql*). After clarifying the self-contradictory nature of these concepts within *uṣūl al-fiqh*, it was time to move into the realm of theology, which was more controversial. But the fact is that theology became more prominent than *uṣūl al-fiqh*; some of the reasons behind this priority and preference will be discussed below. Although Mīrzā's journey in Mashhad started with *uṣūl al-fiqh*, his tertiary education was in the *hawza al-'ilmīyyah* and his first pupils were all jurists, so the question is why his *uṣūlī* ideas, besides his *fīqhī* approach, have been less promoted and developed even among his advocates. It is necessary to discover why *maktab-i tafkik* gradually grew as a theological system yet there is no tangible echo of his massive literature on *fiqh* and *uṣūl-alfiqh* within seminaries.

Silence and Isolation

Valid or invalid, Mīrzā's ideas could potentially be considered as a good source of criticism for sifting through Islamic philosophy and amending the jurisprudential system,

564 *Abwāb al-Hudā* p.142.

565 For an expanded discussion see chapter 3, section 5.

566 *Abwāb al-Hudā*, p.6.

as he does not merely refute the philosophy but claims an alternative scriptural methodology, ontology, and pedagogy. Nevertheless, they remained unpublicized and abandoned, although this silence was stronger with regards to his jurisprudential ideas. His pupils also were unwilling to publicize his *fīqhī* concepts. Robert Gleave correctly suggests some socio-political reasons behind this silence, although his reasoning deals more with Mīrzā's ideology.⁵⁶⁷ I would like to focus more on the silence concerning his *uṣūlī* and *fīqhī* ideas. I have a list of some reasons which stand for a theological tafkīk rather than a *fīqhī/uṣūlī* tafkīk. Some of them go back to Mīrzā's own actions and some relate to his pupils who came later. It should be remembered here that the tafkīkī School has a sense of quietism which is a common factor in both its ideological and *fīqhī* approaches, though the silence is more discernible in *fīqhī*.

The threat of being accused of *akhbārīsm*:

To attack *Uṣūlī* ideas is to be labelled as an *akhbārī* and to be discredited publicly and slandered in the seminaries, whereas to attack Philosophy/Mysticism could possibly lead merely to a vague label of irrationalism or scripturalism. However, this hope did not come true, because they were labelled as *new akhbārīs* besides being *irrational*.⁵⁶⁸

The priority of reform in theological issues compared with jurisprudential subjects.

Iran's theocratic revolution in 1979 under the leadership of an absolute philosopher and mystic clergyman.

The subtle Scriptural approach (and sometimes hidden) of Mīrzā in his *fīqhī* and *uṣūlī* works, compared with his ideologically severe critiques.

The expansion of the School's ideas among laymen, lawyers and university students rather than *ḥawzawī* members, especially in the second generation of its advocates, although the first circle of Mīrzā's pupils in Mashhad were all clerics. It is evident that laymen are basically far removed from *uṣūl al-fīqh* and its terminology; so, one can imagine that they are unwilling to promote the subject. Moreover, when the subject itself aims to amend formal terminologies, they show even more reluctance.

Shiyykh Maḥmūd Halabī's role as the most zealous advocate of Mīrzā in Mashhad and later in Tehran. His socio-political fame lies before Iran's revolution in the institution of *Anjuman-i Ḥujjatīyya Mahdawīyya* as a non-political anti-*bahā'ī* convention. His fame as an anti-revolutionary to the ideological system potentially paved the way for his anti-philosophical and mystical doctrine, which was not necessarily at the forefront of *bahā'ī* resistance. Halabī, however, had no interest in working with clergies who were deeply influenced by the philosophical *ḥawza* of Qum and the regime proper; therefore, his

567 Gleave, R. (2010). 'Continuity and Originality in Shi'i Thought: The Relationship between the Akhbariyya and the Maktab-i Tafkik', in Mervin, S. and Hermann, D. (ed.) *Shiite Streams and Dynamics*. Beirut: Orient-Institut, pp.1800-1925.

568 For the detailed stories see chapter two.

dissemination was again among university students -not seminaries- in Tehran.⁵⁶⁹ University students who had only limited *hawzawī* experience passionately embraced his ideas and worked on them – which is precisely why, after over half a century of teaching and writing, Mīrzā’s *fiqhī* discourses are still isolated and considered obsolete even among his followers.⁵⁷⁰ Ḥalabī’s succeeded among young university students because of his personality and method. He, at the time, was a very good preacher and as it is recorded did not start with ideological discourses (similar to his great master Mīrzā). His intention for forming an anti-Bahā’ī organization, which is normally appealing to the youth, is the main reason of his success in encouraging and mobilizing them for supporting and protecting twelfth Imam against Bahā’īs threat. It is narrated that after defeating Bahā’īs in Iran he started ideological discourses with his pupils as a reward to their organized and systematic anti-Bahā’īs affairs.⁵⁷¹ Even now, after a half century of teaching theological subjects (*durūs al-ma’ārif*) in their classes, the main characteristic identity which convenes them together is protecting imam in a non-political⁵⁷² manner.

Textual barriers and interpretational difficulties:

The ideas were usually new, profound and sometimes demanding philosophical preliminaries, not to forget that he did not always follow the same method in his different classes. Different scriptures form different students also beget different interpretations, if one can say that Mīrzā had reached his final destination in all his ideas.

569 Reading the names of the authors of the School shows this fact that there are no clergies highlighted in the list. Rabbānī, H. (1392 SH). *Kitābshināsi-yi Tuṣṭī-yi Maktab-i Tafkīk*. Qum: Pajhūhishgāh-i ‘Ulūm wa Farhang-i Islāmī.

570 More references on Ḥalabī’s biography and works are available in chapter three if needed.

571 Their activity was banned from 19 by direct order of ʻAyatullāh Khumiynī. Group of Authors. (1389 SH) ‘Bāzkhānī-yi Siyr-I Mawādī’-I ’Imām Khumiynī dar Ghibāl-I ’Anjuman-I Ḥujjatīyah’, *Jurnāl of Hamshahrī*, 19.

Hence, published and official sources on *Anjuman-i Ḥujjatīyya* is very scarce in term of the number of their students, their organization and even their members. But, as I have mentioned in introduction of the thesis, I have self experience in studying and living at the heart of their society and it is clear, for example that there are not a lot of clergies, as it is the case, in Mīrzās pupils around Ḥalabī. They are still under restrictions and their opponents are widely and freely attacking them. For this see ’Akbarī Āhangar, R. (1398 SH). *Haqāyiqī Pīrāmūn-I ’Anjuman-I Ḥujjatīyah*. Tīhrān: Shahīd Kazīmī. He also produced a documentary film based on his critiques on *Maktab-i Tafkīk* in the *Owj Arts and Media Organization*, named “Pūstīn-i wārūnī”. (The name means “Inside out fur”. It has been inspired from a sentence quoted from *Imam Ali* in *Nahj al-Balāghah* (sermon 108) that is blaming cruel people in apocalypse, who will use Islam like wearing a fur inside out.) The film goes on the screen at the *Ammar International Popular Film Festival*, but never on the public screens, however, it can be found in its director’s page: pp [Accessed 15 May 2022]

572 For their article of association see Khusru Panāh, ’A.H. (1393 SH). *Jarīyān Shinasī-yi Didd-I Farhang-hā*. Tīhrān: Ta’līm wa Tarbiyat-I ’Islāmī. In which anti-politicism is highlighted, p.489.

The custom of quietism as a trend of the School, by nature, which led to selective teaching circles after Mīrzā, although Mīrzā's lessons were not of that selectivity.

4.1 Miṣbāḥ al-Hudā

For examining Mīrzā's *uṣūlī* ideas, *Miṣbāḥ al-Hudā* has been chosen as the main reference from among his works. This compendium stands for an *uṣūlī* counterpart to *Abwāb al-Hudā*, with the same significance and characteristics.⁵⁷⁴ However, his other *uṣūlī* works are not obsolete, namely *al-'Iftā' wa 'l-taqlīd* where the main questions of the chapter find their answers.

4.1.1 Miṣbāḥ al-Hudā and the ambiance of Mashhad

It has been mentioned before that the atmosphere of Mashhad was eclipsed by the *uṣūlī* ideas of Akhond Khurasani and his manifesto called *kifayah*. Akhond is renowned for his philosophical trend and there is no doubt of the differences between Na'ini (Mīrzā's master) and Akhond. Considering that when Mīrzā died in Mashhad he was the most important figure in the semiraries, it should be borne in mind that he had gone a long way to tip the balance in favour of Na'ini's *uṣūlī* ideas. I have expanded on this issue in chapter two where the intellectual biography of Mīrzā is discussed.

4.1.2 Framework of the Book

It is very interesting that the framework of this book does not follow the classical format of *uṣūlī* works. Even a glimpse makes the gap evident. From the perspective of this thesis, the most remarkable observation is the title of the first chapter: Badness of Syllogism. It is fascinating that he starts his *uṣūlī* manifesto with this chapter. And then, more surprisingly, the second one: Authenticity of Knowledge. Possibly after reading chapter three of this thesis the reader could imagine such a choice, but the reality is that this is definitely odd and unusual in the *uṣūlī* order. I think, for those who are familiar with *uṣūlī* works, the difference of this order is a vivid indicator of a specific theological point of view. Mīrzā starts with a refutation of syllogism, establishes the authority of knowledge, and persists, I believe, in a kind of certainty which is obtained through common-sense and not a rational intellectual one influenced by philosophically perplexing argumentations. Then after, when it comes to the subject of the words (*mabāḥith al-'alfāz*) he finds his famous opinion about the authority of the explicit meaning. For someone who has read previous chapters it should be crystal clear that Mīrzā is following the same paradigm.

4.1.3 Chapters of the Book

Introduction

First principle: Badness of syllogism (*qubḥ al-qīās*)

574 See chapter three, why *Abwāb al-Hudā*?

Second principle: Authenticity of knowledge (*ḥujjīyat-u al-‘ilm*)

Third principle: Common-sense (*‘uqalā’ī*) certainty⁵⁷⁷ (*yaqīn al-‘uqalā’ī*)

Forth principle: Authenticity of explicit meaning (*ḥujjīyat-u al-ẓawāhir*)

Fifth principle: Authenticity of a trustworthy narrator (*ḥujjīyat-u khabar al-thiqah*)

Sixth principle: Authenticity of continuity of certainty about something (*ḥujjīyat-u yaqīn bi al-shay’ alā baqā’ih*)

Seventh principle: Authenticity of the actor’s working memory whilst in action, its actuality and validity (*ḥujjīyat-u ‘adhkarīyyat al-‘āmil waqt al-‘amal, tahaqqquqih wa shīħhatih*)

Eighth principle: The assigned duty when practical assertion is unknown (*ḥujjīyat-u al-muqarrarah ‘ind al-jahl bi al-ḥukm al-fi’lī*)

4.2 Anti-Philosophical *uṣūl*

Reading the introductions to his works, one easily spots that the Shī‘a *uṣūlī* system has not been in such dire need of purification in Mīrzā’s eyes as has always been the case of theology and *kalām*.⁵⁸³ In other words, Mīrzā is not as angry with the *uṣūlis* as he was with Shī‘ī theologians. It can be also assumed that he does not want to mention directly the philosophical destruction of the *uṣūl al-fiqh* as he did in terms of *ma’ārif* and theology.⁵⁸⁴ He always praises his predecessors of ‘ulamā, jurists and narrators (*muḥaddithīn*), and dignifies their efforts⁵⁸⁵. He clearly tries to justify the expansion of *uṣūl al-fiqh* by Shī‘a scholars on the pretext of defending Shī‘a borders against the Sunnīs’ *uṣūlī* format. The main dispute goes back to sunnīs’ *uṣūlī* principles which, as far as I recognize, is based on the role of *aql* emerging in syllogism. The second influential realm was *rījāl*, the chain of narrations. As it is mentioned in the thesis (section 3.5) they have different categories for validating the authenticity of narrators which was gradually embraced by Allāmi Ḥillī and other Shī‘ī ‘ulamās.⁵⁸⁶ What I construe is that in order to

577 It should be brought to attention that the best translation, as far as I can touch upon, is the common-sense and reasonable whereas for ‘aqlānī I would rather use intellectual, intellective and rational.

583 This can be easily grasped in his introduction on *Miṣbāḥ al-Hudā* which is translated in this chapter and even in *Abwāb al-Hudā*’s which is not considered as a jurisprudential work.

584 Some possibilities behind this strategy are suggested above.

585 See the introduction of ‘Iṣfahānī, M.M. (1387 SH). *Miṣbāḥ al-Hudā bi Ḍamīmih-yi ‘Ijāz al-Qur’ān*. Qum: Būstān-I Kitāb.

586 There is an expectrom of ideas among shī‘ī ‘ulamās in this issue: for opposition see ‘Astarābādī, M.A. and ‘Āmilī, S.N. (1383 SH). *al-Fawā’id al-Madaniyyah wa al-Shawāhid al-Makīyyah*, Qum: Daftar-I Intishārāt-I Islāmī, pp.30. In which he posites Allāmi Ḥillī against the main stream of shī‘ī ‘ulamās and for the pro-side see theintroduction of Khuyī, ’A. (1390 AH).

feed the purpose of remaining within mainstream circle, Mīrzā needed to take this position. He gives alibies to read the story of changes in Shī‘ī uṣūlī by ‘ulamā as a defending strategy. Where Mīrzā tries to stand in this battle is that Shī‘ī ‘ulamās didn’t imitate Sunnīs format but try to formulate an independent Shī‘ī system. However, the system was more or less influenced. And I (Mīrzā) should reform it.⁵⁸⁷ Having said this, it cannot be hidden that the expansion of *uṣūl* is indeed a negative point from Mīrzā’s perspective, for which predecessors of the Shī‘a jurists are forgiven. Here are his excuses:

*‘And the secret of extension of *uṣūl* by our jurists, may Allah praise their souls, is the major calamity in Islam when the ideas of the scholars of oppressive Caliphs (based on envisaging and thinking in all aspects of religion) were spread everywhere. The calamity became worse after the translation of philosophy and dissemination of mysticism, and juxtapositioning them with religious knowledge, and then promulgating them throughout the cities and towns. This led to an overwhelming ignorance of people, extinguishing the light of Islamic knowledge, and perpetuating ignorance by intellect and its principles. This was a reversion of religious nature (*fitrah* al-dīnīyyah), let alone the wisdom and the principles of Divine doctrine’.*⁵⁸⁸

Mu‘jam al-Rijāl al-Hadīth wa Tafṣīl Ṭabaqāt al-Ruwwah. Qum: al-Thiqāfah al-‘Islāmīyyah fī al-‘Alam; Ḥillī, J. (1403 AH). *Ma‘ārij al-‘Uṣūl*, Qum: Mu‘assisah ‘Āl al-Bayt l’ihyā’ al-turāth. chapters: *fi al-muftī wa al-mustaftī*. Ḥillī’s ideas which are very important, because of his role in this issue, can be traced in his other work Ḥillī Asadī, H. (1419 AH). *Nahāyah al-Marām fī ‘Ilm al-Kalām*, Qum: Mu‘assisah al-‘Imām al-Ṣādiq. For a western work on Allāmi Ḥillī see Schmidtko, S. (1991) ‘Theology of al-‘Allāma al-Ḥillī (d. 726/1325)’, *Jurnal of Islamkondlichche unterschuchungen*, 152.

587 A comparison between Mīrzā’s literature and what Mullā Amīn al-Astarābādī does in his manifesto *al-fawā’id al-madanīyyah* makes this difference crystal clear. In his *al-Fawā’id al-Madanīyyah*, pp.76-79 and p.91, he says: ‘the first one from Shī‘ī ‘ulamās who started imitating Sunnīs and their ‘aqī system was Ibn-i junayd.’ Then, he stigmatizes him and his pupil Shiykh al-Mufid, and continuoes mentioning them with rough words down to Allāmi Ḥillī. Mullā Amīn believes they did something slander for Shī‘a, and caused Sunnīs to say Shī‘ī ‘ulamās do not have an independent system of *uṣūl*. On the other side, with a very moderate bahaviour, Mīrzā mentions the same names praising them for protecting Shī‘ī *uṣūlī* system against Sunnīs. See the introduction of ’Isfahānī, M.M. (1387 SH). *Abwāb al-Hudā*. Tīhrān: Munīr, pp.99-101.

It seems that Mīrzā’s problem is mainly with philosophy not with ‘aqī *uṣūlī* system as it is explained earlier in the text.

For this see *al-Fawā’id al-Madanīyyah*, p.30.

588 Miṣbāḥ al-Hudā, pp.4&5.

*It is interesting that these alibis are the same as those proposed for theologians and traditionalists (*muḥaddithes*) in *Abwāb al-Hudā*.⁵⁸⁹ So, the problem, in both terms of theology and jurisprudence, is basically rooted on the Sunnī side, and Shī‘ī scholars are utterly excused. As he puts it, *uṣūl al-fiqh* of Shī‘a is the result of rebutting the Sunnī distortions, which is itself the result of Philosophy:*

*'By using this knowledge [Philosophy and mysticism], Sunnī scholars cast doubt upon everything, and hesitation and delusion were spread over any issue. So, this has been stipulated by the greatest pillar of religion after Imams *PBUT*, al-Shiykh al-Kulaynī in the beginning of *al-Kāfi*. This strategy entailed the delusion of shortage and divergence of Scripture (*al-kitāb*), tradition (*al-sunnah*), and all narrations (*riwāyāt*) in all chapters. As a result, there was no intellectual, first-posed, or rational issue that was not theoretical. Therefore, it became very difficult to infer from narrations. So, eminent companions and great jurists stood for protecting religion and rebuffing this major calamity. They endeavoured to rebut these doubts, misgivings, and delusions which were presented in the name of argumentation [in Philosophy], or unveiling and vision [in Mysticism].'⁵⁹⁰*

Mīrzā defines Shī‘ī *uṣūl* as a retort to Sunnī *uṣūl*:

*'So, [scholars] bore this load to compose *uṣūl al-fiqh* and its principles, bases, and what it entails, making an effort to reject the Sunnis' misgivings, delusions, and illusions based on their science.'*

591

589 See the Introduction of *Abwāb al-Hudā*.

590 Ibid, pp.5&6.

591 Ibid, p.6.

This is why learning and teaching *uṣūl* becomes acceptable, and even necessary. Also, it is interesting that Mīrzā takes this excusing approach in his introduction to an *uṣūlī* text, because it is definitely bizarre for *uṣūlīs* to take a defensive position in producing *uṣūlī* works. Hence it has been seen, in their view, as an indispensable and essential factor in understanding Sharī'a. Take this example from al-Mūjaz:

'The term uṣūl al-fiqh consists of two words which indicate that there are principles and regulations upon which the jurisprudence relies.'

592

And this from Muẓaffar:

*'Uṣūl al-fiqh Is a knowledge in which such principles are discussed and by which Sharī'a law can be inferred.'*⁵⁹³

And here read Mīrzā's view on this:

*'Thanks to God the absolute necessity of learning uṣūl al-fiqh became clear. It is impossible to infer sharia law from Scripture without uṣūl al-fiqh. So, collecting, composing, teaching, and learning it is not innovation in religion, neither is it an adoption of the Sunnī system. Then, is it permitted for anyone to be suspicious about such great scholars?'*⁵⁹⁴

The real essence of Shī'ī *uṣūl al-fiqh* cannot be projected in contrast with the Sunnī system, Mīrzā believes. It appears from his words that what has been done by the predecessors of Shī'ī scholars is, rather, defending, and it is only by Shiykh Murtadā al-Anṣārī, famous as the Shiykh al-a'ẓam (the great sheikh), that the real essence of *uṣūl al-fiqh* came to be seen. Although Mīrzā dignifies all predecessors, he upholds Shiykh al-a'ẓam's purifying role and insists that his method is the only one that should be followed. For him, Shiykh al-a'ẓam stands at the pinnacle of *uṣūl al-fiqh*. He tacitly links his own scriptural approaches to the Shiykh, even the act of purifying and dignifying predecessor scholars. This means that, Mīrzā follows the Shiykh in correcting them, instead of pinning the blame on them.⁵⁹⁵ All in all, Mīrzā tries to introduce his work as an *uṣūlī* reformation movement started by Shiykh Murtadā al-Anṣārī, who is arguably the father of contemporary Shī'ī *uṣūl al-fiqh*. There is a clear connotation in Mīrzā's literature

592 Subhānī Tabrīzī, J. (1385 SH). *al-Mūjaz fī 'Uṣūl al-Fiqh*, Qum: Dār al-Fikr, p.9.

593 Muẓaffar, M. (1390 SH). *Uṣūl al-Fiqh*, Qum: Dār al-'Ilm, p.5.

594 Miṣbāḥ al-Hudā, p.6&7.

595 Ibid, p.8.

that the way of *uṣūl al-fiqh* is deviated after the Shiyykh.⁵⁹⁶ The list of praised scholars always ends up with his name, and no one is named afterwards.

'Moreover, jurisprudence (fiqāha) was a graded entity (dhāt-u al-darajāt),⁵⁹⁷ until the leadership ended up with the Shiyykh of the great shiykhs, al-Shiyykh al-a‘ẓam al-Anṣārī may Allah purify his soul, who summarized and purified it may Allah praise him.'⁵⁹⁸

*He mentions these names and exalts them with a lot of additional glorifying epithets. It is noteworthy that the exalted list includes 'Allāmah al-Hillī who has always been the main target of akhbārīs' blames for the integration of devious Sunnī uṣūlī systems into the pure Shī'a framework.*⁵⁹⁹

al-Shiyykh al-Tūsī

al-Shiyykh al-Mufīd

al-Sayyid al-Murtadā

al-Muhaqqiq al-Hillī

'Allāma al-Hillī

al-Shahīd al-'awwal

al-Muhaqqiq al-thānī

596 It has been mentioned in chapter two that there is a debate over the scientific succession of Shiyykh al-a‘ẓam, Mīrzā belongs to a circle which is against *kifāyah al-uṣūl* and its author Ākhūnd Khurāsānī. It has been discussed that disseminating lessons and the method of his teacher Nā’īnī in Mashhad had the same root and effect. In their camp, Ākhūnd Khurāsānī had deviated from the real *uṣūl* of Shiyykh al-a‘ẓam and they saw it as their responsibility to rectify that *uṣūl* to the main one as it emerged on the hands of the Shiyykh. It is interesting that Mīrzā does not count Ākhund among ulamā's. Both in *Abwāb al-Hudā* and *Miṣbāḥ al-Hudā*, the list of scholars who are eligible for praise ends with Shiyykh al-Anṣārī, before Ākhund Khurāsānī whose *uṣūl* is definitely drenched with philosophy.

597 This means that jurists are not equal and are not at the same level, preparing the platform for high rank of Shiyykh al-a‘ẓam.

598 Ibid, P.6

599 Mainly by Mullā Amīn al-Astarābādī in the introduction of his famous manifest of *Akhbārīsm*, 'Astarābādī, M.A. and 'Āmilī, S.N. (1383 SH). *al-Fawā'id al-Madāniyyah wa al-Shawāhid al-Makīyyah*, Qum: Daftar-I Intishārāt-I Islāmī, p.28&30.

*al-Shahīd al-thānī*⁶⁰⁰

Based on the above discussion, Mīrzā can be seen as an ‘anti-philosophical jurist’ who tries to amend the *uṣūl al-fiqh* by modulating the role of intellect and shortening the excessive logical processes, penetrated into Shī‘a *uṣūlī* system as a result of repulsion to the logical inferring system of Sunnī *fiqhī* Schools, well known as syllogisms (*al-qīyās*).

Unlike *akhbārīs*, who in effect, believed that the deviations in the Shī‘ī *uṣūlī* system are caused directly by imitating the Sunnī *uṣūlī* pattern, Mīrzā maintains that the main reason of aberration is Philosophy, which indeed first occurred among Sunnīs and then infiltrated into Shī‘a Jurists’ works. It is obvious that by singling out Philosophy as the main cause, the function of intellect and the role of reason will be set at the centre of inquiry and revision.

As already discussed in this thesis, for Mīrzā, syllogism is the utmost threat to religion. It is even more dangerous for doctrinal issues compared with jurisprudence.⁶⁰² Syllogism is absolutely rejected by Shī‘ī jurists to the extent that it has become a slogan in the Shī‘ī *uṣūlī* system.⁶⁰³ But, what makes Mīrzā distinctive in this regard is his extension of the concept of syllogism, again, both in doctrinal issues and jurisprudence. He tries to dissect and redefine the real concept of syllogism as the ‘recognition of human intellectuality as an authorized cognitive source against revelation’. No matter where it is used, human science, which refers to human thought, is barren in the field of religion. So, ‘*aql*’ is authorized, infallible, and in line with religion, whereas human thought, which is mixed up by philosophers with ‘intellect’, and by jurists sometimes with ‘reason’, is not necessary. This has been discussed so far in the context of theology, but now it is time to take a look at the amendment of the functionality of intellect in *uṣūl al-fiqh* territory.

4.3 Temperate Reason

Given the historical background of an unfair process of integration of Greek philosophy into Muslim society, here, Mīrzā criticises the conceptualization of *uṣūl al-fiqh* in a more

600 Ibid, p.7.

602 See Chapter Three, 4.2, on Mīrzā’s critique on syllogism.

603 The condemnation process has been led by Shī‘ī Imams according to what jurists cite in their works. It is a famous slogan in Shī‘ī *uṣūl al-fiqh* formed and presented even in poetry: (wa lays-a min madhaba-na al-qīyās-u awwal-u man qās huwa al-iblīs-u)

(وليس من مذهبنا القياس/ أول من قاس هو الإبليس)

Which means: syllogism is not of our religion, and the first one who did it was Satan.

For a good example of rejecting syllogism by Shī‘ī Imāms see the primary source by Mufīd, M. (1388 SH). *Al-‘Ikhtīṣāṣ*. Tīhrān: ‘Intishār-I ‘Ilmī wa Farhangī, p.189. It is easy to find this discussion in all *uṣūlī* sources such as Wilāyī, Ṭ. (1374 SH). *Farhang-i Tashrīḥī-yi Iṣṭilāhāt-i Uṣūl*, Tīhrān: Nashr-I Niy; ‘Alam al-Hudā, ‘A. (1376 SH). *A-Dhdharī’ah ilā ’Uṣūl al-Shari’ah*. Tīhrān: Dānishgāh-I Tīhrān, v.2, p.656; Hillī, H. (1404 AH). *Mabādī al-Wuṣūl ilī ’Ilm al-’Uṣūl*. Qum: al-Maṭba’ah al-‘Ilmiyyah, p.214; ‘Amīlī, H. (1378 SH). *Ma ’ālim al-dīn fi al-’Uṣūl*. Qum: Tibīyān, p.223; Tūnī, ‘A. (1415 AH). *al-Wāfiyyah fi ’Uṣūl al-Fiqh*. Qum: Majma’ al-Fikr al-‘Islāmī. Also there are chapters in *ḥadīthī* books about this issue, such as *al-kāfi* and *bihār al-anwār*. For this see Wilāyī, Ṭ. (1374 SH). *Farhang-i Tashrīḥī-yi Iṣṭilāhāt-i Uṣūl*, Tīhrān: Nashr-I Niy. There are six types of syllogism.

jurisprudential way (slightly different from how he argues in his theological works such as *Abwāb*).

He refers to the Shī‘ī Imams and highlights the method they have established for instructing their contemporary companions (their pupils) in *uṣūl al-fiqh*.

The high volume of usage of the term ‘instinct’ (*fitrāh*), which plays a key role in Mīrzā’s ideological system, and the term ‘reasonable’ (*al-‘uqalā’ī*) instead of rationalism (*al-‘aqlāni*), are significant signs of his method in redefining the functionality of ‘*aql*’ in *uṣūl al-fiqh* in the same way that he did in theology. The term *al-‘uqalā’ī* is chosen cautiously, as it is deeply rooted in classical *uṣūlī* discourses, and moreover, stands more for an anti-philosophical movement than an anti-rational or *akhbārī* trend. The issue of *al-‘uqalā’ī* and their relationship with Sharia Law has always been discussed in *uṣūlī* tradition. *Al-‘uqalā’ī* are important because they are the addresses to whom revelation has been exposed, and therefore, revelation should be understood on their cognitive bases. This way Mīrzā attempts to argue that the current system of *uṣūl al-fiqh*, which is heavily influenced by perplexing logical arguments inspired by Hellenistic philosophy, deviates from the simple and straightforward system of ‘*fitrat al-‘uqalā’īyyah*’ by which people were intrinsically equipped, and consequently, cannot be used as an inferring system of Sharia Law. It should be amended and returned to its origin, because Sharia Law has descended on a *fitrāh* basis, not on any human-made system of thought, which makes it disturbing and distorted. The major effects of philosophy emerge on definition and functionality of intellect, which has always been Mīrzā’s main problem in theology and jurisprudence. This difference in defining ‘*aql*’ and its functionality is what I have named ‘epistemic divergence’ in this thesis. This fact has always been at the centre of major disputes within Shī‘ī scholarship circles, of which one notable example can be seen in the recent work of Sajjad Rizvi on *Tafkīk*.⁶⁰⁴ Mīrzā takes responsibility for showing that the ‘*uqalā’ī*’ method is original, efficient, and reasonable enough, not in need of any alternative system. In short, Sharia Law can be inferred based on a ‘*uqalā’ī*’ system of reasoning and not a philosophical, or any other human basis, and this is the meaning of the amendment of *uṣūl al-fiqh* based on modulation of the functionality of ‘*aql*’.

Mīrzā’s clear statements on the Imam’s revelatory method and the necessity of amendment of the functionality of intellect based on *fitrat-tu ‘l-‘uqalā’īyyah*’ reads as follows:

‘...And [one] of the most evident matters is that Divine knowledge is aimed at leading people to the world of light (‘ālam al-nūr) with compilation of their intellect and supporting it with the Divine knowledge. The knowledge of Sharia Law, its principles and pillars are based on [this] intellect which is the Divine authority (proof), and [also] is based on instinctive matters on which people are created,

604 Rizvi, Sajjad H. (2012) “Only the Imam Knows Best” The Maktab-e Tafkīk’s Attack on the Legitimacy of Philosophy in Iran’, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 22, pp.487-503.

*and the Sharia of Islam and Jurists' instructions are based on it, as Ayatollah 'Allāma Hillī stipulates here... When Imams were asked about an Islamic Law they did not answer based on any method but the instinctive (*fitrī*) and rationalistic ('*uqalā*')* one, needless of any contemplation or quest'.⁶⁰⁵

Mīrzā also mentions the role of '*aql*' as the real intellect, instead of idiomatic intellect which is the philosophical one. This will be discussed in more detail later.

*'And it is evident for every intelligent person that comprehending Imams' intentions is sustained upon true knowledge of intellect and its principles, the rationalistic instinct (*fitrīyāt al-'uqalā'iyya*), the refutation of syllogism and the certainty caused by it, the authority of knowledge, the endorsement of the authority of certainty (based on real knowledge) which is the rationalistic way (*ṭarīq al-'uqalā'i*), the narration of reliable narrators, and the *uṣūlī* formulas such as *farāgh*, *tajāwuz*,... are the bases of the basics, yet the Religion does not stand in Occultation period without it'*⁶⁰⁶

4.4 Mīrzā's Principles in *Uṣūl al-Fiqh*

In *Miṣbāḥ al-Hudā*, Mīrzā give a summary of his main principles in *uṣūl al-fiqh*. This valuable synopsis gives an easy access to the basis of his system of thought in *uṣūl al-fiqh*. The outline is very useful in making a comparison between his ideas in theology and the ones in jurisprudence. He starts with '*aql*' as he did in his *Abwāb*. He distinguishes between the idiomatic intellect (*al-'aql al-iṣṭilāḥī*), and the true intellect which is the light of '*aql*'. For him, syllogism, which is the worst threat to religion, emerges when these two are mixed up, i.e. the human thought and the light of intellect. Here one of the chapter's questions finds its answer: the order of the principles, and the definition of all epistemic means such as *al-'aql* (intellect), *al-'ilm* (knowledge), and *al-yaqīn* (certainty) are exactly the same as the one in *Abwāb al-Hudā*. The functionality of these epistemic means will be scrutinized in the coming parts by examining two case studies in which Mīrzā applies '*aql*' to his system in order to deduce Sharia law rules.

4.4.1 Al-'aql (Intellect)

605 The introduction of *Miṣbāḥ al-Hudā*, p.1&2.

606 Ibid, p.4.

Mīrzā redefines his own principles based on *revelatory* methods and starts with intellect to show that in spite of being anti-philosophy, he is a rational Jurist. Another important note about the following paragraph is his definition of syllogism. As it has been intimated in previous chapters, for him, philosophical argumentations are based on syllogism that were prohibited in the Shī‘a legal system.⁶⁰⁷ It was discussed earlier that Mīrzā sees no difference between the usage of syllogism in *fiqh* (known as comparison), and the one applied to the doctrinal realms. Take his words in this regard:

*'And the first Principle of the basic principles on which the laws of the Prophet and Imams (God bless them) are established, inverse to the literal Syllogism which is precisely the idiomatic intellect in humanistic sciences (al-qīyās al-lažī huwa 'ayn al-'aql al-iṣṭilāḥī fī 'ulūm al-basharīyya), is the intellect which is self-evident (dhāhir-un bi ẓātihi) for every intelligent being even after missing it in his childhood, anger, serious desire...'*⁶⁰⁸

It should be noticed that he does not define the intellect, as for him, no one can define it, hence it is not definable: how can one enlighten something by which everything is enlightened. Therefore, any defined subject is not intellect; one can only observe it personally, and what others can do is merely reminding or pointing to it. One may identify the presence of a clear doxastic in the quotation above. The question is that, does Mīrzā, converse with all his anti-logical motifs, using the same logical argumentation as that used by philosophers, to refute the defining process by philosophy? This is one of the important epistemological questions that the *Tafkīkī* School has faced in recent decades. As far as this research is concerned, Mīrzā's argumentations are basic and simple; they are logical, but do not follow a perplexing philosophical framework.⁶⁰⁹ To take one example, one may consider his attempts in proving self-contradiction (paradoxes) which occur within the process of defining knowledge by philosophers.⁶¹⁰ This is why his opponents believed that whoever tried to avoid the concept of being a philosopher had no choice but to produce a new philosophy.⁶¹¹ However, for me, rationalism is not equal to philosophy, and, I want to make it clear that indeed encompassing a possible sense of rationalism embeds a thought into the wider borders of the general concept of philosophy, but never entails embracing all principles of Hellenistic Philosophy, or any other branch of its well known Islamic offshoots.

607 For more details about his opinions on this, see Rahīmīyān, A. (1385 SH). *Mas'alihi-yi Qiās*. Tīhrān: Muṇīr. He takes expanding on the concept of syllogism and its different types then goes on Mīrzā's critiques and then cites narrations from imams rejecting syllogism and finally attempts to repulse the critics on Mīrzā in this issue.

608 Miṣbāḥ al-Hudā, p.8.

609 See chapter three, 3.2, I have described 'simplisim' as one of the main elements of his method.

610 This can be followed in chapter three, 4.2 and 4.3

611 See the chapter on *tafkīk* in 'Ibrāhīmī Dīnānī, G.H. (1376 SH). *Mājarā-yi Fikr-i Falsafī dar Jahān-i Islām*. Tīhrān: Tarḥ-i naw.

Some famous advocates of the School, namely Ḥakīmī, however, attempted to articulate *Tafkīk* in a philosophy-oriented framework, by distinguishing between true and false philosophy, which was admired neither by *takfīkīs*⁶¹² nor by Western scholars⁶¹³.

To shed light on Mīrzā's *uṣūlī* ideas, the principle of 'concomitance between 'aql and *Sharia*', known as *Qā'idat al-mulāzimah*, has been taken as an example, with a long, challenging background both in *kalām* and Jurisprudence. This is one of the best patterns for examining the functionality of intellect and focusing on the relationship of 'aql within the realm of jurisprudence. Depending on various definitions of the function of 'aql' in different subjects, Islamic scholars can be stretched on a spectrum of rationalism between two famous poles; anti-rationalism (*Ashā'ira*), and rationalism (*Mu'tazila*). The common trend of Shī'a ideology and the current *uṣūlī* system is more compatible with a *Mu'tazilī* tendency. According to *Mu'tazila* and the Shī'a mainstream, 'aql' is an independent and authentic epistemological source (*hujjat al-bāṭinyyah*) which is able to verify the accuracy/inaccuracy of many issues parallel to the *Sharia* (*hujjat al-zāhirīyyah*). Although the exact boundaries of its territory (e.g. is it just discovery (*kashf*) or commanding (*hukm*), or whether its role is restrained in essential goodness and badness, *al-ḥusn wa al-qubh al-dātī*, or further) have always been disputed, it is accepted, to the effect that 'whatever is ruled by *Sharia* law, can be ruled by intellect' *kull-a mā ḥakam bi al-Shar'*, *ḥakam-a bī al-'aql*, and vice versa, 'whatever is ruled by intellect, is ruled by *Sharia* law', *kull-a mā ḥakam-a bi al-'aql ḥakam-a bī al-Sahr'*. This regulation is known as the servant (*mulāzima*) between *Shari'a* and 'aql. The *Akhbārī* and *Uṣūlī* debate also can be seen from this perspective, because the function of 'aql' is the crux of it. So, it is interesting now to find out how Mīrzā Mahdī reflects on this issue. I have quoted here from his *Miṣbāḥ al-Hudā*, although many more detailed opinions of him are available on this issue mainly in *al-Mashhadayn*, one of his *taqrīrāt* written by written by Ḥalabī.

He stipulates that the servant (*mulāzima*) is not from both sides, meaning that although *Shari'a* endorses what 'aql discovers, 'aql' is not able to explore what *Shari'a* establishes as law. He also distinguishes between 'aql's discovery and commands in different issues.

Here it is explained:

- 'aql cannot discover God's and the Prophet's laws
- The discovery of 'aql is confined to the essential goodness and badness, (*al-ḥusn wa al-qubh al-zātīyan*), and this is not to discover a religious law, but merely the goodness (*al-ḥusn*) or badness (*al-qubh*). That's why there are Scriptural stipulations commanding the proffered and prohibiting

612 For this, see Mufid, H. (1387 SH) 'Ma'nā-yi Khārijīyyat-I Ma'nā wa Mawdū'-I lah az Naṣar-I Mīrzā Mahdī 'Isfahānī', *Journal of Naqd wa Naṣar*, 49 & 50.

613 Gleave, R. (2010). 'Continuity and Originality in Shi'i Thought: The Relationship between the Akhbariyya and the Maktab-i Tafkik', in Mervin, S. and Hermann, D. (ed.) *Shiite Streams and Dynamics*. Beirut: Orient-Institut, pp. 1800-1925.

undesirable acts [if 'aql had any command, then it would not be necessary for a Sharī'a command]

- In essential obligation and prohibitions (al-vujūb wa al-hurma al-żātīyan), as in the case of the obligation of prelude (muqadamat al-vājib) 'aql has authority (hujja)
- And, in religious established law (ja'liyya min al-Shāri'i), it cannot be discovered by syllogism or the idiomatic intellect (al-'aql al-iṣṭilāḥī) and it should be referred to the Prophet's or Imam's (valī Allah) conduction⁶¹⁴

It is important that he repeatedly asserts that the discovery of *Shari'a* laws by 'aql is a kind of syllogism which is firmly prohibited in the Shī'i jurisprudential system. He deprecates the inappropriate usage of 'aql in *fiqh* and tries to show that this wrong expansion has the same destructive value in Shī'i ideology.

4.4.2 Al-'ilm (Knowledge)

The second principle is Knowledge. In Mīrzā's opinion, divine knowledge should also be identified as distinct from its philosophical concept. The same pattern is applied here: philosophical proof (*al-burhān*) is not the true reasoning, as its accuracy should be checked by another means; consequently, neither of the two concepts of philosophical knowledge, i.e., acquired (*husūlī*) and presential (*hudūrī*), can be the real knowledge: the real knowledge should be self-evident without the need of any other proof. The real light makes no mistakes; even if it does not enlighten everything, it is faultless in its enlightening realm.⁶¹⁵

Before examining the function of this faultless light on Mīrzā's *Uṣūlī* grounds, I will briefly list some other *Uṣūlī* principles given in his compendium. This helps to give a lucid account of his jurisprudential system.

Certainty (*hujīyyat al-yaqīn*) emanating from rationalistic sources. It is a common rationalistic way but it is not self-authentic and should be proven by *Shari'a* law⁶¹⁶

The authority of the appearance of statements (*hujīyyat al-dhuḥūr*)⁶¹⁷

The authority of narration by a credible narrator (*hujīyyat khābr al-thiqā*)⁶¹⁸

614 Ḥisfahānī, M.M. (1398 SH). *al-'Uṣūl al-Wāṣīt Miṣbāḥ al-Hudā*. Tīhrān: Āfāq, pp.359-362.

615 *Miṣbāḥ al-Hudā*, p. 27.

616 *Ibid*, p.26.

617 *Ibid*, p.27.

618 *Ibid*, p.60.

The authority of the continuity of certainty about something (*hujjīyat al-yaqīn bi al-shay' alā baqā`ih*)⁶¹⁹

The authority of the attention of the actor while doing an act (*hujjīyatuhū : tazakkur al-`āmil hīn al-`amal*)⁶²⁰

What should be done in the case of ignorance (*al-wadhiṭa `ind al-jahl*)⁶²¹

4.4.3 Al-yaqīn (Certainty)⁶²²

Certainty, for Mīrzā, is a commonsense reality on which all people rely and on which their life flows. Following the normalization process and purifying *uṣūl al-fiqh* from philosophical terminologies, he uses the terms *fīṭrī* (innate cognition) and common-sense as ways of cognition. He persists that the way of understanding religion is in the way that people normally live. He believes that the order of people's normal life can not be disordered, otherwise their whole life system will be disordered. It is interesting that Mīrzā refers to the most famous verse of the Qur'ān which is about the *fīṭrah*, and as I have intimated before this is one of the most important keywords of his theological terminologies.⁶²³ Similar to his theological approach, he supports his idea by quoting a large number of *ḥadīths*.

4.4.4 The Authenticity of the Explicit Meaning⁶²⁴

For an expanded explanation of this, refer to chapter three of the thesis, under the same title. besides chapter three, you can find these references from Mīrzā's different works in which he states his idea on this significant subject.⁶²⁵

4.5 Case Study

4.5.1 Imitating the best knower scholar (*taqlīd al-a'lam*)

Is it possible to simply refer to an eligible scholar who knows *Shārī'a* law (*al-`ālim*) and imitate him in jurisprudential quests even if he is not the most knowledgeable scholar (*al-`alam*) in the field? Or, is it obligatory to imitate the best knower only? Although it is difficult to find a long historical record for this question in the *Shī'ī* jurisprudential literature,

619 Ibid, p.565.

620 Ibid, p.585.

621 Ibid, p.621.

622 Ibid, pp.505-509; 'Iṣfahānī, M.M. (1398 SH). *al-`Uṣūl al-Wasīṭ Miṣbāḥ al-Hudā*. Tīhrān: Āfāq, pp. 220-224.

623 For more information see chapter 3 section 6.2.

624 Miṣbāḥ al-Hudā, p.27.

625 'Iṣfahānī, M.M. (1398 SH). *al-`Uṣūl al-Wasīṭ Miṣbāḥ al-Hudā*. Tīhrān: Āfāq, p. 242; Miṣbāḥ al-Hudā, p.509; 'Iṣfahānī, M.M. (1398 SH). *Al-Qurān wa al-Furqān fī Wajhi 'Ijāz al-Qurān al-Majīd 'Ijāznāmih*, Qum: Mu'assisah-yi Ma'ārif-I 'Ahl al-Bayt, p. 98&187.

it has had quite an impact on more recent socio-political grounds, particularly in some *Shī‘ī*-populated regions like Iran or Lebanon where the political leadership is more-or-less entwined into the role of conducting religion. Is ‘*being the best knower*’ a crucial criterion for religio-political leadership? And, what would be the case if the politically eligible leader is not the best knower scholar in *Shari‘a* law? A comparative study of the history of the development of this idea shows that this criterion varies from country to country and from one period of time to another.⁶²⁶ Apart from these interesting political concerns, almost all current jurists see it as obligatory (*vājib*) to follow the best knower scholar’s opinions. The establishment of this verdict (*fatwā*) as a firm *Shari‘a* law is apparent from the first part of all practical treatises (*risāla al-‘amaliyya*) regulating completely under the formal *Uṣūlī System*. It is clearly announced that imitators (*muqallid*) should not only imitate (*taqlīd*) a jurist in jurisprudential matters, but also should follow the best knower jurist (*al-‘alam*).⁶²⁷ In this regard, I will examine the different ways in which Mīrzā Mahdī answers this question, but before that I would like to draw attention to these issues:

- Imitation (*taqlīd*), the most disputable issue between *akhbārīs* and *uṣūlīs*, is established as *Shari‘a* law in *uṣūlī* treatises, without which the acts (*a‘māl*) of followers would not be accepted.
- The inferring procedure behind this *fatwā* (following the best knower scholar) is rather based on practical principles (*uṣūl al-‘amaliyya*) which are applied by jurists to deduce the *Shari‘a* law in the case of a lack of specific Scriptures.⁶²⁸ The dominance of these practical principles in the *Shī‘ī Uṣūlī System* also has a central role in the *akhbārī-uṣūlī* context.
- The practicality of this answer. It is quite perplexing, and even impossible for ordinary people, to personally discern the best knower specialist. This is probably why the jurists themselves offered three ways for recognizing the best knower scholar:
 - Self-recognition, this is when one individual has the ability to distinguish the best knower scholar

626 For a very recent paper on this issue, see Mottahedeh, R. (1975) ‘The ‘Abbāsid Caliphate in Iran’, in Richard N. Frye, ed., *Journal of The Cambridge History of Iran*, 5, pp. 57-89.

627 For this see, Khuyī, ‘A. (1410 AH). *Minhāj al-Ṣalihīn*. Qum: Madīnah al-‘ilm. The same idea is reissued by his students like Sīstānī, ‘A. (1315 AH). *Minhāj al- Ṣalihīn*. Qum: Maktab Āyat-u-Allah Siyyid Alī Sīstānī; Wahīd Khurāsānī, H. (1386 SH). *Minhāj al- Ṣalihīn*. Qum: Madrisah al-‘Imām Bāqir al-‘ulūm.

628 For the reasoning system behind this look at Ṭabāṭabā‘ī Qumī, T. (1426 AH). *Mabānī Minhāj al-Ṣalihīn*, Qum: Qalam al-Sharq. There are online modules in the same name on Seminary website explaining the same reasoning method in seminary circles.

- Unanimous, when all Shī‘ī scholars reach the conclusion that one is the best Knower Scholar of all
- Two knowledgeable scholars, one can ask two elite scholars and rely on their decision⁶²⁹

Needless to say, that for the majority of followers the only practical way to identify the best knower scholar is the third way, as ordinary people are not deemed to be capable of distinguishing the most knowledgeable specialist through their own basic knowledge, neither is there unanimity amongst scholars on one person (particularly after Ayatollah Burūjirdī’s death in 1961 when the absolute leadership naturally ceased). But unfortunately, the third way does not work properly either, because it depends on the tendency of the two scholars whom you ask, as each Ayatollah has his own adherent pupils who may see him as the best Knower Scholar. The process is far more complicated in the modern era when the seminary circle is no longer unruffled, and palpable discrepancies are found everywhere on jurisprudential, political, and even ideological grounds.

4.5.2 Mīrzā on the issue of imitating the *best knower* (*taqlīd al-a‘lam*)

By contrast, Mīrzā shows a more scriptural approach to this issue. Amongst his treatises, there is a short compendium piece on the subject of verdict and imitation called *al-Iftā` wa al-taqlīd*, in which he concentrates on this important issue and explains all its edges and leaps. Similar to what I mentioned earlier about his general attitude, his answers are based more on *common-sense* (*al-‘urf*), with frequent usage of the term ‘*uqalā`ī* (reasonable), instead of ‘*aqlānī* (rational).⁶³⁰ Giving a significant platform to the imitation process during the Occultation period, he shows that the essentiality of imitation lies in the behaviour of the Prophet and Imam.⁶³¹ They started issuing *fatwā* and then addressed their erudite disciples to either teach or issue *fatwā* for ordinary followers. In an absolute scriptural method, he quotes several narrations from Imams in which, on

629 For this you can easily refer to all *practical treaties* (in Arabic: *risāli-yi ‘amaliyi*, that is practical treaties prepared by a *Mujahid* for the laity) first chapter. For instance Khuyī, ’A. (1410 AH). *Minhāj al-Šāliḥīn*. Qum: Madīnah al-‘ilm. The same idea is reissued by his students like Sīstānī, ’Ā. (1315 AH). *Minhāj al-Šāliḥīn*. Qum: Maktab Āyat-u Allah Siyyid Alī Sīstānī.

630 Looking at different Mīrzā’s ‘usūlī works makes it clear that he gives a high platform to the ‘*uqalā`ī* (reasonable) term, for instance ‘Iṣfahānī, M.M. (1396 SH). *al-‘Iftā` wa al-Taqlīd*, Qum: Mu’assisih-yi Ma’ārif-I ‘Ahl al-Bayt, p.76; ‘Iṣfahānī, M.M. (1398 SH). *al-‘Uṣūl al-Wasīṭ Miṣbāḥ al-Hudā*. Tīhrān: Āfāq, p.362; ‘Iṣfahānī, M.M. (1387 SH). *Miṣbāḥ al-Hudā bi Ḏamīmih-yi I‘jāz al-Qur’ān*. Qum: Būstān-I Kitāb, p.507.

631 ‘Iṣfahānī, M.M. (1398 SH). *al-‘Uṣūl al-Wasīṭ Miṣbāḥ al-Hudā*. Tīhrān: Āfāq, pp.299-322; ‘Iṣfahānī, M.M. (1387 SH). *Miṣbāḥ al-Hudā bi Ḏamīmih-yi I‘jāz al-Qur’ān*. Qum: Būstān-I Kitāb, pp.83-98.

different occasions, they direct their followers to their own erudite pupils to ask their questions of them. Mīrzā elicits from these narrations that to imitate a scholar he should not necessarily be the best knower, simply because Imams, despite having an incomparable depth of Divine knowledge (*best knowledge of all*), referred people to their students to answer their religious questions. This way, he comes out with a scriptural answer based on traditional narrations with a *commonsense* methodology. Though, even from inside the *Shī‘ī* scriptural tendency, one may argue that people being directed by Imams to some of their pupils does not necessarily indicate that he gives permission to imitate a *non-best knower scholar*, as it is also possible that *Shī‘ī* Imams referred people to their students merely to provide them with experience of conducting people and preparing both sides for their absence in later times.⁶³² The reason he posites his arguments is again *rationalistic instinct* (*al-fitrat al-‘uqalā’īyyah*). He says in the case that its not clear which one is the knower (*al-a‘lam*) reffering to one them is authentic.

632 Rabbānī, H. (1392 SH). *Kitābshināsi-yi Tuṣīfi-yi Maktab-i Tafkīk*. Qum: Pajhūhishgāh-i ‘Ulūm wa Farhang-i Islāmī, p.168.

Conclusion

Reading Mīrzā Mahdī is important, because besides evaluating any possible result, his attempt to revive precious debates over fundamental issues holds great value, especially within Iran's religious atmosphere. He brought new insight to many Islamic subjects and challenged their philosophical and mystical basis, which could be more beneficial to scholars as they could face it more intimately from an outsider perspective. However, the questions he raises over the functionality of intellect are not limited to an Islamic or Shia atmosphere. His common, and unfortunately, neglected fiqhī method, also, could be revived as an absolute for many entangled issues in today's Shia uṣūl al-fiqh.

In terms of Mīrzā Mahdī's intellectual background, this research (chapter two), for the first time, despite the Tafkīkīs' attempts in association Mīrzā with the School of Sāmirrā, considers historical uncertainties about having an absolute ideological Sāmirrā School, besides connections between Mīrzā and the School in order to form a continuous network of a recognizable anti-philosophical/mystical trend. There are similarities between the School of Sāmirrā and Mīrzā's tendency, but it is not easy to call him the final ring of the definite chain. I have focused on Mīrzā's teaching circles in Mashhad, the way he rose to fame, to what extend was he embraced by the seminaries. I tried (chapter two), as much as I could, to trace his intellectual background and I have highlighted some amassable effects, the one of Nā'īnī, for instance, only to draw attention to other normal and neglected factors, because a robust contextualization calls for much greater research (chapter two). I wish Mīrzā could expand further on the connection between his uṣūlī ideas and his ideological thoughts, and I would like to invite scholars to focus more on this issue.

For Mīrzā Mahdī, integration of Hellenistic Philosophy into the Islamic texture is a deeply-rooted controversial story. He traces the historical roots back to the inception of the confrontation between two rival Schools: the Shī'ī School of Imamate and the Sunnite School of Caliphs (chapter two). But, the problem never remains historical, or even religious: he traces it back to the ontology of the intellect where controversies between any possible Scripture and human intelligence could be seen.

Mīrzā binds philosophy and mysticism together and sets them in contrast with Scripture. He stigmatizes their methods with the label of 'human science'. This way, the problem is generalized and is sought through the essence of intellect, knowledge, the Divine, and ego; for epistemology inevitably calls for ontology. Technical mistakes in philosophy, which can be found everywhere in human intellectual activities, are raised when philosophers use fallible epistemological means and intellect, with an irreproachable light of knowledge. This way he is able to form the first level of his discourse (refutation) and criticize philosophical basis from insider perspective (chapter three). Here comes his deep roots of ontological reasoning (chapter three): for philosophers, the essence of

intellect, is a level of ego, which is intrinsically fallible and dark, and the light of knowledge, as an ‘innate authentic proof of God’ (*ḥujjat al-bāṭin*), cannot be erroneous. This is why ‘logical deduction’ is not absolute proof for Mīrzā, because he thinks that absolute proof should not have any mistakes, and we see that sometimes it has (chapter three).

In his second level (demonstration), he attempts to show the textual contradictions between the two systems (revelation and philosophy). He explains that based on the revelation, knowledge and intellect are infallible lights, luminous, and pure, whereas human ego is dark, fallible, and tenebrous; human ego can be eliminated by the light of knowledge and thinking correctly, whereas without revelation, based on mere human essence, it would not be secure (chapter three). There is no need to mention how the problem deteriorates when it comes to the realm of religion, especially on the issue of God who has no similarity with anything else.

I should mention that I notice that the refutation level in his work is less distinct compared with the demonstration level. I think the most compelling reason for this is the nature of scripturalism and the simplistic method of Mīrzā.

For me, Mīrzā does not fit into six main characteristics of akhbārīs. He, importantly, quotes a lot of Qur’ānic verses without narrating any hadith under them, which is a clear sign that he is not following the akhbārīs method. These verses are from a variety chapters of the Qur’ān and therefore belong to diverse contexts. Therefore, the authority of explicit meaning of Qur’ānic verses (*ḥujjīyat ẓawāhir al-Qur’ān*) forms one of Mīrzā’s main hermeneutical bases (chapter three). I preferred to label him as an akhbār-girā (hadith oriented), because of his clear scriptural tendency. After pointing his finger at some self-evident problems (refutation level), he gives substantial narrations in order to support his idea and clarify the textual contrast. It is very important - as a scriptural method - that how Mīrzā forms the network of narrations around one subject in order to re-enforce his ideas from inside the text (chapter three). Exactly in this context, his rijālī method should be highly considered: Like akhbārīs, he does not care about the chain of hadith (*isnād*), and relies on the main primary Shī'a sources. He maintains that words are indicators, but their ‘indicatory-role’ is not due to their inherent essence as established in philosophy. For him, the primary usage of the words is very important in finding their genuine meaning. Therefore, as a hermeneutical method, Mīrzā always digs into the roots of the words to derive their first-used meaning (chapter three). Making this network, how he is able to list and explains meticulously all the differences between the various methods of the two systems as a clear manifest of the main theological issues: Tawhīd (Unity of God), Knowing God (ma’rifat-u ’l-Allah), Creation and Divine Volition, Free Will, Causality (chapter three).

Making these methodic and linguistic bases, Mīrzā is enable to re-define ‘aql. In term of ontology, he still notices a chasm between philosophical construal of ‘aql and the one of Scripture. In philosophy, ‘aql (intellect) is a level of ‘āqīl (intellectual), and is united with ma’qūl (intellectualized). This mystical epistemology calls for considering the whole world as one and united entity which is a manifestation of God (different levels of one reality) (chapter three). Mīrzā outbursts against this ideology. He tries to prove that this is not accepted by the revelatory instruction by no means, and this is vivid infidelity. He concludes that ‘aql is an ultimate proof with an absolute authenticity: finds the details,

and stops itself when it comes to knowing Inimitable Allah. He emphasizes again that the role of ‘aql and knowledge is to show the insufficiency of all possible means and tools in knowing God. It is because when they are known as insufficient, there will no longer remain any chance for other means to define or introduce God, because there is nothing more powerful or illuminating than intellect and knowledge (chapter three).

One of the key concepts of Mīrzā’s thought is the belief in a pre-known God, which is strongly supported by Scripture. This knowledge is called *ma’rifat al-fitrīyyah* (the innate cognition) and has been explained in the Imams’ narrations. The crucial effect of this is that when Allah is known by Himself in a pre-world (‘alam al-dhar), then what remains for other means is just to remind Him to the people (reminder or *mudhakkir*); they work merely as an indicator. That is to say, that when the knowledge is given, it is ‘aql’s turn to encourage the intellectual person (‘āqil) to follow *ma’rifah*, which means to grasp it and believe in it. This is the practical role of ‘aql well-known as *al-‘aql al-‘amalī* (practical intellect).

In terms of *uṣūl al-fiqh* (Chapter four), I have tried to examine whether Mīrzā follows the same method or not. However, it has not been discussed as much in this context as it has been in theology. He, similar to his theology, controls the function of ‘aql in *uṣūl* which has been inflated too much due to the philosophical basis of *uṣūlī* scholars. Mīrzā’s *fiqh*, as a result, follows common-sense (‘urf) and has the same simplistic method. My conclusion on his *uṣūl al-fiqh* is based on his two recent *uṣūl* works which seem to be sort of compendiums of his later *uṣūlī* ideas. These pieces fit completely into the formal Shī‘ī *uṣūlī* framework and stand far-distanced from the *akhbārī* style. They include all common chapters of a normal *uṣūlī* textbook such as *mabāhith al-‘alfāz* or certainty or conjecture, but the point is the weight of each chapter and the definition of ‘aql in each of them in quite different. He establishes the significance of *ijtihād* and *taqlīd* in the Occultation period as an essential doctrinal ground, without which the whole organization of religion will not survive (chapter four). He follows the *uṣūlī*s categories, which I see as an attempt for defining himself far from *akhbārī*s and remaining within the mainstream circle and, at the same time, tries to bring his own ideas into the discussion of each subject, which is absolutely normal in the Shiite *ijtihād* tradition. However, his challenges often deal with epistemological elements and sometimes draw dichotomies by redefining the crucial factors like knowledge, certainty, and the role of intellect. The main methodical part of his work is an attempt to switch from a rational base system to the common-sense base system. As it is clear in all his *uṣūlī* extant treatises, a higher platform is always given to the common-sense reasoning (*al-‘uqalā’ī*) instead of the firm intellectual reasoning (*al-‘aqlānī*) which is rooted in Philosophical basis. This is a vivid sign for his main message for modulating the role of ‘aql compared to the mainstream *uṣūlī* system. He avoids using the term ‘aqlānī (rational) which seemingly to him is a symbol of philosophical thought, and attempts to re-establish the term ‘uqalā’ī instead, which is rooted in the common-sense terminology. Diluting the role of intellect, (as was seen in the *mulāzima* regulation) he builds his ideas more on scriptural infrastructures. Thus, he normally quotes several narrations and tries to infer his opinion directly from a group of *riwāyas* which solidify one specific concept. This does not mean that he comes out with a firm idea in his *fiqhī* opinions: because by giving a high platform to the two distinctive roles of Imams, (a) educating the main principles and (b) issuing *fatwā* in individual

cases, he paves the way for jurists to issue an individual fatwā in each case, and also issue general fatwās based on the Imams' educational principles (Chapter four).

Appendix

1. Qur'ānic verses

١. كِتَابُ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ لِتُخْرِجَ النَّاسَ مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ إِلَى صِرَاطِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَمِيدِ (Ibrāhīm, 1)
٢. إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَلِيُّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يُخْرِجُهُمْ مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أُولَئِكُمْ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ عُوْثُ يُخْرِجُهُمْ مِنَ النُّورِ إِلَى الظُّلُمَاتِ أُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْأَنَارِ هُمْ فِيهَا حَلَّوْنَ (al-Baqarah, 257)
٣. قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ نُورٌ وَكِتَابٌ مُبِينٌ يَهْدِي بِهِ اللَّهُ مَنْ مَنْ اتَّبَعَ رَضْوَانَهُ سُبْلَ السَّلَامِ وَيُخْرِجُهُمْ مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ بِإِذْنِهِ وَبِهْدِيهِمْ إِلَى صِرَاطِ مُسْتَقِيمٍ (Mā'idah, 16)
٤. يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا وَسَجُودًا بُكْرَةً وَأَصْبِلًا هُوَ الَّذِي يُصَلِّي عَلَيْكُمْ وَمَلَائِكَتُهُ لِيُخْرِجُكُمْ مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ وَكَانَ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَحِيمًا تَحِيَّهُمْ يَوْمًا يَلْقَوْنَ سَلَامًا (al-Ahzāb, 41)
٥. هُوَ الَّذِي يَنْزَلُ عَلَى عَبْدِهِ آيَاتٍ بَيِّنَاتٍ لِيُخْرِجُكُمْ مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُمْ لَرَوْفٌ رَحِيمٌ (al-Hadīd, 9)
٦. يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَآمِنُوا بِرَسُولِهِ يُوتُّمْ كُفَّالِيْنَ مِنْ رَحْمَتِهِ وَيَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ نُورًا تَمْشُونَ بِهِ (al-Hadīd, 28)
٧. أَوْمَنَ كَانَ مَيْتًا فَأَحْيَيْنَاهُ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُ نُورًا يَمْشِي بِهِ فِي النَّاسِ كَمَنْ مَثَلُهُ فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ أَلِيْسَ بِخَارِجٍ مِنْهَا كَذَلِكَ زُيْنَ لِلْكَافِرِينَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ (al-An'ām, 122)
٨. أَفَمِنْ شَرَحَ اللَّهُ صَدْرَهُ لِإِسْلَامٍ فَهُوَ عَلَى نُورٍ مِنْ رَبِّهِ فَوْيِلٌ لِلْفَاسِيَّةِ فُلُوبُهُمْ مِنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ (Zumar, 22)
٩. يَهْدِي اللَّهُ لِنُورِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ (Nūr, 35)
١٠. إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَتَوَفَّى الْأَنْفُسَ حِينَ مَوْتِهَا وَالَّتِي لَمْ تَمُتْ فِي مَنَامِهَا فَيُمْسِكُ الَّتِي قَضَى عَلَيْهَا الْمُوْتَ وَيُرْسِلُ الْأَخْرَى إِلَى أَجَلٍ مُسَمَّى (Zumar, 42)
١١. وَمَنْ لَمْ يَجْعَلِ اللَّهُ لَهُ نُورًا فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ نُورٍ (Nūr, 40)
١٢. أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ صَافَاتٍ كُلُّ قَدْ عَلِمَ صَلَاتَهُ وَسَبِيلَهُ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيْمٌ بِمَا يَعْلَمُونَ (Nūr, 41)
١٣. فَأَمْنَوْا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَالنُّورِ الَّذِي أَنْزَلْنَا (Taghābun, 8)
١٤. وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا مُوسَى بِآيَاتِنَا أَنْ أَخْرِجْ قَوْمَكَ مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ وَذَكَرْهُمْ بِأَيَّامِ اللَّهِ (Ibrāhīm, 5)
١٥. إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا التُّورَةَ فِيهَا هُدَىٰ وَنُورٌ يَحْكُمُ بِهَا الْتَّبِيُّونَ (Mā'idah, 44)
١٦. رَبُّنَا الَّذِي أَعْطَى كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خُلْقَهُ ثُمَّ هَدَىٰ (Tāhā, 50)
١٧. وَقَفَنَا عَلَى آثَارِهِمْ بِعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ التُّورَةِ وَآتَيْنَاهُ الْإِنْجِيلَ فِيهِ هَدَىٰ وَنُورٌ (Mā'idah, 46)
١٨. الَّذِينَ يَتَنَاهُونَ عَنِ الرَّسُولِ النَّبِيِّ الْأَمِيِّ الَّذِي يَجْدُونَهُ مَكْتُوبًا عِنْهُمْ فِي التُّورَةِ وَالْإِنْجِيلِ يَأْمُرُهُمْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَنَهَاهُمْ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُحِلُّ لَهُمُ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَيُحَرِّمُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْحَبَابَاتِ وَيَضَعُ عَنْهُمْ إِصْرَهُمْ وَالْأَغْلَالَ الَّتِي كَانَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ فَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِهِ وَعَزَّرُوهُ وَنَصَرُوهُ وَاتَّبعُوا النُّورَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ مَعَهُ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ (al-A'rāf, 157)
١٩. أُولَئِكَ كَتَبَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الْإِيمَانَ وَأَيَّدَهُمْ بِرُوحٍ مِنْهُ (Mujādilah, 22)

٢٠. وَلَكِنَ اللَّهُ حَبَّبَ إِلَيْكُمُ الْإِيمَانَ وَرَيَّئَتُهُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ وَكَرَّهَ إِلَيْكُمُ الْكُفْرُ وَالْفُسُوقُ وَالْعَصْيَانَ (al-Hujurāt, 7)
٢١. أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى رَبِّكَ كَيْفَ مَدَ الظَّلَّ وَلَوْ شَاءَ لَجَعَلَهُ سَاكِنًا ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَا الشَّمْسَ عَلَيْهِ دَلِيلًا ثُمَّ قَضَيْنَاهُ إِلَيْنَا فَقَضَا يَسِيرًا (al-Furqān, 45)
٢٢. وَمَا أُوتِيتُمْ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ إِلَّا فَلَيْلًا (al-Isrā, 85)
٢٣. تُسَبِّحُ لَهُ السَّمَاوَاتُ السَّبْعُ وَالْأَرْضُ وَمَنْ فِيهِنَّ وَإِنْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا يُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِهِ وَلَكُنْ لَا تَعْقِلُونَ سَبِّيْحَهُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ حَلِيمًا (al-Isrā, 44)
٢٤. رَبَّنَا لَا تُزِغْ قُلُوبَنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْنَا (Al-i 'imrān, 8)
٢٥. أَفَعَيْرَ دِينَ اللَّهِ يَبْغُونَ وَلَهُ أَسْلَمَ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ طَوْعًا وَكَرْهًا وَإِلَيْهِ يُرْجَعُونَ (Al-i 'imrān, 83)
٢٦. ثُمَّ اسْتَوَى إِلَى السَّمَاءِ وَهِيَ دُخَانٌ فَقَالَ لَهَا وَلِلْأَرْضِ اتَّنْبِئْنَا طَوْعًا أَوْ كَرْهًا فَأَلَّا أَتَنْبَئْنَا طَائِعِينَ (Fuṣṣilat, 11)
٢٧. وَمَنْ يُؤْمِنْ بِاللَّهِ يَهْدِ فَلْبِهِ (Taghābun, 11)
٢٨. وَعَلِمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلُّهَا (al-Baqarah, 31)
٢٩. عَلِمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ (al-'Alaq, 5)
٣٠. وَمِنْكُمْ مَنْ يُرَدُّ إِلَى أَرْذَلِ الْأَعْمَرِ لِكِنْ لَا يَعْلَمْ بَعْدَ عِلْمٍ شَيْئًا (al-Nahāl, 70)
٣١. قَلُولًا إِذَا بَلَغْتِ الْحُلُومَ (al-Waqi'ah, 83)
٣٢. بَلْ أَحْيَاءٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزَفُونَ (Al-i 'imrān, 169)
٣٣. فِي قُلُوبِ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُ رَأْفَةً وَرَحْمَةً (al-Hadīd, 27)
٣٤. وَمَا يَذْكُرُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ (al-Muddathir, 56)
٣٥. وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً (al-Rūm, 21)
٣٦. فَلَّا فَلَّا بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْرَانًا (Al-i 'imrān, 103)
٣٧. قَالَ مَا مَنَعَكَ أَلَا تَسْجُدُ إِذْ أَمْرَنَاكَ قَالَ أَنَا خَيْرٌ مِنْهُ خَلَقْتَنِي مِنْ نَارٍ وَخَلَقْتَهُ مِنْ طِينٍ (al-A'rāf, 12)
٣٨. قَالَ أَنَا خَيْرٌ مِنْهُ خَلَقْتَنِي مِنْ نَارٍ وَخَلَقْتَهُ مِنْ طِينٍ (Shād, 76)

2. Abwāb al-Hudā:

١. (الباب الثاني من أبواب الهدى : معرفة العقل فنقول : العقل) الذي يُشار إليه بلفظ العقل في العلوم الإلهية هو النور الخارجي الظاهر بذاته لكل عاقل حين ظهور حسن الأفعال وقبحها للإنسان، ويعرف به الجزيئات، والصادق على الله والكاذب ، والناصح الأمين والغاش الخائن . وأمّا في العلوم البشرية فهو عبارة عن فعلية النفس باستخراج النظريات من الضروريات ، ولهذا ليست المعقولات عندهم إلا الكليات. p. 6
٢. لما كان العقل عند اليونانيين عبارة عن فعلية النفس باستخراج النظريات من الضروريات وهي عين التصورات والتصديقات وهي عين العلم في اصطلاحهم ، ذكر صاحب الشريعة بالعقل وأنه من العلم وهو عين إقامة الحجّة على علماء البشر من اليونانيين ورفع الغفلة والجهالة عن نور عقولهم وهو يوجب معرفتهم بجهالتهم وغفلتهم عن عقولهم وعن حقيقة العلم وباحتاجاتهم عنها فيعرفون أنّهم كانوا مدبرين من النور إلى الظلمات لأنّ التصورات والتصديقات ليس حيّث ذاتها النور ، ولا يعرف النور إلا بالنور ، وكذا لا يعرف غير النور أيضًا إلا بالنور ، فتسمية الظلمات علمًا وعقولًا عين الجهالة ، ولما كانت المعقولات عندهم عقلاً وعلمًا فكلّما زادت معقولاتهم وتصوراتهم وتصديقاتهم يكون أحبّ من نور العقل والعلم ومن كشف الحقائق بالنور أبعد ، وكلّما ازداد علمياتهم واشتبّه بينهم وجزّهم يكون حجّابهم ويعرفون بعقولهم وعلمهم الحقّ من الباطل لعرفائهم بهما أنّ طلب معرفة النور بغيره من التصورات والتصديقات التي هي ذاتها الظلمة وكذلك طلب معرفة الحقائق الخارجية بغير النور طلب المعرفة في الظلمات بالظلمات وهو الضلال المبين. pp. 36-37
٣. فنقول : لما كان العقل حجّة الله تعالى والعلم مثيله العليا يمتنع سقوط الحجّية عنّهما ، فكلّ أمر لا يعقل ولا يعلم لو كان نفس العقل والعلم بذاتها معرفين له أو آيتين فهو حقّ وإنّما فهو باطل ؛ فمن ادعى أمراً وقال إنّه فوق العقل والعلم ولم يكن العقل والعلم معرفين أو آيتين له فقد ادعى باطلًا بالضرورة ، وبهذا يمتاز المعارف الإلهية عن المعرفات البشرية ، فإنّ شيعة أكسيوфан من يدّعي أنّ ما يعاينه فوق العقل والعلم ، وأنّه لا طريق لهم إليه ، فهو عين السحر والباطل. p. 69
٤. في الكافي عن عدّة من أصحابنا ، عن أحمد بن محمد بن مرسلاً قال : قال أبو عبدالله صلوات الله عليه : «دعامة الإنسان العقل ، والعقل منه الفطنة والفهم والحفظ والعلم ، وبالعقل يكمّل وهو دليله ومبصره ومفتاح أمره ، فإذا كان تأييد عقله من النور كان عالماً حافظاً ذاكراً فطناً فهماً ، فعلم بذلك كيف ولم وحيث ، وعرف من نصّه ومن غشّه ، فإذا عرف ذلك عرف مجرى ومسؤوله ومفصوله ، وأخلص الوحدانية لله تعالى والإقرار بالطاعة ، فإذا فعل ذلك كان مستدركاً لما فات ووارداً على ما هو آت ، ويعرف ما هو فيه ولائي شيء هو هاهنا ومن أين يأتيه وإلى ما هو صائر ، وذلك كله من تأييد العقل» p.39
٥. وعن الخصال في رواية كميل ، قال أمير المؤمنين صلوات الله عليه «هجم بهم العلم على حقائق الأمور فباشروا روح اليقين واستلأنوا ما استوعره المترفون ، وأنسوا بما استوحش منه الجاهلون ، صحبوا الدنيا بأبدان أرواحها معلقة بال محلّ الأعلى». p. 40
٦. وفي البحر في باب صفات العلماء عن نهج البلاغة ، قال صلوات الله عليه : «إنّ من أحبّ عباد الله إليه عبداً أعاده الله على نفسه فاستشعر الحزن وتجلّب الخوف فزهر مصباح الهدى في قلبه ، وأعدّ القرى ليومه النازل به فقرب

على نفسه البعيد ، وهو الشديد ، نظر فأبصر ، وارتوى من عذب فرات سهلت له موارده فشرب نهلاً ، وسلك سبيلاً جدداً ، قد خلع سرابيل الشهوات ، وتخلى من الهموم إلا هماً واحداً انفرد به فخرج من صفة العمى ومشاركة أهل الهوى ، وصار من مفاتيح أبواب الهدى ومغاليق أبواب الردى ، قد أبصر طريقه وسلك سبيله وعرف مناره وقطع غماره ، واستمسك من العرى بأوقتها ، ومن الحال بأميتها ، فهو من اليقين على مثل ضوء الشمس قد نصب نفسه للسبحان في أرفع الأمور من إصدار كل وارد عليه ، وتصيير كل فرع إلى أصله ، مصباح ظلمات ، كشاف عشوارات ، مفتاح مهمات ، دفاع معضلات ، دليل فلوارات ، يقول فيفهم ، ويُسكت فيسلم ، قد أخلص الله فاستخلصه فهو من معادن دينه وأوتاد أرضه ، قد ألزم نفسه العدل فكان أول عده نفي الهوى عن نفسه ، يصف الحقّ ويعمل به ، لا يدع للخير غاية إلا أنها ، ولا مظنة إلا قصدها ، قد أمكن الكتاب من زمامه فهو قائده وإمامه ، يحلّ حيث حلّ ثقله ، وينزل حيث كان منزله. p. 40.

٧. وأما العلم فهو في العلوم الإلهية عبارة عن النور الظاهر بذاته عند كل من يعلم ويجده شيئاً من الأشياء وإن كان جاهلاً بحقيقة ذلك الشيء ... وأما في العلوم البشرية فهو عبارة عن الصورة الحاصلة لشيء لدى النفس أو حضورها لديه. ولها ينقسم إلى الحصولي والحضوري p. 142

٨. وأما التعليم فهو في العلوم الإلهية إنما هو بإخراج الناس من ظلمات التصورات والتصديق المظلمة بالذات (التي لا أمان من خطائها ودخولهم وسوقهم إلى النور بوجданهم لأنوار القدسية التي هي نور العقل والعلم والفهم، فيعرفونها بها لا بغيرها) ، فشأن المعلم الإلهي هو المذكورة فقط كما في قوله تعالى... p. 16

٩. ولما تحقق بالعلوم الإلهية عدم تجرد النفس وفقرها وخلوها عن الأنوار، يكون أساس قيام الرسول صلى الله عليه وآله ونزول القرآن على التذكرة برب العزة وتنبيه الناس عن نوم الغفلة والجهالة بفقرهم، وبالمراقبة في محضره كي يعيينوا إفاضة الأنوار في قلوبهم كي يحصل لهم المعاينة لفعل الله تعالى في انتشار صدورهم وتنور قلوبهم واشتداد أفهامهم وكشف الحقائق لهم فيعرفوا حينئذ صدق الرسول صلى الله عليه وآله، وبمعاينة إفاضته تعالى معرفته لهم وكتابة الإيمان في قلوبهم ونزول السكينة عليهم يعيينوا شهادة الله عزوجل لصدق رسوله الأكرم صلى الله عليه وآله. و هذا التذكرة أول درجة إخراج الناس من ظلمات الجهات إلى نور المعرفة والعلم.

p. 74

١٠. فكان العقل والعلم بذاتها حجتين على حجيتها لكونهما كاشفين عن الباطل ، والمعرفين للحق... p. 39.

١١. الباب الرابع والعشرون من أبواب الهدى :معرفة اختصاص حجية الخوارق للعادات لأشخاص الأنبياء وخلفاء الله ، وأن صدورها من غيرهم امتحان للناس ونفس هذا الشخص فنقول ومن غرائب العلوم الإلهية في باب النبوة والرسالة والإمامية ما أنزل الله تعالى في كتابه من امتحان الناس بفعل السامری ، فيظهر أن خرق العادة لا يكون حجّة من الله على صدق المدعى [إلا] إذا حكم العقل بحجية ذلك ، وأما إذا حكم العقل بأن الدعوة باطلة أو أن صاحب الدعوة لا يليق بالرسالة والخلافة ما يكون خرق العادة إلا امتحاناً وختباراً ، فلو صدر من الصوفي آلاف خوارق لا يكشف عن ولایته لأن الدعوة إلى التسلیم بين يدي الغیر دعوة باطلة فضلاً عما يدعون من الدواعي التي قامت العقول والعلوم الإلهية كلها على بطلانها لأنها تجب إنكار أبدى اليقينيات وإنكار الحسن والقبح وحقيقة كل دین وكل أمر وكل مذهب، وتکذیب جميع الأنبياء في دعوتهم. p. 90-91

١٢. فلو صدر من الصوفي آلاف خوارق لا يكشف عن ولايته لأن الدعوة إلى التسليم بين يدي الغير دعوة باطلة فضلاً عما يدعون من الدواعي التي قامت العقول والعلوم الإلهية كلها على بطلانها لأنها تجب إنكار أبده البقينيات وإنكار الحسن والقبح وحقيقة كل دين وكل أمر وكل مذهب ، وتكتسب جميع الأنبياء في دعوتهم. p. 90-91.

١٣. فكان العقل والعلم بذاتهما حجتَّهما على حجتَّهما لكونهما كاشفَين عن الباطل ، والمعرَّفين للحق وأول الحق كما ذكرنا أن المذكُّر بهما ورافق الغفلة والجهالة عنهما والمذكُّر للباطل الظاهر بهما صادق على الله وهو الناصح الأمين ، وهذا هو الرسول الكريم ، ورسالته حقٌّ مبين من هذه الجهة ، وهذه معرفة الرسول بالرسالة التي ذكر بها صاحب الشريعة وهي إقامة الحجَّة الباطنية على جميع البشر وتعجزهم وإظهار جهالتهم وغفلتهم وإدبارهم عن عالم النور ، وانغماسهم في الظلمات والضلال المبين ، وسلوكهم في طريق معوج غير مستقيم ، واحتياجهم إلى المذكُّر والرسول . وبهذه الرسالة أقدر علماء أمته على تعزيز أهل العالم كي يظهر لهم جهالتهم وضلالاتهم واعوجاج طريقتهم ، فإذا أقام الرسول الحجَّة على البشر يذكُّرهم بربِّهم الذي يعرفونه بفطرتهم ، ويحتاج عليهم بعقولهم التي من آيات عظمة ربِّهم ؛ فإن أطاعوا أحكام عقولهم يزكيهم ويكمِّلهم ويفتح لهم باب الأبواب لمعرفة النور بالنور ، ومشاهدة النور بالنور ، ومعرفة حقائق الأشياء بالنور فيخرجهم من الظلمات إلى النور ، فيظهر لهم علماء البشر أن كلَّ شيء توهَّموا العلم به لم يكن إلا عين الجهالة وهذا طور جديد وسلوك حديث في تكميل البشر لا يكون إلا بالتذكُّر بما يجدونه لا بالتصوُّر ولا بالتعلق ، وباب الأبواب لهذا التكميل فتح باب معرفة العقل بالعقل وعيانه وشهوده به كي تعرج الروح إلى معرفة العلم وكشف الحقائق به. p. 39.

١٤. الباب الثاني عشر: معرفة أنَّ باب علوم القرآن العقل الذي هو الحجَّة الباطنة من الله العزيز الوهاب جلت عظمته وهذا باب من أعظم أبواب الهدى ، فنقول : وأساس القرآن على التذكُّر بذلك العقل وبالذكُّر به يذكُّر بالعلم الحقيقي وتترفع الغفلة عنه فتقوم الحجَّة من الله العزيز فيفتح باب معرفة حقيقة الوجود ، وبذلك الأنوار ينفتح باب معرفة العزيز الجبار به تعالى شأنه ومعرفة آياته وملفوقاته وباب الأبواب إلى ذلك الجري على الفطرة في كشف المرادات بالألفاظ لبداية جرى القرآن العظيم في كشف المرادات والمقاصد على الفطرة التي فطر الله الناس عليها ، فإنَّ من أعظم عجائب حكمة الله تعالى في طور الخلقة أن فطرهم على معرفته تعالى وعلى معرفة العقل والعلم ، وحقيقة الوجود ومعرفة رسالته وحججه وما يقوم به معاشهم ومعادهم ، قال الله عزَّ وجلَّ : « فَطَرَ اللَّهُ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ ذَلِكَ الَّذِينَ أَقْرَبُوا إِلَيْهِ أَكْثَرُ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ». p. 90-91.

١٥. أساس علوم القرآن المجيد على التذكُّر بهذا النور الذي هو الحجَّة والمميَّز بين الحق والباطل، فيكون مرجعه إلى إقامة الحجَّة لكلَّ عاقل بنفس عقله بواسطة التذكُّر به والتذكُّر بالحق والباطل للذين (تكون هذه الحجَّة هي الكاشف عنهم بذاتهما) فيظهر لجميع العقلاء الباطل الذي كانوا فيه والحق الذي يذكُّرهم به بنفس عقولهم فتقوم الحجَّة عليهم بعين عقولهم على أنَّ المذكُّر بذلك العقل والداعي إلى أحكامه حقٌّ صادق. p. 34.

The following passage from the same page can be also noted:

فيظهر من تكير القرآن المجيد ثم الرسول الأكرم صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ بِالنُّورِ العقلي والحق والباطل الذين يكتشفهما هذه الحجَّة بذاتهما كون جميع العقلاء محظوظين عن نور عقولهم بالجهالة والغفلة في عين ظهوره لهم بذاته واستحضارتهم به وأنهم مدبرون عن عالم النور إلى الظلمات وهي الأدلة التي توهَّموها أدلة على ما يعتقدون

ويزعمون ، وأنهم لطلبهم كشف الأمور في الظلمات لا كشف النور وغير النور في الضلال المبين ، ولحصر طريق الأمور بالنور يكون طريقهم معوجا و سلوك هذا الطريق لعدم الأمان من خطائه في الأمور المهمة سلوك المجانين . قال الله عزوجل : « قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ جَمِيعًا » .

١٦. وبهذا يعلم أن الاستدلال لرب العزة ليس من باب الاستدلال بالأمر المتصور والتصديق به على الذات المتصور بوجه كما عليه أساس الحكم ، بل الاستدلال بها ليس إلا بالإشارة إلى الحقائق المكتشوفة بالعقل والعلم فإنهما كاشفان عن الجزئيات وليس الاستدلال بها إلا من جهة أن حيّ ذاتها الإشارة إلى من بمشيته التحقق والحقيقة لا من باب المعلولة والمتعلقة كما عليه أساس المعقولة كي يرد الإشكال في معلولة الماهية ومتعلقتها بعد السخنية في الوجود و باستلزم التحديد . فهذا الذي ذكرنا من الجري على الفطرة في كشف مرادات القرآن والروايات هو باب (الأبواب في علوم القرآن) (وعلى ذلك أسسّت أبواب الهدى) لا على ما اصطلاح عليه اليونانيون في علومهم المدونة كما ستعرف إن شاء الله تعالى. 27 p.

١٧. وفي الكافي مسندًا قال ابن السكيت لأبي الحسن صلوات الله عليه : فما الحجّة على الخلق اليوم ؟ فقال عليه السلام : « العقل ؛ يعرف به الصادق على الله فيصدقه ، والكاذب على الله فيكذبه ». أقول : هذه الرواية الشريفة [تنذر] بأنّ النور العقلي كاشف عن صدق الصادق وكذب الكاذب قوله جزئياً . وهذه الرواية (وما قبله) صريحة في التنذر بأنّ هذا النور يدرك به الجزئيات ويحكم فيها خلافاً لما في العلوم البشرية ، وقد فتح صاحب الشريعة بالتنذر بنور العقل بباب المعرفة بالعلم وهو باب ينفتح منه الأبواب إلى معرفة الحقائق على ما هي عليها وبالتنذر به وبأئمة القائم بالعلم رفع حجاب علماء العلوم البشرية من اليونانيين عن العقل والعلم واقام الحجّة عليهم بنفس عقلاهم وعلمهم بأنّهم محظوظون عن العقل والعلم أشدّ من العوالّم ، وإدبارهم عن النور أشدّ وانغمارهم في الظلمات أكثـر وضلالـهم أبـين وطريقـهم أعوج وسلوكـهم فيه سلوكـ أسفـه السـفـهـاء . 36 p.

١٨. وحيث إن الأساس في تلك العلوم - كما عرفت إجمالاً - على عرفان النور والحقائق الظلمنية بالنور لا بالتصور والتعقل ، فلا بدّ فيها من ضرب الأمثال ، فمثل نور العقل مع الناس كسراج مضيء يستضاء به الناس ويظهر لهم الواقع الهلكة والنجاة وهم للغفلة عنه والاشتغال بما ظهر به يستجلون في طلبه بالتقليد والتوهّمات والظنّ واليقين التي تخطيء وتصيب ، فيهلكون من غير شعور وعلم... وقال عزوجل : « الرَّكَابُ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكُمْ لِتُخْرِجَ النَّاسُ مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ إِلَى صِرَاطِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَمِيدِ ». وفي البحر في باب العقل عن العلل مسندًا عن أمير المؤمنين صلوات الله عليه في رواية شريفة قال صلى الله عليه وآله : « فإذا بلغ كشف ذلك الستر فيقع في قلب الإنسان نور فيفهم الفريضة والسنة والجيد والردي ، ألا ومثل العقل في القلب كمثل السراج في وسط البيت ». pp. 33-34

١٩. فنقول : كلّ عاقل بعد الطفولية لا يخفى عليه ما يجد من النور الذي يظهر به له حسن أفعاله أو قبحها في حال فقدان النور فيكون النور ظاهراً بذاته له حال احتجابه عنه بالتجوّه به إلى الأفعال ، والغفلة عن التوجّه به إليه بالتجوّه الموضوعي وهكذا في حال الغضب أو الشهوة الشديدة قد يصدر منه فعل قبيح ، وبعد ذهاب الغضب والشهوة لا يخفى عليه نور يجد به قبح فعله حال الغضب والشهوة في عين التوجّه إلى الفعل لا إلى ذات النور ، فهذا ظهور النور بذاته في استضائة العاقل به والغفلة عنه بالتجوّه إلى المنورات وعدم التوجّه به إليه ، وعرفانه

حق المعرفة ، وهكذا نور العلم فإن كل أحد بعد الجهل بأمر كائناً ما كان يجد نوراً مظهراً له ما علمه بعد فقدانه ، وبه يعرف ما علمه وهذا ظهور العلم بذاته في عين الغفلة والاحتاجاب عنه بالتجاه إلى المعلومات وعدم التوجّه إليه حتّى يعرفه حق المعرفة. p. 26

٢٠. بيان: أقول : ظاهر للعقل أن نفس التذكّر بهذا النور عين رفع حجاب الغفلة والجهالة اللتين تكونان لجميع العقلاء بعقولهم التي هي حجّة إلهيّة وعين إقامة الحجّة وإحيائها ، فهو إخراج العقلاء من ظلمات أدلةّهم اليقينيّة التي هي عين الظلمات إلى النور وإلى معرفتهم إياه به وهو يوجب معرفتهم بأنّ جهالتهم وحجابهم عنه غافلتهم وهي الباطل الذي كانوا فيه من استكشاف المطالب بغیر هذا النور ومن الإدبار عنه والإقبال إلى الظلمات ، ومعرفتهم بعقولهم بالباطل الآخر وهو الضلال المبين... p. 26

٢١. وفي الكافي مسندأ قال ابن السكيت لأبي الحسن صلوات الله عليه : فما الحجّة على الخلق اليوم ؟ فقال عليه السلام : «العقل ؛ يعرف به الصادق على الله فيصدقه ، والكافر على الله فيكفره». p. 36

٢٢. وفي الكافي مسندأ عن عبدالله صلوات الله عليه في رواية شريفة ، قال:«إذا كان تأييد عقله من النور» إلى أن قال : «عرف أبي من نصحه ومن غنه». p. 36

٢٣. وفي البحار في باب العقل عن الاختصاص عن الصادق صلوات الله عليه ، قال عليه السلام : «خلق الله العقل من أربعة أشياء : من العلم والقدرة والنور والمشيّة بالأمر فجعله قائمًا بالعلم ، دائمًا في الملوك». P. 37

٢٤. الباب الثالث والعشرون من أبواب الهدى : معرفة طريق معرفة رب العزة في العلوم الإلهيّة و المعارفها على خلاف ما في العلوم والمعارف البشرية فعلى العلوم البشرية باب المعرفة بوجه هو التعلم للعلوم الفلسفية ، وأماماً باب كمال المعرفة فطريقه التسلیم بين يديّ الشیخ کی یوصله بمساعدته وتریبته إلى حال التجرد والمعاینة ، فإنه یمتنع حصول الفناء والعيان إلا بالتجرد ، ولا يحصل التجرد بلا تسلیم بين يديه من يجرده وهو الشیخ والقطب ، فالمعراج هو التجرد وهو النوم الاختیاري بين يديه من يریبه حتّی يصل إلى المعاینة والفناء في الوجود الذي هو رب العزة عندهم ؛ فالصلالة [بمعزل] عن العروج إلى مرتبة الفناء لأنّها ليست إلا الأعمال المتقوّمة بالالتفات إلى معانیها وما يخاطب به ربّه . وأماماً باب المعرفة في العلوم الإلهيّة كمال المعرفة بالعقل والعلم فإنّ بكمال المعرفة بهما یعرف رب العزة (فهو تعالى شأنه خلاف ذلك) فيعرف أنّ عمدة الحجاب هي المعقولات والمعلومات والموهومات ، وإنّ عرفانه بحقيقة المعرفة ورؤيته تعالى لا يكون إلا به ، وذلك يدور مدار إذنه تعالى ومشيّته ، ولهذه الجهة ليس الرسول الأكرم والإمام إلا الهدى إلى طريق رب العزة ، فغاية التعليمات في العلوم الإلهيّة معرفة العجز عن المعرفة بالعقل والعلوم ، ووجوب الحيرة وخروجه تعالى عن حدّ النفي والتشبيه . وطريق الحكماء وال فلاسفة العلم الحصولي وهو العقل عندهم ، وطريق أکسيوفان وشیعته من الصوفية التجريد والسير والسلوك مع المرشد والمربي ، ورب العزة عند الحكماء هو حقيقة الوجود في درجة الشدة بلا رأى ولا مشيّة ، وعند الصوفية هو تعالى عين حقيقة الوجود وحقيقة الماهيات وواقعيتها وفعاليتها ، وهو المتطرّر والمت Shank ، وطريق الحكماء ينتهي إلى المادية والدهرية ، وطريق الصوفية يثبت السحر للأنباء فإنّهم جعلوا جميع المعجزات من قبيل هذه التصرّفات التي توهموها من شعب الولاية. pp. 89-90

٢٥. وأما طريقه تعالى في العلوم الإلهية فهو النور وهو العقل الذي باب إلى العلم ، ولهذه الجهة يثير الأنبياء دفائن العقول ويعلمون الناس الكتاب والحكمة ، وبخرونهم من الظلمات إلى النور باذن ربهم إلى صراط العزيز الحميد ، ويعرفون بالعقل والعلم على رب العزة من أن يُعرف بغيره فينتاج التسبيح ومحو الموهومات وصحو المعلومات التي تعلّموها من الآباء والأمهات الجسمانية والروحانية ، وحيث إن الطريق في العلوم الإلهية العقل والعلم فيما الحجتان على حقيقة الدعوة بخلاف العلوم البشرية ، فالمكافحة الصوفية فإنه لا برهان على حقيقتها إلا اليقين الذي لا أمان لخطائه ، وطريق الصوفية عين حركة المجانين لأن التسليم بين يدي الغير حتى يتصرف في نفس الإنسان

p. 90 ...

٢٦. وأيضاً نتيجة الاستدلال في العلوم الإلهية هي الوله والحيرة في ذاته ، ولهذا يقال : الله تعالى وهو تعالى شأنه . ٨

٢٧. وتمتنع معلوميته ومفهوميته ومعقوليته سبخ ذاته تعالى وطور خلقته، العلم والحياة والوجود بمشيئته وخلقته الحقائق الظلمنائية وتحقيقها وبقائها وكيفية عدم محدودية ذاته مطلقاً ومباعدة ذاته مع مخلوقاته بالمباهنة الصفنتية ، بل لا بد من عرفن ذلك كله به تعالى لا بغيره ، فهو المعرف بذاته ذاته ، ولكلماته ولأفعاله في درجات لا نهاية لها. ٨

٢٨. فالباب الخامس عشر من أبواب الهدى : **الذكـر بالـمـعـرـفـة الفـطـرـيـة** فنقول : من العـلـمـ الـجـدـيـدـ الإـلـهـيـ الذـكـرـ بـالـمـعـرـفـةـ الفـطـرـيـةـ (في قـبـالـ الـحـاـصـلـةـ بـالـبـرـاهـيـنـ الـحـكـمـيـةـ الـقـدـيمـةـ) فإـنـاـ قـالـعـةـ لـمـادـةـ كـلـ شـبـهـةـ ، وبـهـ صـدـقـ اللـهـ وـعـدـهـ فـيـ شـهـادـتـهـ ، فإـنـ الـمـطـلـوبـ لـكـلـ أـحـدـ مـعـرـفـةـ صـانـعـهـ ، فإـنـ الصـانـعـ مـحـبـوـبـ الـكـلـ بـالـجـبـلـةـ ، وـعـدـةـ الـخـلـافـ بـيـنـ أـهـلـ الـعـالـمـ فـيـ أـنـهـ مـنـ هـوـ ؟ فـجـمـلـةـ مـنـهـمـ أـنـكـرـوـاـ رـبـ الـعـزـةـ فـتوـهـمـوـاـ أـنـ الـدـهـرـ وـالـطـبـيـعـةـ وـالـمـادـةـ هـيـ صـانـعـ الـأـشـيـاءـ ، وـأـقـرـ جـمـلـةـ مـنـهـمـ بـصـانـعـ حـكـيـمـ عـلـيـمـ وـلـكـتـهـمـ اـخـتـلـفـوـاـ فـيـ مـعـرـفـتـهـ تـعـالـيـ فـتـوـهـمـتـ حـكـمـاءـ الـيـونـانـ إـمـكـانـ مـعـرـفـتـهـ بـوـجـهـ فـتـصـوـرـوـهـ بـوـجـهـ وـأـثـبـتوـاـ لـهـ كـمـالـاتـ بـعـقـولـهـ ، وـتـوـهـمـتـ شـيـعـةـ أـكـسـيـوـفـانـ إـمـكـانـ مـعـرـفـتـهـ بـالـفـنـاءـ فـيـ وـاـخـتـلـفـوـاـ فـيـ بـيـنـهـمـ فـيـ كـمـالـاتـهـ وـعـلـمـهـ وـقـدـرـتـهـ وـمـشـيـئـتـهـ وـإـرـادـتـهـ ، فـجـاءـ رـسـوـلـ اللـهـ صـلـىـ اللـهـ عـلـيـهـ وـآـلـهـ وـأـنـزـلـ إـلـيـهـ الـقـرـآنـ ، وـذـكـرـ بـالـمـعـرـفـةـ الـفـطـرـيـةـ فـصـارـ أـسـاسـ الـدـيـنـ عـلـىـ تـلـكـ الـمـعـرـفـةـ ، قـالـ اللـهـ عـزـ وـجـلـ : « فـاقـمـ وـجـهـكـ لـلـذـيـ حـنـيـفـاـ فـطـرـتـ اللـهـ الـتـيـ قـطـرـ الـنـاسـ عـلـيـهـاـ لـأـ تـبـدـيـلـ لـخـلـقـ اللـهـ ذـلـكـ الـدـيـنـ الـقـيـمـ » . فـبـشـرـ صـلـىـ اللـهـ عـلـيـهـ وـآـلـهـ وـأـنـزـلـ إـلـيـهـ الـقـرـآنـ ، وـلـهـ السـرـ يـذـكـرـ يـوـلـدـ عـلـىـ الـفـطـرـةـ إـلـاـ أـنـ الـآـبـاءـ وـالـأـمـهـاتـ بـالـتـعـلـيمـاتـ يـحـبـوـنـ الـأـوـلـادـ عـنـ الـذـيـ يـعـرـفـوـنـ بـالـفـطـرـةـ ، وـلـهـ السـرـ يـذـكـرـ الـقـرـآنـ بـرـبـ الـعـزـةـ عـنـ الـبـأـسـاءـ وـالـضـرـاءـ ، فـإـنـ نـزـلـ عـلـيـهـ الـبـأـسـاءـ وـالـضـرـاءـ يـجـدـ أـنـ قـلـبـهـ يـعـرـفـ رـبـهـ فـلـاـ يـنـكـرـهـ ، بـلـ يـجـأـرـ إـلـيـهـ فـذـكـرـ اللـهـ رـبـ الـعـزـةـ . ٤١-٤٢ p.

٢٩. فمن أعظم أبواب الهدى في باب معرفة رب العزة وقربه معرفة هذا الباب فإنه يجد ربّه قريباً مجيماً بلا تكلف تعلم أو تجريد ورياضة ٤٢ p.

٣٠. فمن عرف العقل وأحكامه وظهرت له المعرفة الفطرية لا يضلّ عنه معرفة العلم الإلهي بل يعرف أعظم الآيات وأكبرها رب العزة فلا يتوهم العلم الذي هو عين الفهم والشعور والحياة أنه هو رب العزة تعالى شأنه لما عرف ربّه بالفطرة وأنس به وعرفه في كمالاته تعالى شأنه ، فبربه يعرف أن العلم آية من آياته فكانت معرفة رب العزة متقدماً على معرفة العلم (لأنه وجد ربّه على حين غفلة وانقطاع عمّا سواه تعالى مطلقاً ، وهذا سرّ الأخذ بالضراء والبأساء والإنجذار إليه تعالى خالصاً مخلصاً) وهذا من عجائب المعارف الإلهية ؛ فإن الدين قد أسس على هذه المعرفة الإلهية كيلا يضللوا عند وجdan العلم والحياة. ٤٢-٤٣ p.

٣١. فمن أراد المعرفة من طريق القرآن فعليه أن يسلك المسلوك الجديد الذي جاء به الرسول ونزل به القرآن المجيد، ويعرف الحجاب عن الفطرة كي يظهر له المعرفة ولا يشتبه عليه الأمر، ولا يتوهّم أنّ حقيقة الوجود هي رب العزة كما توهّم اليونانيون والأكسيفانيون. p. 43
٣٢. فهو المعّرف بذاته عن الحقائق الحادثة المتحقّقة به وحدودها وبقائها p. 57
٣٣. عن الخصال مسندًا عن أبي عبدالله عليه السلام قال: ليس على الناس أن يعلموا حتى يكون الله هو المعلم لهم، فإذا علمُهم فعليهم أن يعلموا. p. 19
٣٤. وفيه مسندًا عن الحسن بن زياد قال: سألت أبا عبدالله عليه السلام عن الإيمان هل للعباد فيه صنْع؟ قال: لا، ولا كرامة، بل هو من الله وفضله. pp. 19-20
٣٥. وبهذا يظهر أن تذكّر الأنبياء لذلك يوجب إرادة القلوب أفعال الرب جل جلاله حال الدعوة وفتح الباب إلى شهود مواهبه وطريق عرفانه تعالى p. 21
٣٦. فظهر مما ذكرناه أن وجdan الأنوار بإذن الله تعالى لها درجات، وفقدانها أيضًا لها درجات يعبر عنها في القرآن بالطبع، والختم، والرين، والغشاوة، والعمى والضلالة، عدلاً منه تعالى وقسطاً، وذلك لإدبار الناس عن أحكام عقولهم التي هي الحجج الباطنية لهم وعليهم وصيروفتهم كالأنعام بل أضل سبيلاً. P.21
٣٧. ن: بأن العلم والإيمان بيد الله يعطى عباده وياخذ ويزيد وينقص على اختلاف طلبهم ونياتهم واعمالهم يوجب إرادة القلوب أفعال الرب تعالى في الأخذ والإعطاء و يجب فتح الباب إلى شهود مواهبه تعالى وطريق عرفانه بأنه هو المعّرف لنفسه إلى عباده في درجات مختلفة. p. 21
٣٨. وأما العلم فهو في العلوم الإلهية عبارة عن النور الظاهر بذاته عند كل من يعلم ويجده شيئاً من الأشياء وإن كان جاهلاً بحقيقة ذلك الشيء ... وأما في العلوم البشرية فهو عبارة عن الصورة الحاصلة لشيء لدى النفس أو حضورها لديه. ولهذا ينقسم إلى الحصولي والحضوري. p. 6

3. Miṣbāḥ al-Hudā:

١. وأما سرّ بسط علم الأصول من فقهائنا رضوان الله عليهم أجمعين فأساسه البلية العظمى التي حدثت في الإسلام بعد ترويج الخلفاء علمائهم الذين كانت علومهم مؤسسة على الأفكار والأبحاث في جميع جهات الدين، واشتادت البلية بعد ترجمة الفلسفة وانتشار العرفان واحتلاط علوم الدين بهما وترويجهما ونشرهما في البلاد، وهذا الذي أوجب غلبة الجهلة على الناس، وأظلم نور علوم الإسلام، وأورث الجهل بالعقل وأحكامه، وانقلاب الفطرة الدينية فضلاً عن العقلانية ومباني الأحكام الإلهية. pp.4-5
٢. فصار علماء العامة باستمدادهم بذلك العلوم مشككين في كل باب، وأوردوا الشبهات والموهومات في كل أمر، كما صرّح بذلك أعظم أركان الدين بعد الأئمة المعصومين صلوات الله عليهم أجمعين الشيخ الكليني في أول الكافي، فأوجب هذه السياسة توهّم الإجمال والاختلاف في الكتاب والسنة وجميع الروايات في جميع الأبواب، ولم يبق أمر عقلي أو فطري أو عقليّ إلا صار نظريّاً، فصعب استنباط الأحكام من الروايات فقام أجلاء الأصحاب وكبار فقهائنا العظام لحفظ الدين ودفع هذا البلاء العظيم، واجتهدوا في مقام دفع الشبهات والتشكيلات والأوهام التي سموها بالبرهان أو بالمحاكفة والعيان. pp.5-6
٣. فوقعوا سلام الله عليهم أجمعين في مشقة عظيمة في قبال تلك السياسة فدونوا علم أصول الأحكام ومبانيها و ما يتوقف عليه، مُجذّبين في دفع شبهات العامة وأوهامهم على حسب علومهم واصطلاحاتهم p.6
٤. ظهر بحمد الله كمال الاحتياج بتعلم أصول الفقه و بدون ذلك يتمتع استنباط الأحكام من الكتاب والسنة، وليس جمعها و تدوينها و تعلّيمها و تعلّمها بدعة، و لا اقتباس من أصول العامة فهل يجوز لذى مسكة أن يُسيء الظنّ في حقّ المشايخ العظام؟ pp.6-7
٥. وقد أوضح علوّ ساحة قدس فقهائنا رضوان الله عليهم عن هذا التوهّم الفاسدشيخ مشائخنا العظام الشیخ الأعظم الأعلم، خاتم الفقهاء والمجتهدين، [و أكمل الربّانيين من العلماء الراسخين، المنتهي إليه رئاسة الإمامية في العلم والعمل والزهد والورع، فخر الشيعة و ذخر الشريعة الحاج شيخ المرتضى الأنباري قدس الله روحه الشريفة، الذي عكف على كتبه و مصنّفاته و تحقيقاته كلّ من نشأ (من بعده من العلماء الأعلام) والفقهاء الكرام والمشايخ العظام رضوان الله تعالى عليهم أجمعين] ، فعلينا الاقتداء بحضرته في تفصيل ما أجمله. p.8
٦. مع أنّ الفقاہة ذات درجات إلى أن انتهى الرياسة إلى شيخ المشايخ العظام الشیخ الأعظم الأنباري قدس الله سره فلخصه و هذبّه فجزاه الله تعالى عن الإسلام والمسلمين خير الجزاء. p.6
٧. شیخ الطائفۃ المحقّة (و رافع أعلام الشريعة الحقّة)، رئيس الفرقۃ بعد الأئمة صلوات الله عليهم، وعماد الشیعۃ أبو جعفر الطوسي؛ و رأس رؤساء الملة، فخر الشیعۃ ومحبی الشريعة ، الملهم بالحقّ و منار الدين و سبیلہ الشیخ المفید محمد بن محمد بن النعمان؛ و سید علماء الامة و محبی آثار الأئمة سیدنا الأجل ذوالمجدین علم المهدی و شمس الوری السید المرتضی؛ والشیخ الأجل الأعظم شیخ الفقهاء بغير جاحد ، وواحد هذه الفرقۃ وأی واحد أبوالقاسم نجم الدين جعفر بن الحسن المحقق ؛ وآیة الله العظمی حامی بیضة الدین و ماحی آثار المفسدین، رئيس علماء الشیعۃ العلامۃ الحلی؛ والشیخ الأجل الأفق، رئيس المذهب والملة، و رأس المحققین الجلۃ شیخ الطائفۃ بغير منکر ، و فرید دھرہ و ای مفرد الشهید الأول؛ والشیخ الأعظم، مرrocج المذهب والملة، و شیخ الأجلة و شیخ الطائفۃ

في زمانه، و عالمة عصره وأواطنه، العالم الرباني، نور الدين المحقق الثاني على ابن عبدالعالى العاملى؛ والشيخ الأجل الأجل، زين الملة والدين، و فخر الفقهاء الكاملين، و عماد الإسلام والمسلمين، شيخنا الشهيد الثاني رضوان الله تعالى و سلامه عليهم أجمعين، و غيرهم من الفقهاء العظام (و علمائنا الكرام، ممَّن لا يمكن عدّ مناقبهم إلَّا في مجلَّات، رضوان الله تعالى عليهم و شُكْرُ الله مساعيهم الجميلة).^{p.7}

٨. أمَّا بعد: فمن أظهر الأمور لمن اقتبس العلوم من ساحة قدس الأصحاب و فقهائنا العظام سلام الله عليهم أجمعين، (الذين هم الحملة لعلوم الشريعة و ما جاء به الرسول الأكرم و ما أنزله الله تعالى في القرآن المجيد، و هم المقتبسون من أنوار الأنئمة صلوات الله عليهم أجمعين) ، أنَّ العلوم والمعارف الإلهية التي جاء بها الرسول صلى الله عليه و آله هادمة لأساس العلوم القديمة البشرية، رافعة للمطالب الفكرية و للأبحاث الخلاقية، و أنَّ الأساس هو سوق أهل العالم إلى عالم النور بتكامل العقول و تأييدها بنور العلم الإلهي، و لهذه الجهة لا يكون علم الأحكام و أصوله و دعائمه إلَّا مؤسِّساً على العقل الذي هو حجَّه الله تعالى، و على الأمور الفطرية التي فطر الناس عليها، والظاهرة لكل عاقل بنور عقله، وانعقد الإسلام على الجري على طبقها بالتحديد والتقييد والإمساء والردع . فيكون طور وضع الشريعة في البشر طوراً جديداً و نحواً حديثاً، فإنَّها تعليمات عامة لجميع الفقهاء والعوام من الأحكام العقلائية والفرائض والواجبات والمحرمات و شرائع الدين جمعاً و جملأ، ثم الإفتاء في مقام تحديد حدودها و تعين موضوعاتها و متعلقاتها للفقهاء والعوام أيضاً كما نصَّ عليه آية الله العظمى العلامة الحلي رحمة الله في أول تذكرة الفقهاء حيث قال رحمة الله: «أمَّا بعد: فإنَّ الفقهاء عليهم السلام هم عمدة الدين و نقلة شرع رسول رب العالمين، و حفظة فتاوى الأنئمة المهدىين صلوات الله وسلامه عليهم أجمعين الخ» و حيث إنَّ نوع ذلك كان لعامة العوام لم يكن إلَّا مؤسِّساً على الأمور الفطرية التي يجرون عليها في أموراتهم العقلائية بالجلبة التي فطرهم الله عليها لحفظ نظام التكوين، والأئمة صلوات الله عليهم لم يذكروا إلَّا بها، و عند السؤال عنهم لم يعلَّموا إلَّا إياها بلا احتياج إلى فكر و بحث.^{p.1-2}

٩. و ظاهر لكل عاقل أنَّ فهم المرادات و رفع الاختلاف عنها في كل باب متوقف على معرفة العقل و أحكامه، و معرفة الفطريات العقلائية التي جرت الشريعة على إمضائتها و تحديدها و تقديرها و ردعها كي يفهم المقصود و يرتفع الخلاف في نظره في جميع الأبواب، فلا بدَّ من الرجوع إلى الروايات الواردة في العقل و أحكامه، والواردة في الردع عن القياس واليقين الحاصل منه، و حجَّةَ العلم و إمساء حجَّةَ اليقين الذي هو طريق عقلي، و إخبار الثقات، (والكلام على ما هو الظاهر به) ، و قاعدة الفراغ والتجاوز والروايات (الواردة لرفع الاختلاف) بين الأخبار، والوظائف المقررة عند الجهل بالأحكام و موضوعاتها، و ليس الأصول عند المحدثين والقدماء و أصحاب الأئمة إلَّا مؤسِّساً عليها، فلا بدَّ من فهم ذلك والتذكير بها و ضبطها، فهل يمكن الفقاہة بدون ذلك؟! فهذا أساس الأصول، بل الدين لا يقوم (في عصر العيبة) إلَّا بذلك.^{p.4}

4. The primary sources of narrated texts:

١. يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ بِمَشِيَّتِي كُنْتَ أَنْتَ الْأَدِي تَشَاءُ لِنَفْسِكَ مَا تَشَاءُ.
٢. قَالَ أَبُو الْحَسَنِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ الْعَرْشُ لَيْسَ هُوَ اللَّهُ وَ الْعَرْشُ إِسْمُ عِلْمٍ وَ قُدْرَةٍ وَ عَرْشٌ فِيهِ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ.
٣. حَدَّثَنَا أَبِي رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا عَلَيُّ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ عَنْ أَبِيهِ عَنْ ابْنِ أَبِي عُمَيْرٍ عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ سَيَّانٍ عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ :فِي قَوْلِ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمَاءُوَاتِ وَ الْأَرْضَ(البقرة ٥٥) قَالَ السَّمَاءُوَاتِ وَ الْأَرْضُ وَ مَا بَيْنَهُمَا فِي الْكُرْسِيِّ وَ الْعَرْشُ هُوَ الْعِلْمُ الَّذِي لَا يَقْدِرُ أَحَدٌ قُدْرَةً.
٤. ثُمَّ الْعَرْشُ فِي الْوَصْلِ مُفْرَدٌ مِنَ الْكُرْسِيِّ لِأَنَّهُمَا بَابًا مِنْ أَكْبَرِ أَبْوَابِ الْغُيُوبِ وَ هُمَا جَمِيعًا غَيْبَانٌ وَ هُمَا فِي الْغَيْبِ مَفْرُوَنَانِ لِأَنَّ الْكُرْسِيِّ هُوَ الْبَابُ الظَّاهِرُ مِنَ الْغَيْبِ الَّذِي مِنْهُ مَطْلُعُ الْبَدْعِ وَ مِنْهُ الْأَشْيَاءُ كُلُّها وَ الْعَرْشُ هُوَ الْبَابُ الْبَاطِنُ الَّذِي يُوجَدُ فِيهِ عِلْمُ الْكَيْفِ وَ الْكَوْنِ وَ الْقُدْرَ وَ الْحَدَّ وَ الْأَيْنِ وَ الْمَشِيَّةَ وَ صِفَةَ الْإِرَادَةِ وَ عِلْمُ الْأَلْفَاظِ وَ الْحَرَكَاتِ وَ الْتَّرْكِ وَ عِلْمُ الْعَوْدِ وَ الْبَدَاءِ فَهُمَا فِي الْعِلْمِ بَابًا مَفْرُوَنَانِ لِأَنَّ مُلْكَ الْعَرْشِ سَوَى مُلْكِ الْكُرْسِيِّ وَ عِلْمُهُ أَغْيَبُ مِنْ عِلْمِ الْكُرْسِيِّ فَمِنْ ذَلِكَ قَالَ :رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ(المؤمنون ٨٦) أَيْ صِفَتُهُ أَعْظَمُ مِنْ صِفَةِ الْكُرْسِيِّ وَ هُمَا فِي ذَلِكَ مَفْرُوَنَانِ فُلُثْ جُلُثْ فِذَاكَ فَلِمَ صَارَ فِي الْفَضْلِ جَازَ الْكُرْسِيِّ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ إِنَّهُ صَارَ جَازَهُ لِأَنَّ عِلْمَ الْكَيْفَوْفِيَّةِ فِيهِ وَ فِيهِ الظَّاهِرُ مِنْ أَبْوَابِ الْبَدَاءِ وَ أَيْنَتِهَا وَ حَدَّ رَتْقَهَا وَ فَنَقَهَا فَهَذَا جَازَهُمَا حَمَلَ صَاحِبَهُ فِي الظَّرْفِ وَ بِمِثْلِ صَرْفِ الْعَلَمَاءِ وَ لَيْسُنْدُلُوا عَلَى صِدْقِ دَعْوَاهُمَا لِأَنَّهُ يَخْتَصُ بِرَحْمَتِهِ مِنْ يَشَاءُ(آل عمران ٧٤) وَ هُوَ الْقَوْيُ الْعَزِيزُ(الشورى ١٩) فَمِنْ اخْتِلَافِ صِفَاتِ الْعَرْشِ أَنَّهُ قَالَ تَبَارَكَ وَ تَعَالَى :رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ(الأنبياء ٢٢) رَبُّ الْوَحْدَانَيَّةِ عَمَّا يَصْفُونَ(الأنبياء ٢٢) وَ قَوْمٌ وَصَفْوَةٌ بَيْنَيْنِ فَقَالُوا يَدُ اللَّهِ مَعْلُوَةٌ(المائدah ٦٤) وَ قَوْمٌ وَصَفْوَةٌ بِالرِّجْلَيْنِ فَقَالُوا وَضَعَ رَجُلَهُ عَلَى صَحْرَةِ بَيْتِ الْمَقْدِسِ فَمِنْهَا أَرْتَقَى إِلَى السَّمَاءِ وَ وَصَفْوَهُ بِالْأَنَاءِ مِنْ فَقَالُوا إِنَّ مُحَمَّدًا صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَ آلِهِ قَالَ إِنِّي وَجَدْتُ بَرْدَ أَنَاءِلِهِ عَلَى قَلْبِي فَلِمِثْلِ هَذِهِ الصِّفَاتِ قَالَ :رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ عَمَّا يَصْفُونَ(الأنبياء ٢٢) يَقُولُ رَبِّ الْمِثْلِ الْأَعْلَى عَمَّا بِهِ مَثُلُوهُ وَ بِهِ الْمِثْلُ الْأَعْلَى الَّذِي لَا يُنْسِبُهُ شَيْءٌ وَ لَا يُوْصَفُ وَ لَا يُتَوَهَّمُ فَذَلِكَ الْمِثْلُ الْأَعْلَى وَ وَصَفَ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُؤْنَوا مِنَ اللَّهِ فَوَائِدُ الْعِلْمِ فَوَصَفُوا رَبَّهُمْ بِأَدْنَى الْمِثَالِ وَ شَبَهُوهُ بِالْمُنْتَشِّبِهِ مِنْهُمْ فِيمَا جَعَلُوا بِهِ فَذَلِكَ قَالَ :وَ مَا أُوتِيْتُمْ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا(الإسراء ٨٥) فَلَيْسَ لَهُ شَيْءٌ وَ لَا مِثْلٌ وَ لَا عَدُلٌ.
٥. وَ الَّذِينَ يَحْمِلُونَ الْعَرْشَ هُمُ الْعُلَمَاءُ الَّذِينَ حَلَّلُمُ اللَّهُ عِلْمُهُ وَ لَيْسَ يَحْرُجُ مِنْ هَذِهِ الْأَرْبَعَةِ شَيْءٌ خَلَقَ اللَّهُ فِي مَلْكُوَتِهِ وَ هُوَ الْمَلْكُوْثُ الَّذِي أَرَاهُ اللَّهُ أَصْفِيَاءَهُ وَ أَرَاهُ خَلِيلَهُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ فَقَالَ :وَ كَذَلِكَ تُرِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ مَلْكُوتَ السَّمَاءُوَاتِ وَ الْأَرْضِ وَ لِيَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُؤْفِقِينَ(الأنعام ٧٥).
٦. رَوْضَةُ الْوَاعِظِينَ، رَوَى جَعْفُرُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ عَنْ أَبِيهِ عَنْ جَدِّهِ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ أَنَّهُ قَالَ :فِي الْعَرْشِ تَمَثَّلُ مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ مِنَ الْبَرِّ وَ الْبَحْرِ قَالَ وَ هَذَا تَأْوِيلُ قَوْلِهِ :وَ إِنْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا عَنْدَنَا خَرَائِثُهُ(الحجر ٢١).
٧. فِي بَعْضِ الْكُتُبِ عَنْ عَلَيِّ بْنِ الْحُسَيْنِ عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلَامُ :إِنَّ فِي الْعَرْشِ تَمَثَّلَ جَمِيعُ مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ.
٨. قَالَ لِي يَا مُحَمَّدُ هَذَا الْحَرْمَ وَ أَنْتَ الْحَرْمَ وَ إِلَكُلٌ مِثْلٌ مِثَالٌ.
٩. أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَ جَلَ أَمْرَ الْقَلْمَنْ جَرَى عَلَى الْلَّوْحِ الْمَحْفُوظِ بِمَا هُوَ كَائِنٌ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ قَبْلَ خَلْقِ آدَمَ بِالْفَيْنِ عَامٍ وَ أَنَّ كُلُّهُ اللَّهُ كُلُّهُ فِيمَا جَرَى فِيهِ الْقَلْمَنْ فِي كُلِّهَا تَحْرِيمُ الْأَخْوَاتِ عَلَى الْإِخْوَةِ مَعَ مَا حُرِّمَ وَ هَذَا تَحْرِيمٌ قَدْ نَزَى مِنْهَا هَذِهِ

الكتب الأربع المشهورة في هذا العالم للتوراة والإنجيل والزبور والفرقان أنزلها الله عن اللوح المحفوظ على رسله صلوات الله عليهم أجمعين.

١٠. قال: فلما رأى الله القلم فجرى بما هو كائن وما يكون فهو بين يديه موضوع ما شاء منه زاد فيه وما شاء نقص منه، وما شاء كان وما لا يشاء لا يكون.

١١. ومنه، عن أحمد بن الحسنقطان عن عبد الرحمن بن محمد الحسني عن أحمد بن عيسى بن أبي مريم عن محمد بن أحمد العزري عن علي بن حاتم المنقري عن إبراهيم الكريبي قال: سألت جعفر بن محمد عليه السلام عن اللوح والقلم فقال هما مكان.

١٢. كنز [كنز جامع الفوائد] وتأويل الآيات الظاهرة روى الحسن بن أبي الحسن الدليمي عن رجاله بإسناده يرافقه إلى محمد بن الفضيل عن أبي الحسن موسى عليه السلام قال: سأله عن قوله تعالى: بن والقلم وما يسطرون (القلم) قال: «ن» لسم لرسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله و«القلم» لسم لأمير المؤمنين عليه السلام.

١٣. [الإحتجاج] و قال عليه السلام في خطبة أخرى: ذليله آياته و وجوده إثباته.

١٤. ... يعني أعمى عن الحقائق الموجدة...

١٥. وبهذا الإسناد عن محمد بن سنان قال: سأله عن الاسم ما هو قال صفة لم صوف.

١٦. فمن عبد الاسم دون المعنى فقد كفر ولم يعبد شيئاً ومن عبد الاسم والمعنى فقد أشرك وعبد الآثرين ومن عبد المعنى دون الاسم فذلك التوحيد.

١٧. وروى أبو حذيفة عن أبي عبد الله عليه السلام قال: إذا قام القائم عليه السلام جاء بأمر جديد كما دعا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله في بذو الإسلام إلى أمر جديد.

١٨. أن يحيى بن خالد البرمكي سأله هشام بن الحكم بمحضر من الرشيد فقال: أحيزني يا هشام، هل يكون الحق في جهتين مختلفتين؟ قال هشام: الظاهر لا. قال: فالحيزني عن رجلين اختلفا في حكم في الدين، وتنازعوا وخالفوا، هل يخلو من أن يكونا محقين، أو مبطلين، أو أن يكون أحدهما محقاً والأخر مبطلاً؟ فقال هشام: لا يخلو من ذلك. قال له يحيى بن خالد: فالحيزني عن علي و العباس لما اختلفا إلى أبي بكر في الميراث، أيهما كان المحق و من المبطل؟ إذ كنت لا تقول أنهما كانا محقين ولا مطلعين!. قال هشام: فنظرت فإذا إبني إن قلت إن علياً عليه السلام كان مبطلاً كفرت و حررت من مدحبي، وإن قلت إن العباس كان مبطلاً ضرب الرشيد عني، ووردت على مسألة لم أكن سألاً عنها قبل ذلك الوقت، و لا أعددت لها جواباً، فذكرت قول أبي عبد الله عليه السلام: يا هشام، لا تزال مoidداً بروح القدس ما نصرنا بساندك، فعلمته أني لا أخذل، و عن لي الجواب في الحال. فقلت له: لم يكن لأحدهما حطاً حقيقة، و كانوا جميعاً محقين، و لهذا نظير قد نطق به القرآن (سورة ص) في قصة داود عليه السلام، يقول الله عز وجل: وهل أذاك نبأ الحصم إذ شرروا المحراب (٢١) إذ دخلوا على داود ففرع منهم قالوا لا تخف حصمك بعى بعضنا على بعض فاحكم بيننا بالحق ولا تسلط واهدىنا إلى سواء الصراط (٢٢) إن هذا أخي له تسعة وتسعمون نعجةولي نعجة واحدة فقال أكتلنيها وعزمي في الخطاب (٢٣) قال لقد ظلمك سؤال نعجتك إلى نعاجه وإن كثيراً من الخلطاء ليغري بعضهم على بعض إلا الذين آمنوا وعملوا الصالحات وقليل ما هم وظن داود أنما فتناه فاسْتَعْفِرَ رَبَّهُ وَحْرَ رَاكِعاً وَأَنَابَ (٢٤). فأي الملائكة كان مخططاً وأيهما كان مصيباً؟ أم تقول: إيهما كان

مُخْطَلِينَ، فَجَوَابُكَ فِي ذَلِكَ جَوَابِي. قَالَ يَحْيَىٰ: لَسْتُ أَقُولُ: إِنَّ الْمَلَكِينَ أَحْطَنَا، بَلْ أَقُولُ: إِنَّهُمَا أَصَابَا، وَ ذَلِكَ أَنَّهُمَا لَمْ يَحْتَصِمَا فِي الْحَقِيقَةِ وَ لَمْ يَخْتَلِفَا فِي الْحُكْمِ، وَ إِنَّمَا أَظْهَرَا ذَلِكَ لِيُبَيِّنَا ذَأْوِدَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ فِي الْحَطَبَيَّةِ وَ بُعْرَفَاهُ الْحُكْمُ وَ بُعْرَفَاهُ عَلَيْهِ. قَالَ هِشَامٌ: قُلْ لَهُ: كَذَلِكَ عَلَيِّ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ وَ الْعَبَاسُ، لَمْ يَخْتَلِفَا فِي الْحُكْمِ وَ لَمْ يَحْتَصِمَا فِي الْحَقِيقَةِ، وَ إِنَّمَا أَظْهَرَا الْإِخْتِلَافَ وَ الْخُصُومَةَ لِيُبَيِّنَا أَبَا بَكْرٍ عَلَى حَطَبَيَّهِ، وَ يَدْلِلَهُ عَلَى أَنَّ لَهُمَا فِي الْمِيرَاثِ حَقًا، وَ لَمْ يَكُونَا فِي رِبِّيْبٍ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمَا، وَ إِنَّمَا كَانَ ذَلِكَ مِنْهُمَا عَلَى حَقٍّ مَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمَلَكِينَ. فَاسْتَحسَنَ الرَّشِيدُ ذَلِكَ الْجَوابَ.

١٩. فَتَبَأَ وَ حَبَّيْهُ وَ تَعْسَا لِمُنْتَحِلِي الْفَلْسَفَةِ كَيْفَ عَيَّثَ قُلُوبُهُمْ عَنْ هَذِهِ الْخُلْفَةِ الْعَجِيْبَةِ حَتَّى أَنْكَرُوا التَّدَبِيرَ وَ الْعَمَدَ فِيهَا.
٢٠. يَا أَبَا هَاشِمٍ سَيِّدِي رَمَانٍ عَلَى النَّاسِ وُجُوهُهُمْ ضَاحِكَةٌ مُسْتَبْشِرَةٌ وَ قُلُوبُهُمْ مُظْلَمَةٌ مُتَكَبِّرَةٌ السُّنَّةُ فِيهِمْ بِدْعَةٌ وَ الْبِدْعَةُ فِيهِمْ سُنَّةُ الْمُؤْمِنِ بَيْنَهُمْ مُحَقَّرٌ وَ الْفَلْسِقُ بَيْنَهُمْ مُوْقَرٌ أَمْرَاؤُهُمْ جَاهِلُونَ جَاهِلُونَ وَ عَلَمَاؤُهُمْ فِي أَبْوَابِ الظَّلَمَةِ [سَائِرُونَ] أَغْيَيْنَاهُمْ يَسِّرُّوْنَ رَادِ الْفَقَرَاءِ وَ أَصَاغِرُهُمْ يَتَقدَّمُونَ عَلَى الْكُبَرَاءِ وَ كُلُّ جَاهِلٍ عِنْهُمْ حَبِيرٌ وَ كُلُّ مُحِيلٍ عِنْهُمْ فَقِيرٌ لَا يُمِيزُونَ بَيْنَ الْمُخْلِصِ وَ الْمُرْتَابِ لَا يَعْرِفُونَ الْضَّانَ مِنَ الْدِنَابِ عَلَمَاؤُهُمْ شِرَارٌ خَلْقُ اللهِ عَلَى وَجْهِ الْأَرْضِ لَا يَأْتُهُمْ يَمِيلُونَ إِلَى الْفَلْسَفَةِ وَ التَّصَوُّفِ وَ أَيْمَ اللهِ إِنَّهُمْ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْعُدُولِ وَ الْتَّحْرُفِ يُبَالِغُونَ فِي حُبِّ مُحَالِفِيْنَا وَ يُضْلُلُونَ شَيْعَتَنَا وَ مُوْلَيْنَا إِنْ تَأْلُوا مَنْصِبَا لَمْ يَشْبُعُوا عَنِ الرِّشَاءِ وَ إِنْ خَذَلُوا عَبْدَوْ اللهِ عَلَى الرِّيَاءِ أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ قَطَّاعُ طَرِيقِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَ الدُّعَاءَ إِلَى نَحْلَةِ الْمُلْحِدِينَ فَمَنْ أَدْرَكَهُمْ فَلَيُخَذِّرُهُمْ وَ لَيُبَصِّرُنَّ دِيَّهُ وَ إِيمَانَهُ.
٢١. مَنْ ذَكَرَ عِنْهُ الصُّوفِيَّةَ وَ لَمْ يُنْكِرْهُمْ بِلِسَانِهِ وَ قَلْبِهِ فَلَيْسَ مِنَّا وَ مَنْ أَنْكَرَهُمْ فَكَانَمَا جَاهَدَ الْكُفَّارَ بَيْنَ يَدَيِّ رَسُولِ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَ آلِهِ.
٢٢. إِنَّهُمْ أَعْدَاؤُنَا فَمَنْ مَالَ فِيهِمْ فَهُوَ مِنْهُمْ وَ يُحْسِرُ مَعَهُمْ وَ سَيِّكُونُ أَفْوَاقَمْ يَدَعُونَ حُبَّنَا وَ يَمِيلُونَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَ يَتَشَبَّهُونَ بِهِمْ وَ يَلْقَيُونَ أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَ يُلْأَوْنَ أَفْوَالَهُمْ أَلَا فَمَنْ مَالَ إِلَيْهِمْ فَلَيْسَ مِنَّا وَ إِنَّا مِنْهُمْ بِرَاءٌ.
٢٣. مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ يَحْنَى عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ بْنِ عِيسَى عَنْ ابْنِ أَبِي نَجْرَانَ عَنْ عَبْدِ اللهِ بْنِ سَنَانٍ عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ : فِي قَوْلِهِ «لَا تُنْدِرُكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ» قَالَ إِحْاطَةُ الْوَهْمِ أَلَا تَرَى إِلَى قَوْلِهِ : «فَقُدْ جَاءُكُمْ بَصَائِرُ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ» لَيْسَ يَعْنِي بَصَارَ الْعَيْوَنِ : «فَمَنْ أَبْصَرَ فَلِنْفَسِهِ» لَيْسَ يَعْنِي مِنَ الْبَصَرِ بِعِيْنِهِ : «وَ مَنْ عَمِيَ فَعَلِيْهَا» لَيْسَ يَعْنِي عَمَى الْعَيْوَنِ إِنَّمَا عَنَّى إِحْاطَةُ الْوَهْمِ كَمَا يَقَالُ فَلَانُ بَصِيرٌ بِالشَّيْخِ وَ فَلَانُ بَصِيرٌ بِالْفَقِهِ وَ فَلَانُ بَصِيرٌ بِالدَّرَاهِمِ وَ فَلَانُ بَصِيرٌ بِالثَّيَابِ اللهُ أَعْظَمُ مِنْ أَنْ يُرَى بِالْعَيْنِ .
٢٤. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ فِي حُطْبَةِ أَخْرَى: بَلِيلُهُ أَيَّالُهُ وَ وُجُودُهُ إِبْنَائُهُ وَ مَعْرُفَهُ تَوْجِيدُهُ وَ تَوْجِيدُهُ تَمْيِيزُهُ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ وَ حُكْمِ الْتَّمْيِيزِ بَيْنَوْنَهُ صِفَةٌ لَا بَيْنَوْنَهُ عُزْلَةٌ إِنَّهُ رَبُّ حَالَقٍ عَيْرُ مَرْبُوبٍ مَحْلُوقٍ مَا تُصُورَ فَهُوَ بِخَلْفِهِ ثُمَّ قَالَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ لَيْسَ بِإِلَهٍ مِنْ عَرْفَتَ بِنَفْسِهِ هُوَ الدَّالُ بِالْدَلِيلِ عَلَيْهِ وَ الْمَوْدِي بِالْمَعْرَفَةِ إِلَيْهِ.
٢٥. التَّوْجِيدُ أَلَا تَتَوَهَّمُهُ.
٢٦. مَنْ عَبَدَ اللهَ بِالْتَّوْهُمْ فَقَدْ كَفَرَ وَ مَنْ عَبَدَ الْأَسْمَاءِ دُونَ الْمَعْنَى فَقَدْ كَفَرَ وَ مَنْ عَبَدَ الْأَسْمَاءِ وَ الْمَعْنَى فَقَدْ أَشْرَكَ.
٢٧. احْتَجَبَ عَنِ الْعُقُولِ كَمَا احْتَجَبَ عَنِ الْأَبْصَارِ.

٢٨. [عيون أخبار الرضا عليه السلام] جعفر بن علي بن احمد القمي ع عن حسن بن محمد بن علي بن صدقة ع عن محمد بن عمر بن عبد العزيز ع من سمع الحسن بن محمد التوفي يقول: قال الرضا عليه السلام لسلیمان المروزي ما انكرت من البداء يا سليمان و الله عز وجل يقول: أ ولا يذكر الإنسان ألا خلقناه من قبل و لم يك شيئاً (مریم ٦٣)

- وَيَقُولُ عَزْ وَجَلْ: وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَبْدُوا الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدهُ (انعام٢٧) وَيَقُولُ بَدِيعُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ (بقرة١١٧) وَ
يَقُولُ عَزْ وَجَلْ: يَبْرِيدُ فِي الْخَلْقِ مَا يَشَاءُ (فاطر١).
٢٩. ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتِ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ لِيُذِيقُهُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي عَمِلُوا لَعْلَهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ (الروم٤١)
٣٠. بَلَغَنِي أَنَّكَ تَقِيسُ قَالَ نَعَمْ أَنَا أَقْيِسُ فَقَالَ وَيْلَكَ لَا تَقِيسْ فَإِنَّ أَوَّلَ مَنْ قَاسَ إِنْبِيلِينَ قَالَ حَلَقْتِي مِنْ نَارٍ وَ حَلَقْتُهُ مِنْ طِينٍ قَاسِ.
٣١. إِنَّ أَصْحَابَ الْقِيَاسِ طَلَبُوا الْعِلْمَ بِالْقِيَاسِ، فَلَمْ يَزْدَادُوا مِنَ الْحَقِّ إِلَّا بُعْدًا، إِنَّ دِينَ اللَّهِ لَا يُصَابُ بِالْقِيَاسِ.
٣٢. إِنَّ أَصْحَابَ الْمَقَايِيسِ طَلَبُوا الْعِلْمَ بِالْمَقَايِيسِ فَلَمْ يَزْدُدُهُمُ الْمَقَايِيسُ مِنَ الْحَقِّ إِلَّا بُعْدًا وَ إِنَّ دِينَ اللَّهِ لَا يُصَابُ بِالْمَقَايِيسِ
٣٣. مَنْ نَصَبَ نَفْسَهُ لِلْقِيَاسِ، لَمْ يَزَلْ دَهْرَهُ فِي التَّبَاسِ، وَ مَنْ دَانَ اللَّهَ بِالرَّأْيِ، لَمْ يَزَلْ دَهْرَهُ فِي ارْتَمَاسِ.
٣٤. عَوَالِي الْلَّالِي، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَ قَالَ: الشَّرِيعَةُ أَفْوَالِي وَ الطَّرِيقَةُ أَفْوَالِي وَ الْحَقِيقَةُ أَحْوَالِي وَ الْمَعْرِفَةُ رَأْسُ مَالِي وَ الْعَقْلُ أَصْنُلُ دِينِي وَ الْحُبُّ أَسَاسِي وَ الشَّوْقُ مَرْكِبِي وَ الْحَوْفُ رَفِيقِي وَ الْعِلْمُ سَلَاحِي وَ الْجُلْمُ صَاحِبِي وَ التَّوْكِلُ زَادِي وَ الْقَناعَةُ كَذِي وَ الصِّدْقُ مَنْزِلي وَ الْيَقِينُ مَأْوَايَ وَ الْفَقْرُ فَحْرِي وَ بِهِ أَفْتَخِرُ عَلَى سَائِرِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ.
٣٥. أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: بِدِعَامَةِ الْإِنْسَانِ الْعَقْلُ وَ الْعَقْلُ مِنْهُ الْفِطْنَةُ وَ الْفَهْمُ وَ الْحِفْظُ وَ الْعِلْمُ وَ بِالْعَقْلِ يَكْمُلُ وَ هُوَ دَلِيلُهُ وَ مُبْصِرُهُ وَ مِفْتَاحُ أَمْرِهِ فَإِذَا كَانَ تَأْيِيدُ عَقْلِهِ مِنَ الْتُّورِ كَانَ عَالِمًا حَافِظًا دَائِرًا فَعِلْمًا فَعِلْمٌ بِذَلِكَ كَيْفَ وَ لَمْ وَ حَيْثُ وَ عَرَفَ مَنْ نَصَحَهُ وَ مَنْ غَشَهُ فَإِذَا عَرَفَ ذَلِكَ عَرَفَ مَجْرَاهُ وَ مَوْصُولُهُ وَ مَفْصُولُهُ وَ أَخْلَصَ الْوَحْدَانِيَّةَ لِهِ وَ الْإِفْرَارِ بِالطَّاعَةِ فَإِذَا فَعَلَ ذَلِكَ كَانَ مُسْتَدِرًا كَمَا قَاتَ وَ وَارِدًا عَلَى مَا هُوَ آتٍ يَعْرِفُ مَا هُوَ فِيهِ وَ لَأَيِّ شَيْءٍ هُوَ هَاهُنَا وَ مِنْ أَيْنَ يَأْتِيهِ وَ إِلَى مَا هُوَ صَائِرٌ وَ ذَلِكَ كُلُّهُ مِنْ تَأْيِيدِ الْعَقْلِ.
٣٦. هَجَمَ بِهِمُ الْعِلْمُ عَلَى حَقَائِقِ الْأُمُورِ فَبَاشَرُوا رُوحَ الْيَقِينِ وَ إِسْتَلَأُوا مَا إِسْتَوْعَرَهُ الْمُثْرِفُونَ وَ أَسْوَوا بِمَا إِسْتَوْحَشَ مِنْهُ الْجَاهِلُونَ صَجَبُوا الدُّنْيَا بِإِبْدَانٍ أَرْوَاهُمَا مُعْلَقَةً بِالْمَحَلِّ الْأَعْلَى.
٣٧. إِنَّ مِنْ أَحَبِّ عِبَادَ اللَّهِ إِلَيْهِ عِبْدًا أَعَانَهُ اللَّهُ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ فَاسْتَشَرَ الْحُرْنَ وَ تَجَلَّبَ الْحَوْفَ فَرَهَ مَصْبَاحُ الْهُدَى فِي قَلْبِهِ وَ أَعْدَّ الْقَرَى لِيَوْمِهِ الظَّازِلِ بِهِ فَقَرَبَ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ الْبَعِيدَ وَ هَوَنَ الشَّدِيدَ نَظَرَ فَأَبْصَرَ وَ ذَكَرَ فَاسْتَكْثَرَ وَ ازْتَوَى مِنْ عَذَبِ فَرَاتِ سُئَلَتْ لَهُ مَوَارِدُهُ فَشَرَبَ نَهَلًا وَ سَلَكَ سَبِيلًا جَدَدًا فَدَ خَلَعَ سَرَابِلَ الشَّهَوَاتِ وَ تَخَلَّى مِنَ الْهُمُومِ إِلَّا هَمَّا وَاحِدًا إِنْفَرَدَ بِهِ فَخَرَجَ مِنْ صِفَةِ الْعَمَى وَ مُشَارِكَةِ أَهْلِ الْهَوَى.
٣٨. إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى النَّاسِ حُجَّتَيْنِ حُجَّةً ظَاهِرَةً وَ حُجَّةً بَاطِنَةً فَأَمَّا الظَّاهِرَةُ فَالرَّسُولُ وَ الْأَنْبِيَاءُ وَ الْأَئِمَّةُ وَ أَمَّا الْبَاطِنَةُ فَالْعَقْفُونُ.
٣٩. * قَالَ فَإِنَا دَدْ قَنَّا قُوْمَكَ مِنْ بَعْدِكَ وَ أَضْلَلْتُمُ السَّامِرِيَّ (٨٥) فَرَجَعَ مُوسَى إِلَى قَوْمِهِ غَضْبًا قَالَ يَا قَوْمَ أَلَمْ يَعْدُكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ وَ عَدَا حَسَنًا أَفْطَالَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْعَهْدُ أَمْ أَرْدَتُمْ أَنْ يَحْلَ عَلَيْكُمْ غَضَبٌ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ فَأَخْلَقْتُمْ مَوْعِدِي (٨٦) قَالُوا مَا أَخْلَقْنَا مَوْعِدَكَ بِمَلِكِنَا وَلَكِنَّا حُمِلْنَا أُوزَارًا مِنْ زِيَّةِ الْقَوْمِ فَعَذَقْنَاهَا فَكَذَلِكَ الْقَوْمُ السَّامِرِيُّ (٨٧) فَأَخْرَجَ لَهُمْ عَجْلًا جَسَدًا لَهُ حُوازُرْ قَالُوا هَذَا إِلَهُكُمْ وَإِلَهُ مُوسَى فَقَسَى (٨٨) أَفَلَا يَرَوْنَ أَلَا يَرْجِعُ إِلَيْهِمْ قَوْلًا وَ لَا يَمْلِكُ لَهُمْ ضَرًا وَ لَا نَفْعًا (٨٩) وَلَقَدْ قَالَ لَهُمْ هَارُونُ مِنْ قَبْلٍ يَا قَوْمَ إِنَّمَا فَتَنْتُمْ بِهِ وَ إِنَّ رَبَّكُمُ الرَّحْمَنُ فَاتَّبِعُونِي وَ أَطِيعُوا أَمْرِي (٩٠) قَالُوا لَنْ تَبْرَحْ عَلَيْهِ عَاكِفِينَ حَتَّى يَرْجِعَ إِلَيْنَا مُوسَى (٩١).
٤٠. [روضة الوعظتين] قَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَوْمُ الْمَرْءِ عَقْلُهُ وَ لَا دِينَ لِمَنْ لَا عَقْلَ لَهُ.

٤١. الحسين بن محمد عن أَبِي يعقوب البغدادي قال: قَالَ إِنْسَكِيتْ لِأَبِي الْحَسَنِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ لِمَا ذَا بَعَثَ اللَّهُ مُوسَى بْنُ عَمْرَانَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ بِالْعَصَا وَ تِدِهِ الْبَيْضَاءَ وَ اللَّهُ الْبَيْضَاءُ وَ بَعَثَ عِيسَى بْنَ الْأَطْبَى وَ بَعَثَ مُحَمَّداً صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَعَلَى جَمِيعِ الْأَئِمَّةِ بِالْكَلَامِ وَالْخُطْبَ فَقَالَ أَبُو الْحَسَنِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَمَّا بَعَثَ مُوسَى عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامَ كَانَ الْغَالِبُ عَلَى أَهْلِ عَصْرِهِ السَّاحِرُ فَأَتَاهُمْ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ بِمَا لَمْ يَكُنْ فِي وُسْعِهِمْ مِثْلُهُ وَمَا أَبْطَلَ بِهِ سِحْرَهُمْ وَأَتَبْتَ بِهِ الْحُجَّةَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بَعَثَ عِيسَى عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامَ فِي وَقْتٍ قَدْ ظَهَرَتْ فِيهِ الزَّمَانَاتُ وَ احْتَاجَ النَّاسُ إِلَى الْطَّبِيبِ فَأَتَاهُمْ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ بِمَا لَمْ يَكُنْ عِنْدُهُمْ مِثْلُهُ وَمَا أَخْيَا لَهُمُ الْمُؤْتَمِرَ وَأَبْرَأَ الْأَكْمَهَ وَالْأَبْرَصَ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَأَتَبْتَ بِهِ الْحُجَّةَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بَعَثَ مُحَمَّداً صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَعَلَى الْأَئِمَّةِ فَأَتَاهُمْ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ بِمَا أَخْيَا لَهُمُ الْمُؤْتَمِرَ وَأَبْرَأَ الْأَكْمَهَ وَالْأَبْرَصَ الْخُطْبَ وَالْكَلَامَ وَأَطْلَنَهُ فَالشِّعْرُ فَأَتَاهُمْ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ مِنْ مَوَاعِظِهِ وَجَكِيمَهُ مَا أَبْطَلَ بِهِ قَوْلَهُمْ وَأَتَبْتَ بِهِ الْحُجَّةَ عَلَيْهِمْ فَقَالَ إِنْسَكِيتْ تَالَّهُ مَا رَأَيْتُ مِثْلَكَ قَطْ فَمَا الْحُجَّةُ عَلَى الْخُلُقِ الْيَوْمِ فَقَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ الْعَقْلُ يُعْرَفُ بِهِ الْصَّادِقُ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَيُصَدِّقُهُ وَالْكَاذِبُ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَيُكَذِّبُهُ فَقَالَ إِنْسَكِيتْ هَذَا وَاللَّهُ هُوَ الْجَوابُ.
٤٢. إِذَا كَانَ ثَابِيُّ عَقْلِهِ مِنَ النُّورِ كَانَ عَالِمًا حَافِظًا دَائِرًا فَطِنًا فَهِمَا فَعِلْمٌ بِذَلِكَ كَيْفَ وَلِمْ وَ حَيْثُ وَ عَرَفَ مَنْ نَصَّحَهُ وَ مَنْ غَشَهُ.
٤٣. وَقَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ حَلَقَ اللَّهُ الْعَقْلَ مِنْ أَرْبَعَةِ أَشْيَاءِ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ وَالْقُدْرَةِ وَالنُّورِ وَالْمَشِيَّةِ بِالْأَمْرِ فَجَعَلَهُ قَائِمًا بِالْعِلْمِ دَائِمًا فِي الْمَلْكُوتِ.
٤٤. مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ إِسْمَاعِيلَ عَنْ الْحُسَينِ بْنِ الْحُسَينِ عَنْ بَكْرِ بْنِ صَالِحٍ عَنْ الْحُسَينِ بْنِ سَعِيدٍ قَالَ سُلَيْلُ أَبُو جَعْفَرٍ الثَّانِي عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ يَجُوزُ أَنْ يُقَالَ لِلَّهِ شَيْءٌ قَالَ نَعَمْ يُخْرُجُهُ مِنَ الْحَدِّيْنِ حَدَّ التَّعْطِيلِ وَ حَدَّ الْتَّشْبِيهِ.
٤٥. فَبَعَثَ فِيهِمْ رُسُلَهُ وَ وَاتَّرَ إِلَيْهِمْ أَنْبِيَاءً لِيُسْتَأْذِوُهُمْ مِيثَاقَ فَطْرَتِهِ وَ يُذَكِّرُهُمْ مَنْسِيَّ نِعْمَتِهِ وَ يَخْتَجُوا عَلَيْهِمْ بِالْتَّبَلِغِ وَ يُبَثِّرُوْلَهُمْ دَفَائِنَ الْعُقُولِ وَ يُرُوْهُمْ آيَاتِ الْمَقْدِرَةِ مِنْ سَقْفِ فَوْقَهُمْ مَرْفُوعٍ وَ مِهَادِ تَخْتَهُمْ مَوْضُوعٍ وَ مَعَايِشَ ثُحْبِيْهِمْ وَ آجَالِ ثُفْنِيْهِمْ وَ أَوْصَابِ ثُهْرُمُهُمْ وَ أَحْدَاثِ [تَتَّابِعُ] تَتَّابِعُ عَلَيْهِمْ.
٤٦. هُوَ الْقَادِرُ الَّذِي إِذَا ارْتَمَتِ الْأَوْهَامُ لِتُدْرِكَ مُنْقَطِعَ فُدْرَتِهِ وَ حَاوَلَ الْفَكْرُ الْمُبِرَّأُ مِنْ [حَطْرُ] حَطَرَاتِ الْوَسَائِسِ أَنْ يَقْعَ عَلَيْهِ فِي عَيْقَاتِ غُيُوبِ مَلْكُوتِهِ وَ تَوَلَّهُتِ الْفُلُوْبُ إِلَيْهِ لِتَجْرِي فِي كَيْفَيَّةِ صِفَاتِهِ وَ غَمْضَتِ مَدَارِخُ الْعُقُولِ فِي حَيْثُ لَا تَبَلُّهُ الصِّفَاتُ لِتَنَاؤلِ عِلْمِ دَائِتِهِ، رَدَعَهَا وَ هِيَ تَجْوِبُ مَهَاوِي سُدَفِ الْغُيُوبِ مُتَحَلِّصَةً إِلَيْهِ سُبْحَانَهُ، فَرَجَعَتْ إِذْ جَبَهَتْ مُعْتَرَفَةً بِأَنَّهُ لَا يَنَالُ بِجُورِ الْإِعْتِسَافِ كُنْهُ مَعْرِفَتِهِ وَ لَا تَخْطُرُ بِبَالِ أُولَى الرَّوَيَاتِ خَاطِرَةً مِنْ تَقْبِيرِ جَلَلِ عَرْتِهِ.
٤٧. قَالَ إِنَّ يَهُودِيًّا يُقَالُ لَهُ سَبَّحْتُ جَاءَ إِلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَفَّا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ جَنَّتْ أَسْلَاكَ عَنْ رَبَّكَ فَإِنَّ أَنْتَ أَجْبَتْنِي عَمَّا أَسْلَكَ عَنْهُ وَ إِلَّا رَجَعْتُ قَالَ سُلَيْلُ عَمَّا شِبْتَ قَالَ أَيْنَ رَبَّكَ قَالَ هُوَ فِي كُلِّ مَكَانٍ وَ لَيْسَ فِي شَيْءٍ مِنَ الْمَكَانِ الْمَحْدُودِ قَالَ وَ كَيْفَ هُوَ قَالَ وَ كَيْفَ أَصِفَ رَبِّي بِالْكَيْفِ وَ الْكَيْفُ مَخْلُوقٌ وَ اللَّهُ لَا يُوَصَّفُ بِخَلْقِهِ قَالَ فَمَنْ أَيْنَ يُعْلَمُ أَنَّكَ نَبِيَ اللَّهِ قَالَ فَمَا بَقِيَ حَوْلَهُ حَجَرٌ وَ لَا غَيْرُ ذَلِكَ إِلَّا تَكَلَّمُ بِلِسَانِ عَرَبِيٍّ مُبِينٍ يَا سَبَّحْتُ إِنَّهُ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَفَّا يَا سَبَّحْتُ مَا رَأَيْتُ كَالْيَوْمِ أَمْرًا أَبَيْنَ مِنْ هَذَا ثُمَّ قَالَ أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ مُحَمَّدٌ بْنُ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ إِسْمَاعِيلَ عَنْ الْحُسَينِ بْنِ الْحُسَينِ عَنْ بَكْرِ بْنِ صَالِحٍ عَنْ الْحُسَينِ بْنِ سَعِيدٍ عَنْ إِبْرَاهِيمَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدِ الْحَرَّازِ وَ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ الْحُسَينِ قَالَا: دَخَلْنَا عَلَى أَبِي الْحَسَنِ الرِّضَا عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ فَحَكَيْنَا لَهُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا

صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ رَأَى رَبُّهُ فِي صُورَةِ الشَّابِ الْمُوْفَقِ فِي سِنِّ أَبْنَاءِ ثَلَاثِينَ سَنَةً وَ قُلْنَا إِنَّ هِشَامَ بْنَ سَالِمٍ وَ صَاحِبَ الطَّافِ وَ الْمِبَثِيَ يَقُولُونَ إِنَّهُ أَجْوَفُ إِلَى السُّرَّةِ وَ الْقَيْلَةِ صَمَدٌ فَحَرَّ سَاجِدًا لِهِ ثُمَّ قَالَ سُبْحَانَكَ مَا عَرَفْتُكَ وَ لَا وَحْدَنِكَ فَمَنْ أَجْلٌ ذَلِكَ وَ صَفْوَكَ سُبْحَانَكَ لَوْ عَرَفْتُكَ لَوْ صَفْوَكَ بِمَا وَصَفْتَ بِهِ نَفْسَكَ سُبْحَانَكَ كَيْفَ طَوَّعْتُمُ الْأَسْعُمُونَ أَنْ يُشَهِّدُوكَ بِغَيْرِكَ اللَّهُمَّ لَا أَصِفُكَ إِلَّا بِمَا وَصَفْتَ بِهِ نَفْسَكَ وَ لَا أُشَبِّهُكَ بِخَلْقِكَ أَنْتَ أَهْلُ لِكُلِّ خَيْرٍ فَلَا تَجْعَلْنِي مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ ثُمَّ اتَّقْتَلَ إِلَيْنَا فَقَالَ مَا تَوَهَّمْتُ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَتَوَهَّمُوا اللَّهُ غَيْرُهُ ثُمَّ قَالَ حَنْ آلَ مُحَمَّدٍ النَّمَطُ الْأَوْسَطُ الَّذِي لَا يُدْرِكُنَا الْغَالِي وَ لَا يَسْتِقْنَا الْتَّالِي يَا مُحَمَّدُ إِنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ حِينَ نَظَرَ إِلَى عَظَمَةِ رَبِّهِ كَانَ فِي هَيَّةِ الشَّابِ الْمُوْفَقِ وَ سِنِّ أَبْنَاءِ ثَلَاثِينَ سَنَةً يَا مُحَمَّدُ عَظَمٌ رَبِّي عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ أَنْ يَكُونَ فِي صِفَةِ الْمُخْلُوقِينَ فَلَمْ جُلِّتْ فِدَاكَ مَنْ كَانَثْ رِجْلَاهُ فِي حُضْرَةِ قَالَ ذَاكَ مُحَمَّدٌ كَانَ إِذَا نَظَرَ إِلَى رَبِّهِ بِقُلْبِهِ جَعَلَهُ فِي نُورٍ مِثْلُ نُورِ الْحُجُّبِ حَتَّى يَسْتَبَّنَ لَهُ مَا فِي الْحُجُّبِ إِنَّ نُورَ اللَّهِ مِنْهُ أَخْضَرٌ وَ مِنْهُ أَحْمَرٌ وَ مِنْهُ أَبْيَضٌ وَ مِنْهُ غَيْرُ ذَلِكَ يَا مُحَمَّدُ مَا شَهَدَ لَهُ الْكِتَابُ وَ الْسُّنْنَةُ فَنَحْنُ الْفَائِلُونَ بِهِ .

٤٩. وَ بَعْدَ إِهَانَتِهِ لَا تَحْلُمُ فِي وَ لَا تُؤْفِقُهُ إِذْ وَ لَا تُؤْمِرُهُ إِنْ عَلُوُّهُ مِنْ غَيْرِ تَوْقُلٍ وَ مَجِيلُهُ مِنْ غَيْرِ تَنْقِلٍ يُوجَدُ الْمُفْقُودُ وَ يُفْقَدُ الْمُوْجُودُ وَ لَا تَجْتَمِعُ لِغَيْرِهِ الْصِّفَاتُ فِي وَقْتٍ يُصِيبُ الْفَكْرَ مِنْهُ الْإِيمَانَ بِهِ مَوْجُودًا وَ وُجُودُ الْإِيمَانِ لَا وُجُودٌ صِفَةٌ بِهِ تُوْصَفُ الْصِّفَاتُ لَا بِهَا يُوْصَفُ وَ بِهِ تُعْرَفُ الْمَعَارِفُ لَا بِهَا يُعْرَفُ فَذَلِكَ اللَّهُ لَا سَمِيَّ لَهُ سُبْحَانَهُ لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ .

٥٠. حَضَرَتْ مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْعَمَانَ الْأَحَوْلَ قَامَ إِلَيْهِ رَجُلٌ فَقَالَ لَهُ يَا عَرَفْتَ رَبَّكَ قَالَ بِتَوْفِيقِهِ وَ إِرْشَادِهِ وَ تَعْرِيفِهِ وَ هَدَايَتِهِ قَالَ فَحَرَجْتُ مِنْ عِنْدِهِ فَلَقِيَتْ هِشَامَ بْنَ الْحَكَمَ فَقُلْتَ لَهُ مَا أَقُولُ لِمَنْ يَسْأَلُنِي فَيَقُولُ لِي يَا عَرَفْتَ رَبَّكَ فَقَالَ إِنَّ سَأَلَ سَائِلٌ فَقَالَ يَا عَرَفْتَ رَبَّكَ قُلْتَ عَرَفْتَ اللَّهَ جَلَ جَلَلَهُ بِتَقْسِيٍّ لِأَنَّهَا أَفْرَبُ الْأَشْيَاءِ إِلَيَّ وَ ذَلِكَ أَتَيَ أَجْدُهَا أَبْعَاصًا مُجْتَمِعَةً وَ أَجْرَاءً مُؤْتَلِعَةً ظَاهِرَةً التَّرْكِيبِ مُتَبَيِّنَةً الصِّنْعَةَ مَبْيَنَةً عَلَى ضُرُوبِ مِنَ الْتَّخْطِيطِ وَ الْتَّصْوِيرِ زَانَةً مِنْ بَعْدِ تُعَصَّانِ وَ تَأْصِصَةً مِنْ بَعْدِ زِيَادَةٍ قَدْ أَنْشَى لَهَا حَوَاسِّ مُخْتَلِفَةً وَ جَوَارِحَ مُتَبَابِلَةً مِنْ بَصَرٍ وَ سَمْعٍ وَ شَامٍ وَ ذَاقِي وَ لَامِسٍ مَجْبُولَةً عَلَى الْضَّعْفِ وَ التَّنْصُصِ وَ الْمَهَانَةِ لَا تُنْدِرُكَ وَاحِدَةً مِنْهَا مُدْرَكَ صَاحِبِتَهَا وَ لَا تَنْقُوى عَلَى ذَلِكَ عَاجِزَةً عِنْ اجْتِلَابِ الْمَنَافِعِ إِلَيْهَا وَ دُفْعِ الْمَضَارِ عَنْهَا وَ اسْتَحَالَ فِي الْعُقُولِ وُجُودُ تَالِيفٍ لَا مُؤْفَلٌ لَهُ وَ ثَيَاتِ صُورَةٍ لَا مُصَوَّرٌ لَهَا فَعَلَمْتُ أَنَّ لَهَا خَالِقًا خَلَقَهَا وَ مُصَوَّرًا صَوَّرَهَا مُخَالِفًا لَهَا عَلَى جَمِيعِ جَهَاتِهَا قَالَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ وَ فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَفَلَا تُبَصِّرُونَ .

٥١. حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عَلَيِّ مَاجِيلُوْيِهِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ يَحْيَى الْعَطَّارُ عَنْ سَهْلِ بْنِ زَيَادٍ عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ إِسْمَاعِيلَ بْنِ بَزِيعٍ عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ زَيْدٍ قَالَ: حِنْثٌ إِلَى الرَّضَا عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ أَسْأَلَهُ عَنِ التَّوْحِيدِ فَأَمْلَى عَلَيَّ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ فَاطَّرَ الْأَشْيَاءِ إِنْشَاءً وَ مُبْتَدِعَهَا ابْتِدَاءً بِقُدْرَتِهِ وَ حَكْمَتِهِ لَا مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَيُبَيِّنُ الْإِخْتِرَاعَ وَ لَا عِلْمٌ فَلَا يَصْحُ الْابْتِدَاعُ خَلَقَ مَا شَاءَ كَيْفَ شَاءَ مُتَوَجِّدًا بِذَلِكَ لِإِظْهَارِ حَكْمَتِهِ وَ حَقِيقَةِ رُبُوبِيَّتِهِ لَا تَضِيِطُهُ الْعُقُولُ وَ لَا تَبْلُغُهُ الْأَوْهَامُ وَ لَا تُدْرِكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ .

٥٢. بِأَعْبُدُ اللَّهَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ يَقُولُ: بَيْنَ أَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ يَحْكُمُ عَلَى الْمُنْبَرِ بِالْكُوفَةِ إِذْ قَامَ إِلَيْهِ رَجُلٌ فَقَالَ يَا أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ صِفَتُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ تَبَارَكَ وَ تَعَالَى لِنَرْدَادَهُ حُبًّا وَ بِهِ مَعْرَفَةٌ فَعَضَبَ أَمِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ وَ نَادَى الْصَّالَةَ جَامِعَةً فَلَاجْتَمَعَ الْأَنْسَابُ حَتَّى غَصَّ الْمَسْجِدُ بِأَهْلِهِ ثُمَّ قَامَ مُتَعَبِّرُ الْلُّؤْنَ فَقَالَ - الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي لَا يَفْرُهُ [لَا يُعَبِّرُهُ] الْمَنْعُ وَ لَا يُكَبِّيهُ الْأَعْطَاءُ إِذْ كُلُّ مُعْطٍ مُنْتَقِصٌ سَوَاءُ الْمَلِيءِ بِقَوَافِدِ الْبَعْمَ وَ عَوَادِ الْمَرْزِيدِ وَ بِجُودِهِ ضَمِّنَ عِيَالَةَ الْحَلْقَ فَأَنْهَجَ سَبِيلَ

الْطَّلْبُ لِلرَّاغِبِينَ إِلَيْهِ فَلَيْسَ بِمَا سُئِلَ أَجْوَدُ مِنْهُ بِمَا لَمْ يُسْأَلْ وَ مَا احْتَفَتْ عَلَيْهِ دَهْرٌ فَيَحْتَفَ مِنْهُ الْحَالُ وَ لَوْ وَهَبَ مَا تَنَقَّسَتْ عَنْهُ مَعَادِنُ الْجَبَلِ وَ ضَحَكَتْ عَنْهُ أَصْدَافُ الْبَحَارِ مِنْ فَلَذِ الْجَبَنِ وَ سَبَائِكِ الْعَقَبَانِ وَ نَضَائِدِ الْمَرْجَانِ لِيَعْصُمَ عَيْبِيهِ لَمَّا أَثْرَ ذَلِكَ فِي وُجُودِهِ وَ لَا أَنْقَدَ سَعَةً مَا عَنْهُ وَ لَكَانَ عَنْهُ مِنْ دَخَابِرِ الْإِفْضَالِ مَا لَا يَقْدُهُ مَطَالِبُ السُّؤَالِ وَ لَا يَحْطُرُ لِكُثُرَتِهِ عَلَى بَالِ لِأَنَّهُ الْحَوَادُ الَّذِي لَا تَنْقُصُهُ الْمَوَاهِبُ وَ لَا يُنْجِلُهُ إِلَاحُ الْمُلْحِينَ وَ إِنَّمَا أَمْرُهُ إِذَا أَرَادَ شَيْئًا أَنْ يَقُولَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ.

٥٣. إِنَّمَا هُوَ وَاحِدٌ مُوَحَّدٌ دَفَكَيْتَ يُوَجِّدُ مِنْ زَعَمَ أَنَّهُ عَرَفَهُ بِعِيْرِهِ وَ إِنَّمَا عَرَفَ اللَّهُ مِنْ عَرَفَهُ بِاللَّهِ وَ مِنْ لَمْ يَعْرِفْهُ بِهِ فَلَيْسَ يَعْرِفُهُ إِنَّمَا يَعْرِفُ عَيْرَهُ لَيْسَ بَيْنَ الْخَالِقِ وَ الْمُخْلُوقِ شَيْءٌ فَاللَّهُ خَالقُ الْأَشْيَاءِ لَا مِنْ شَيْءٍ كَانَ وَ اللَّهُ يُسَمِّي بِاسْمَائِهِ وَ هُوَ عَيْرُ اسْمَائِهِ وَ الْأَسْمَاءِ عَيْرُهُ.

٥٤. ثُمَّ قَالَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ لَيْسَ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ عَرَفَ بِنَفْسِهِ هُوَ الْأَدَالُ بِالْدَلِيلِ عَلَيْهِ وَ الْمُؤْدِي بِالْمَعْرِفَةِ إِلَيْهِ.

٥٥. يَا مَنْ دَلَّ عَلَى ذَاتِهِ بِذَاتِهِ.

٥٦. إِنَّكَ عَرَفْتَكَ وَ أَنْتَ دَلِلْتَنِي عَلَيْكَ وَ دَعَوْتَنِي إِلَيْكَ وَ لَوْ لَا أَنْتَ لَمْ أَدْرِ مَا أَنْتَ.

٥٧. [التوحيد]، أَبِي عَنْ سَعْدٍ عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ عَنْ أَبِيهِ عَنْ ابْنِ الْمُغِيْرَةِ عَنْ ابْنِ مُسْكَانٍ عَنْ زُرْزَارَةَ قَالَ: فَلَثُ لِأَبِي جَعْفَرٍ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ أَصْلَحَكَ اللَّهُ قَوْلُ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ فِي كِتَابِهِ فَطَرَتِ اللَّهُ التَّيْنِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا (سورة روم آية ٣٠) قَالَ فَطَرَهُمْ عَلَى التَّوْحِيدِ عِنْدَ الْمِيقَاتِ عَلَى مَعْرِفَتِهِ أَنَّهُ رَبُّهُمْ فَلَثُ وَ حَاطِبُوهُ قَالَ فَطَأْطَأَ رَأْسَهُ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَوْ لَا ذَلِكَ لَمْ يَعْلَمُوا مَنْ رَبُّهُمْ وَ لَا مَنْ رَازَفُهُمْ.

٥٨. [عوالي الثنائي]، قَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَ آلِهِ : كُلُّ مُولُودٍ يُوَلَّ عَلَى الْفِطْرَةِ، حَتَّى يَكُونَ أَبْوَاهُ هُمَا اللَّذَانِ يُهَوَّدَانِهِ وَ يُنْصِرَانِهِ.

٥٩. مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ إِسْمَاعِيلَ عَنْ الْفَضْلِ بْنِ شَادَانَ عَنْ صَفْوَانَ بْنِ يَحْيَى عَنْ مَنْصُورِ بْنِ حَازِمٍ قَالَ: فَلَثُ لِأَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ أَجَلُ وَ أَكْرَمُ مِنْ أَنْ يُعْرِفَ بِخَلْقِهِ بِلِ الْخَلْقُ يُعْرَفُونَ بِاللَّهِ قَالَ صَدَقْتُ.

٦٠. مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ إِسْمَاعِيلَ عَنْ الْفَضْلِ بْنِ شَادَانَ عَنْ صَفْوَانَ بْنِ يَحْيَى عَنْ مَنْصُورِ بْنِ حَازِمٍ قَالَ: فَلَثُ لِأَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ إِنِّي نَاظَرْتُ قَوْمًا فَقُلْتُ لَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ جَلَ جَلَلَهُ أَجَلُ وَ أَعْرُ وَ أَكْرَمُ مِنْ أَنْ يُعْرِفَ بِخَلْقِهِ بِلِ الْعِبَادُ يُعْرَفُونَ بِاللَّهِ فَقَالَ رَحْمَكَ اللَّهُ.

٦١. عَنْ أَبِيهِ عَنْ فَضَالَةَ بْنِ أَيُوبَ عَنْ جَمِيلِ بْنِ دَرَاجٍ عَنْ زُرَارَةَ عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ : فِي قَوْلِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى: وَ إِذَا أَخَذَ رَبُّكَ مِنْ بَنِي آدَمَ مِنْ ظُهُورِهِمْ دُرِّيَّتِهِمْ وَ أَشَهَدَهُمْ عَلَى أَنْفُسِهِمْ (الاعراف ١٧٢) قَالَ كَانَ ذَلِكَ مُعَايِنَةً لِلَّهِ فَأَنْسَاهُمُ الْمُعَايِنَةَ وَ أَتَبَتَ الْإِفْرَارَ فِي صُدُورِهِمْ وَ لَوْ لَا ذَلِكَ مَا عَرَفَ أَحَدُ خَلْقَهُ وَ لَا رَازَفَهُ وَ هُوَ قَوْلُ اللَّهِ، وَ لَئِنْ سَأَلْتُهُمْ مَنْ خَلَقُهُمْ لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ (الزخرف ٨٧)

٦٢. وَإِذَا أَخَذَ رَبُّكَ مِنْ بَنِي آدَمَ مِنْ ظُهُورِهِمْ دُرِّيَّتِهِمْ وَ أَشَهَدَهُمْ عَلَى أَنْفُسِهِمْ الْأَسْتَ بِرَبِّكُمْ قَالُوا بَلَى شَهَدْنَا أَنْ تَقُولُوا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّا كُنَّا عَنْ هَذَا غَافِلِينَ (الاعراف ١٧٢)

٦٣. مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ يَحْيَى وَ عَيْرُهُ عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ بْنِ عِيسَى عَنْ مُحَمَّدٍ بْنِ أَبِي عُمَيْرٍ عَنْ مُحَمَّدٍ بْنِ حَكِيمٍ قَالَ: فَلَثُ لِأَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ الْمَعْرِفَةُ مِنْ صُنْعِ مَنْ هِيَ قَالَ مِنْ صُنْعِ اللَّهِ لَيْسَ لِلْعِبَادِ فِيهَا صُنْعٌ .

٦٤. لَيْسَ لِلَّهِ عَلَى خَلْقِهِ أَنْ يَعْرُفُوا قَبْلَ أَنْ يُعَرَّفُوهُمْ وَ لِلْخَلْقِ عَلَى اللَّهِ أَنْ يُعَرَّفُوهُمْ وَ لِلَّهِ عَلَى الْخَلْقِ إِذَا عَرَّفُوهُمْ أَنْ يَقْبِلُوهُ.

٦٥. وَبِهَا إِلْسِنَادٌ عَنْ يُوْسُفَ عَنْ حَمَادٍ عَنْ عَبْدِ الْأَعْلَى قَالَ: فَلْتَ لِأَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ أَصْلَحْكَ اللَّهُ هُنْ جُعْلَ فِي النَّاسِ أَدَاءً بِالْأَلْوَنِ بِهَا الْمَعْرِفَةَ قَالَ فَقَالَ لَا فَلْتَ فَهُلْ كُلُّهُمَا الْمَعْرِفَةَ قَالَ لَا عَلَى اللَّهِ الْبَيِانُ لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا (بقرة ٢٨٦) وَ لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا مَا آتَاهَا. (الطلاق ٧)

٦٦. عَنْهُ عَنْ الْوَشَاءِ عَنْ أَبْيَانِ الْأَحْمَرِ عَنِ الْخَسَنِ بْنِ زَيَادٍ قَالَ: بَسَّالْتُ أَبَا عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ عَنِ الْإِيمَانِ هُنْ لِلْعِبَادَ فِيهِ صُنْعٌ قَالَ لَا وَ لَا كَرَامَةً بْنَ هُوَ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَ فَضْلِهِ.

٦٧. حَاطِرَكَ بِمَا لَمْ يَكُنْ فِي وَهْمِكَ وَ عَرُوبَ مَا أَنْتَ مُعْتَقِدُهُ عَنْ ذَهْنِكَ وَ مَا رَأَيْتَ يَعْدُ عَلَيِّ قُدْرَتَهُ الَّتِي هِيَ فِي نَفْسِي الَّتِي لَا أَذْفَعُهَا حَتَّى طَنَّتِ اللَّهُ سَيِّطَهُرُ فِيمَا بَيْنِي وَ بَيْنَهُ.

٦٨. لَمْ تَحْسَبْ أَنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ أَوْ يَعْقُلُونَ إِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا كَالْأَنْعَامُ بْنُ هُمْ أَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا. (الفرقان ٤٣)

٦٩. وَلَقَدْ دَرَأْنَا لِجَهَنَّمَ كَثِيرًا مِنَ الْجِنِّ وَالْأَنْسِ مُلْهُمْ قُلُوبٌ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ بِهَا وَلَهُمْ أَعْيُنٌ لَا يُبَصِّرُونَ بِهَا وَلَهُمْ أَذَانٌ لَا يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَا أَوْلِئِكَ كَالْأَنْعَامُ بْنُ هُمْ أَضَلُّ أَوْلِئِكَ هُمُ الْغَافِلُونَ. (الاعراف ١٧٩)

٧٠. وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا بِلِسَانٍ قَوْمَهُ لِيُبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ فَيُضَلِّلُ اللَّهُ مِنْ يَشَاءُ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ. (الابراهيم ٤).

٧١. التَّوْحِيدُ نَفْيُ الْحَدِيثِ حَدَّ التَّشْبِيهِ وَ حَدَّ الْغَطَّيلِ.

٧٢. حَدَّنَا جَعْفُرُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ بْنُ مَسْرُورٍ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ قَالَ حَدَّنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ جَعْفَرٍ بْنُ بُطْهَةَ قَالَ حَدَّنِي عِدَّةٌ مِنْ أَصْحَابِنَا عَنْ مُحَمَّدٍ بْنِ عِيسَى بْنِ عُبَيْدٍ قَالَ: فَقَالَ لِي أَبُو الْحَسَنِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ مَا تَقُولُ إِذَا قِيلَ لَكَ أَحْبَرْنِي عَنِ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَ جَلَ شَيْءٌ هُوَ أُمٌّ لَا قَالَ فَقُلْتُ لَهُ قَدْ أَثْبَتَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَ جَلَ نَفْسَهُ شَيْئًا حَيْثُ يَقُولُ: قُلْ أَيُّ شَيْءٍ أَكْبَرُ شَهَادَةً فُلَّ اللَّهُ شَهِيدٌ بَيْنِي وَ بَيْنَكُمْ (انعام ١٩) فَأَقُولُ إِنَّهُ شَيْءٌ لَا كَالْأَشْيَاءِ إِذْ فِي نَفْيِ الشَّيْبَيَةِ عَنْهُ إِبْطَالُهُ وَ نَفْيُهُ قَالَ لِي صَدَقْتَ وَ أَصَبْتَ ثُمَّ قَالَ لِي الرَّضَا عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ لِلنَّاسِ فِي التَّوْحِيدِ ثَلَاثَةُ مَدَاهِبٍ نَفْيٌ وَ تَشْبِيهٌ وَ إِثْبَاثٌ بِعَيْرِ تَشْبِيهٍ فَمَدْهُبُ النَّفْيِ لَا يَجُوزُ وَ مَدْهُبُ التَّشْبِيهِ لَا يَجُوزُ لِأَنَّ اللَّهَ تَبَارَكَ وَ تَعَالَى لَا يُشَبِّهُ شَيْءٌ وَ السَّبِيلُ فِي الظَّرِيقَةِ الْثَالِثَةِ إِثْبَاثٌ بِلَا تَشْبِيهٍ.

٧٣. عَنْهُ عَنْ مُحَمَّدٍ بْنِ عِيسَى عَمَّنْ ذَكَرَهُ رَفِعَهُ قَالَ: بَسْلُ أَبُو جَعْفَرٍ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ يَجُوزُ أَنْ يَقَالَ لَهُ إِنَّهُ مَوْجُودٌ قَالَ نَعَمْ ثُرْجُهُ مِنَ الْحَدِيثِ حَدَّ الْأَبْطَالُ وَ حَدَّ التَّشْبِيهِ.

٧٤. قَالَ هُوَ شَيْءٌ بِخَلَافِ الْأَشْيَاءِ ارْجِعْ بِقَوْلِي شَيْءٌ إِلَى إِثْبَاتِ مَعْنَى وَ أَنَّهُ شَيْءٌ بِحِقِيقَةِ الشَّيْبَيَةِ غَيْرُ أَنَّهُ لَا جَسْمٌ وَ لَا صُورَةً.

٧٥. أَوْلُ عِبَادَةِ اللَّهِ مَعْرِفَتُهُ وَ أَصْلُ مَعْرِفَتِهِ تَوْجِيدُهُ - وَ نِظامُ تَوْجِيدِهِ نَفْيُ الصِّفَاتِ عَنْهُ جَلَّ أَنْ تَحْلُمَ الصِّفَاتُ بِشَهَادَةِ الْعَفْوُلِ أَنَّ كُلَّ مَنْ حَلَّتِهِ الصِّفَاتُ فَهُوَ مَصْنُوعٌ وَ شَهَادَةُ الْعَفْوُلِ أَنَّهُ جَلَ جَلَالُهُ صَانِعٌ لَيْسَ بِمَصْنُوعٍ.

٧٦. الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَظْهَرَ مِنْ آثارِ سُلْطَانِهِ وَ جَلَالِ كِبْرِيَائِهِ مَا حَيْرَ مُقْلَ الْعَفْوُلِ مِنْ عَجَابِهِ فُدُرَتِهِ وَ رَدَعَ حَطَّرَاتِ هَمَاهِمِ الْأَنْفُوسِ عَنْ عِرْقَانِ كُلِّهِ صِفَتِهِ.

٧٧. الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي حَارَتِ الْأَوْهَامُ فِي وَصْفِهِ وَ ذَهَلَتِ الْعَفْوُلُ عَنْ كُلِّهِ عَظَمَتِهِ حَتَّى يُرْجَعَ إِلَى مَا امْتَدَحَ بِنَفْسِهِ مِنْ عَزَّ وُجُودِهِ وَ طَوْلِهِ.

٧٨. لرد على أرسسططاليس في التوحيد و عد الشیخ منتجب الدين في فهرسه من كتب قطب الدين الرواندي كتاب تهافت الفلسفه و عد النجاشي من كتب الفضل بن شاذان كتاب رد على الفلسفه و هو من أجلة الأصحاب و طعن عليهم الصدوق ره في مفتح كتاب إكمال الدين و قال الرازي عند تفسير قوله تعالى فَلَمَّا جاءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُّهُمْ بِالْأَنْبَيَاتِ فَرَحُوا بِمَا عِنْدَهُمْ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ فِيهِ وَجْهٌ ثُمَّ ذُكْرٌ مِنْ جُمْلَةِ الْوِجْهِ أَنَّ يَرِيدُ عِلْمَ الْفَلَسْفَهِ وَالدُّهْرِيَّيْنِ مِنْ بَنْيِ يَوْنَانَ وَ كَانُوا إِذَا سَمِعُوا بِوَحْيِ اللَّهِ صَغَرُوا عِلْمَ الْأَنْبَيَاءِ إِلَى عِلْمِهِمْ وَعَنْ سَقْرَاطِ أَنَّهُ سَمِعَ بِمُوسَى عَ وَقَبْلَ لِهِ أَوْ هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِ فَقَالَ نَحْنُ قَوْمٌ مُهَذِّبُونَ فَلَا حَاجَةٌ إِلَى مَنْ يَهْذِبُنَا وَقَالَ الرازي في المطالب العالية أظن أن قول إبراهيم لأبيه يا أَبْتَ لِمَ تَعْبُدُ مَا لَا يَسْمَعُ وَلَا يُبَصِّرُ وَلَا يُعْنِي عَنْكَ شَيْئًا إِنَّمَا كَانَ لِأَجْلِ أَبَاهُ كَانَ عَلَى دِينِ الْفَلَسْفَهِ وَكَانَ يُنَكِّرُ كُونَهُ تَعَالَى قَادِرًا وَيُنَكِّرُ كُونَهُ تَعَالَى عَالِمًا بِالْجَزَيْئَاتِ فَلَا جُرمٌ خَاطَبَهُ بِذَلِكِ الْخَطَابِ.

5. The ḥa’irī’s ijāzah which was granted to Mīrzā for ijtihād:

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم ما كتبه دامت بركاته في حق جناب العالم الفاضل المحقق المدقق زبدة العلماء الراشدين و قدوة الفقهاء المجتهدين الأغا ميرزا مهدى الاصفهانى دام تاييده حق لا زبيب فيه كثرة الله امثاله من العلماء بحق محمد و آله عليهم السلام.
الاحقر عبدالكريم الحائرى.

6. Asās ma’ārif al-Qur’ān:

١. وفي الكافي: في رواية شريفه، قال تعزى اليهودي: يا محمد، صفت لربك، فقال: "إن الخالق لا يوصف إلا بما وصف به نفسه، وكيف يوصف الخالق الذي يعجز الناس عن تدركه، والآوهام ان تناهه، والخطرات ان تحدّه، والابصار عن الاحاطة به، جل عما يصفه الواصفون،... والواصفون لا يبلغون نعنه". p.295
٢. وفي تحف العقول: عن سيد الشهداء صلوات الله عليه: ... احتجب عن العقول كما احتجب عن الايات p.308
٣. وفي التوحيد: مسندًا عن أمير المؤمنين صلوات الله عليه قال: ... المعروف بلا كيفية، ... لا تدركه الابصار ، ولا تحيط به الافكار ، ولا تقدر العقول ولا تقع عليه الاوهام... p.306
٤. وفي العلل: مسندًا عن ثامن الائمة صلوات الله عليه، فاملى: "...لا تضيّطه العقول، ولا بلغه الاوهام..." p.306
٥. وفي التوحيد: مسندًا عن الصادق صلوات الله عليه يقول: "بينا أمير المؤمنين صلوات الله عليه يخطب على المنبر بالکوفه اذا قام اليه رجل فقال: يا أمير المؤمنين، صفت لنا ربكم تبارك و تعالى لنزداد له حبا و معرفة. فغضب أمير المؤمنين صلوات الله عليه و نادى: "الصلاه جامعه" فاجتمع الناس حتى غص السّمجد باهله ثم قام متغير اللون، فقال: "الحمد لله الذي لا يفره المنع... وانحرست الابصار عن ان تناهه فيكون بالعيان موصوفا، و فات لعلوه على الاشياء موقع رجم المتهمين، و ارتفع عن ان تحوى كنه عظمته فيها هه رويات المتفگرين... pp.295-296
٦. وفي التوحيد: مسندًا عن أبي عبدالله صلوات الله عليه: "قال: إنما عرف الله من عرفه بالله، فمن لم يعرفه به فليس يعرفه، إنما يعرف غيره، ليس بين الخالق و المخلوق شيء... و لا تدرك معرفته الله إلا بالله، و الله خلو من خلقه خلقه خلو منه." p.273
٧. وفي لاحتاج: "عن أمير المؤمنين صلوات الله عليه في خطبه: ... هو الدال عليه بالدليل عليه، و المودي بالمعرفة فيه". p.274
٨. وفي الدعاء الصباح: "يامن دل على ذاته بذاته". p.274
٩. وفي دعاء ابو حمزه الثمالي: "بك عرفتك و انت دلتني عليك و دعوتني اليك، و لو لا انت لم ادر ما انت" p.274

١٠. و في الكافي و التوحيد، مسندًا عن منصور بن حازم قال: قلت لابي عبدالله صلوات الله عليه: انى ناظرت قوما فقلت لهم ان الله جل جلاله اجل و اعز و اكرم من ان يعرف بخلقه ، بل العباد يعرفون بالله. قال: رحمك الله.

p.273

١١. و في المحسن: مسندًا عن ابى عبدالله صلوات الله عليه، فى قول الله عزوجل، " وَإِذْ أَخَذَ رُبُّكَ مِنْ بَنَىٰ إِدَمَ مِنْ طُهُورِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتُهُمْ وَأَشْهَدَهُمْ عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ" ، قال: كان ذلك معاينه الله فانساهم المعايشه و اثبت الاقرار فى صدورهم و لولذلك ما عرف احد خلقه و لا رازقه، و هو قول الله: " وَلَئِنْ سَأَلْتُهُمْ مَنْ خَلَقُهُمْ لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ" . p.268

١٢. ففي الكافي عن ابى عبدالله صلوات الله عليه فى جواب السايل عن المعرفه، قال: قلت له: المعرفه من صنع من هى؟ قال من صنع الله، ليس للعباد فيها صنع. p.267

١٣. وفيه [الكافي]: مسندًا عن عبدالاعلى، قال: قلت لابي عبدالله صلوات الله عليه: اصلاحك الله، هل جعل للناس اداء ينالون بها المعرفه؟ قال: لا. قلت: فهل كلفوا المعرفه؟ قال: لا، على الله البيان،.."لَا يُكَافِئُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا" ، "لَا يُكَافِئُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا مَا أَتَاهَا" ... p.267

١٤. و في الاحتجاج: عن امير المؤمنين صلوات الله عليه: "اول عباده الله معرفته، و اصل معرفته توحيده، و نظام توحيده نفي الصفات عنه، جل عن تحمله الصفات بشهاده العقول ان كل من حمله الصفات فهو مصنوع، و شهاده العقول انه جل جلاله صانع ليس بمصنوع" p.304

١٥. و ظاهر ان العباده متقوم بالمعرفه، فان المعرفه اصل و اول و روح و اساس للعباده، و معرفه الحق عيت توحيده، و توحيده تميزه، فان العقل و العلم حجتان على ان كل ما يعلم و يعقل هو بديهي المخلوقيه، فمن يحمله الصفات و يعرف بها يكون كذلك. p.304

١٦. و في النهج: من خطبه صلوات الله عليه: ... لم يطلع العقول على تحديد صفتة، و لم يحجبها عن واجب معرفته،... p.308

7. List of key Figures

Abd Allah Wā'iz Yazdī: (1899-1991)

Abd Allah Wā'iz Yazdī (1287-1370SH/1899-1991), Primary education in Yazd, continued in Mashhad under supervision of Mīrzā Mahdi Gharawī Isfahānī. He learned jurisprudence from his father (Mīrzā Hossein Wā'iz). He got involved in political movements in 1946, arrested and eventually began his secret life and continued until 1965. In Qezel Qala Prison, he wrote a book on dialectical philosophy.

Adīb-I Niyshābūrī (1864-1926)

Adīb-I Niyshābūrī(1243-1305SH/1864-1926), Litterateur, poet, researcher, teacher, thinker and specialist in literary sciences. He studied in "Fazil-khan" and "Navab" schools in Mashhad. Then taught philosophy and logic in there.

One of his prominent students: Mahmūd Ḥalabī

One of his work: Sharḥ-I Muta'alliqat-I Sab'ih is one of his works.

Aḥmad Karbalāī (died in 1914)(44)

Siyyid Aḥmad Karbalāī(died in 1293/1914), Islamic jurist and Shi'a mystic in 13th and 14th AH. He studied religion and Islamic courses in Karbala. In order to complete his education, emigrated to Najaf. He had number of works in the field of philosophy and jurisprudence.

His prominent students: Mīrzā Mahdi Gharawī Isfahānī/Siyyid Ali Ghazi

One of his works: Risālih-yi Muḥākimt-I Biyn-I 'Ilmiyin is one of his works.

Aḥmad Mahdawī Dāmghānī (1926-present)

HeAḥmad Mahdawī Dāmghānī (born in 1305SH/1926), holds a Ph.D. in Persian Literature and a Ph.D. in Islamic Theology from Tehran University where he was a Professor at the School of Literature and at the School of Theology between 1962-1985. He has been teaching at Harvard University^[1] and the University of Pennsylvania^[2] since 1987. He teaches Islamic Sciences, Islamic Literature, Advanced Arabic and Persian Sufi texts, and Islamic Philosophy. Mahdavi Damghani also taught in Spain at Autonomada University of Madrid for three years. Published Several articles in journals of Iran-shnasi and Iran-nameh.

Some of his books: *Nasmat al Sahar – A History of Arab Shi'a Poets, Three volumes; The Sources of Arabic Poems in the Kalilah wa Dimna; The Garden of Light: An Anthology of Sana'i's Hadiqah*

Ākhūnd Mullā Fath 'Alī Sultānābādī (1825-1901)

Mullā Fath 'Alī Sultānābādī(1240-1318AH/1204-1279SH /1825-1901), Shi'a scholar and mystic in 14th century AH. Started his studies in Iran and continued in Najaf in order to complete his education. He was Mīrzā Shirazī's student.

Alī Akbar Şadrzādih

Alī Akbar Şadrzādih Damgani, Mīrzā Mahdi Gharawī Isfahānī's student.

Āqā Ḥusyan Mūsawī Shāhrūdī (1893-1989)

Āqā Ḥusyan Mūsawī Shāhrūdī(1272-1368SH/1893-1989), Islamic scholar. He started seminary education with his uncle (ayatollah siyyid Abas Shāhrūdī), then emigrated to Najaf and continued his education with Siyyid Maḥmūd Shāhrūdī. He has philosophical writings.

Āqā Mīrzā Asgarī Shahīdī Mashhadī (died in 1936)

Āqā Mīrzā Asgarī Shahīdī Mashhadī known as Aqa Bozorg Hakim,(died in 1355AH/1315SH/1936), prominent philosopher. Started his education in Mashhad then went to Tehran under supervision of Mīrzā Muhammad Kadim Khorasani. In 1313AH he came back to Mashhad and started his philosophy course.

Ayatollah Sayyid Ja‘far Siyyidān (1936-present)

Sayyid Ja‘far Siyyidān(born in 1313SH/1936), Scholar and professor of divine knowledge in Mashhad. He learned Arabic literature from Muhammed Taqi Niyshābūrī and jurisprudence from Mīrzā Ahmed Yazdi. He's been also the student of Mīrzā Tehrāni. His teachers and people around him, were the students of Mīrzā Mahdi Gharawī Iṣfahānī.

Scientific works: *The theory of Tafkik*; A study of the method of interpreting the Qur'an to the Qur'an in Al-Mizan

Critique of philosophical rules: He was One of the prominent characters of Maktab-I_e_Tafkik.

Āyatullāh Malikī Mīyānajī (1906-1998)

Mohammed baqir Malikī Mīyānajī(1285-1377SH/1906-1998), Islamic jurist and theologian. He learned Arabic literature, logic and jurisprudence from Siyyid Vase Kadim Tarki.

Works and compositions: *Bada'i al-Kalam*; *Tafsir Fateha Al-Kitab*; *Tawhid al-Imamiyya*; *Tafsir Manahj al-Bayan*; *A look at the Quranic sciences*; He was Mīrzā Mahdi Gharawī Iṣfahānī's student.

Āyatullah Shiyykh Murtadā Muḥāmī' (1934-2021)

He Āyatullah Shiyykh Murtadā Muḥāmī'(1313-1400SH/1934-2021), born in a family of scholars and theologians. Under training of Imam Khomeini and Ayatollah Burujirdi. He was one of the most important teachers in Mashhad seminary. He traveled to Najaf in order to learn from ayatollah Khoei. After 3 years he came back to Mashhad then entered to the lesson courses of Ayatollah Milani and learned jurisprudence from him for 18 years.

Gharawī Iṣfahānī (1879-1942)

He Mohammad Hossein Gharavi Esfahani (1296-1361AH/1258-1321SH/1879-1942) also was known as Kumpani. Was an Iraqi-Iranian Shi'a Scholar, philosopher, jurist and Poet.

His teachers: Sheikh Hassan Tuyerkani- Seyed Mohammad Tabatabai Fesharaki-Agha Reza Hamedani- Akhund Khorasani

Some of Works and writings: *The Prize of man of wisdom (Tohfat Al Hakim); Notes on Makaseb; The end of understanding in principles*

Hakīmī (1935-2021)

Allamah Muḥammad Rida Ḥakīmī. (1314-1400SH/1935-2021), Iranian Shi'a jurist and clergyman, philosopher, thinker and author. His book Al- Hayat , which is an Islamic encyclopedia, has a special reputation in the Islamic world. The term of Maktab-i-_e_Tafkik K(which believes in the separation of religion from philosophy and mysticism) is from him.

Some of his Works: *Maktab-e-Tafkik; Where the sun rises; Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him); From life to eternity; Literature and Commitment in Islam; The position of reason*

Hasan 'Alī Murwārīd (1290-1383SH)

Mīrzā Ḥasan 'Alī Murwārīd(1290-1383SH), Shi'a jurist and scholar. One of the Maktab_e_Tafkik's philosophers. When he was 17, joined Mīrzā Mahdi Gharawī Isfahānī's courses and stayed contact with him for 20 years. The book of "Tanjīh Hawl al-Mabda' wa al-Ma'ād is a summary of his teachings which he taught in various courses.

Masters: Hassan Ali Nakhodaki Esfahani; Mohammad Kazem Mahdavi Damghani (Professor of the book Principles of Laws and Treatises); Hashem Qazvini (Professor of Makaseb Jurisprudence Book); Mīrzā Mehdi Isfahani (Professor of Jurisprudence, Principles and Knowledge)

Hasan Anṣārī (born in 1970)

R Hasan Anṣārī (born in 1349SH/1970), researcher in theology and Islamic philosophy at the university of Berlin. He is known for his works on Islamic theology, philosophy, law, and legal theory. He is a co-editor of Shii Studies Review.

Works: L'imamat et l'Occultation selon l'imamisme; Accusations of Unbelief in Islam: A Diachronic Perspective on Takfir; The Zaydi Reception of Bahshamite Mu'tazilism; Yemeni Manuscript Cultures in Peril

Hasan Islamī (1960-present)

Siyyid Ḥasan Islamī Ardakani(1339SH/1960), he is an Iranian philosopher and professor of ethics at the University of Religions and Denominations. He is known for his expertise on virtue ethics, environmental ethics and research ethics. Eslami is a winner of Farabi International Award for his book Human Cloning in Catholic and Islamic Perspectives.

Books: *Human Cloning in Catholic and Islamic Perspectives, University of Religions and Denominations, 2007; Ethics of Critique, Maaref, 2004; Muhammad: Prophet of Compassion, Khorram, 1997*

Hasan Jamshīdī (24)

Researcher of the Misbāḥ al-ah_ol_hodāa's book according to the Faiqi's version from Mīrzā Mahdi Gharawī Iṣfahānī.

Hasan Mīlānī (born in 1959)

Hasan Mīlānī(born in 1338SH/1959), Shi'a cleric, author and theologian. Most of his works are in rejection of philosophers and the theory of the unity of existence. He One of the critics of Mīrzā Mahdi Gharawī Iṣfahānī.

Hasan Rabbānī (born in 1954)

Hasan Rabbānī(born in 1333SH/1954), Iranian Islamic scholar and teacher.

Husayn Mufid

Has several articles about Mīrzā Mahdi Gharawī Iṣfahānī and Maktab-i-_e_Sāamiarā'a.

Mahdī Āṣhtīyānī (1889-1953)

Mīrzā Mahdi Āṣhtīyānī(1306-1372AH/1268-1332SH/ 1889-1953), mystic and Shi'a scientist in 14th AH. Done various works on the field of philosophy and mysticism.

Mīrzā Mahdi had many great teachers:

Mīrzā Abu I-hasan Jelveh; Mīrzā Hashem Eshkevari; Ayatollah Mohammad Kazem Khorasani; Ayatollah Mohammed Kazem Yazdi; Ayatollah Sayyed Muhammad Firouz Abadi; Ayatollah Sayyid Abu al-Hasan Isfahani; Mīrzāye Naini

Work: *Asas At Tawhid (the foundation of unity); Notes on Asfar in Arabic; notes on Shefa (the book of Healing); notes on Fosus Al Hikam of Ibn Arabi*

Mīrzā 'Alī Akbar Nuqānī (1921-1991)

Mīrzā 'Alī Akbar Nuqānī(1300-1370SH/1921-1991), Oone of the greatest scholar in Mashhad, cleric and politician.

Mīrzā 'Ismā'īl Gharawī

Mīrzā 'Ismā'īl Gharawī, the son of Mīrzā Mahdi Gharawī Iṣfahānī and teacher of his father's works. Imam Khomeini' student.

Mīrzā Jawād Āqā Ṭihrānī (1904-1989)

Mīrzā Jawād Āqā Ṭihrānī(1283-1368SH/1904-1989), Iranian Shi'a jurist and moralist. one of his students: Ali Khamenei. Critical view of mysticism and and Sufism.

Muhammad Bīdābādī (died in 1784)

SMuhammad Bīdābādī (1197/1783), son of Muhammad Rafi' Gilani was a philosopher, mystic, and theologian of 12/18 century. He was famous mostly because of his piety, spiritual journey and teaching Mulla Sadra's transcendental philosophy. He had great students such as Mulla 'Ali Nuri, Haj Ibrahim Karbasi,

Sayyid Husayn Qazwini, Mīrzā Abu I-Qasim Qummi (Mīrzā Qummi). His tomb is in Takht-i Fulad Cemetery in Isfahan.

Works: *Adab al-sayr wa al-suluk*; *Al-Tawhid ala nahj al-tarjid*; *Husn-i dil*; *Marginal notes on Mulla Sadra's al-'Asfar al-'arba'a*; *Dastur al-'amal-i akhlaqi*

Siyyid Jalāl Ashtāyānī

Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Mīrī Āshṭiyānī(1304_1384SH), was a professor and scholar of Islamic philosophy and mysticism. He studied philosophy and mysticism under supervision of 'Allama Tabataba'i, Sayyid Abu I-Hasan Rafi'i Qazwini and Mahdi Mazandarani Amirkulahi. After finishing study he moved to Mashhad and started teaching philosophy and mysticism in the University of Mashhad and seminaries in Mashhad for many years. He defended philosophy against Maktab-I _e_Tafkik.

Ashtiyani spent almost 50 years of his life writing and editing Islamic philosophical and mystical works. He and Henry Corbin collected an anthology of recent philosophical works in Iran as *Muntakhabati az athar-i hukama-yi Iran* (Selections of work by Iranian philosophers).

Abo al-Hasan Sha'rānī (1320-1393SH)

He was Abū I-Hasan Sha'rānī(1320_1393SH), known as 'Allama Sha'rani, was a Shi'a scholar and philosopher in the 14th/20th century. He knew French and English, and was an expert in Quranic studies, hadith, fiqh, usul al-fiqh, kalam (Islamic theology), Islamic philosophy, geometry, and astronomy.

His teachers include: Shaykh 'Abd al-Karim Ha'iri Yazdi, Mīrzā Mahdi Ashtiyani and Mīrzā Mahmud Qummi, Ha'iri Yazdi

and His students include: Mīrzā Hashim Amuli, Hasan Hasanzada Amuli, and Abd Allah Jawadi Amuli.

He started his Islamic education in the Marwi Seminary where he studied Arabic literature, Persian literature, logic, fiqh, usul al-fiqh, Islamic philosophy and mathematics. He then went to the Qom Seminary, which had recently been founded, and attended advanced lectures of fiqh and usul al-fiqh in Qom. Then he migrated to Iraq where he studied Shiite as well as Sunni fiqh. he finished his education and after studying and practice of mysticism, he returned to Tehran in the era of Rida Shah Pahlawi where he started teaching, research, and preaching.

Some of his works: *Annotations on Majma' al-bayan* (in ten volumes); *Editing Tafsir al-safi* (two volumes); *Annotations on Tafsir manhaj _al-sadiqin* (ten volumes); *An introduction and annotations on Tafsir Abu I-Futuh al-Razi*

Āqā Alī Mudarris-i Tehrānī (1234-1307AH)

He was Agha Ali Modarres Tehrani(1234-1307AH), known as Hakim, was one of the scholars of Tehran's philosophical field and the promoter of Mulla Sadra 's philosophy. Agha Ali came to Tehran with his father in 1237 (at the age of three) and after learning the basics of science, including Arabic literature and logic and the principles of jurisprudence and theology, , he participated in his father's course. After the death of his father in 1257 , he went to Iraq , Isfahan and Qazvin to continue his education. .Mullah Mohammad Jafar Lahiji studied and then returned to Tehran. Aqa Ali Modarres began teaching rational sciences in Tehran around 1270; He first taught philosophy at Qasem Khan School and then at Sepahsalar School.

Some of his teachers: Haj Mullah Hadi Sabzevari; Agha Mohammad Reza Ghomshei; Mehdi Haeri Yazdi

Muhammad Bīyābānī ‘uskūyī(68) (born in 1962)

Muhammad Bīyābānī ‘uskūyī(born in 1341SH/1962), Sscholar and jurist. Educated in Mashhad and Tabriz seminary.

Muhammad Hasan Burūjirdī (1928-1977)(Bur)

Siyyid Muhammad Hasan Tabatabai Burūjirdī, (1307-1356SH/1928-1977), Iranian seminary scholar and teacher. The son of Ayatollah Burujirdi

Muhammad Ridā Muḥāmī (1933-1997)

Hojjat al-Eslam Muhammad Ridā Muḥāmī(1312-1376SH/1933-1997), In SAVAK documents, he has been introduced as one of the perpetrators of activities in favor of Imam Khomeini.

Muhammadridā Irshādīnīyā (born in 1963)

Muhammadridā Irshādīnīyā(born in 1342SH/1963), Islamic philosophy researcher (Ph. D), graduated of Mashhad Seminary.

Mullā Alī Nūrī (died in 1246AH)

Mullah Ali Ibn Jamshid Nouri Mazandarani Isfahani (died in 1246AH), was a philosopher and Islamic scholar of the 12th and 13th centuries AH. He revived Sadra's philosophy in Iran and the Tehran School of Philosophy was founded by him. Mullah Ali Nouri was one of the philosophical students of Agham Mohammad Bidabadi.

Mullah Ali Nouri spent his primary education in the regions of Mazandaran and then in Qazvin in the field of jurisprudence and principles of Seyyed Hassan Qazvini, , the brother of Seyyed Hossein Qazvini. . He went to Isfahan to complete his studies and settled there and completed his education. Then he taught philosophy.

His works are mostly descriptions and defences of Mullā Sadra school. Some of his works: them:

Interpretation of Surah Tawhid; Hashia Asfar

Mullā Hādī Sabzivārī (1797–1873)

Hadi Sabzavari or Hajj Molla Hadi Sabzavari (1797–1873) was an Iranian philosopher, mystic theologian and poet. He played a part in making Mulla Sadra the 'master thinker' of the Iranian philosophers. When he was ten, he was taken by his cousin to Mashhad where he studied Arabic, Islamic Jurisprudence, logic, and the principles of religion and law for ten years.

He wrote the *Asrar al-hikmah* ("The Secrets of Wisdom")

Other Books: *Hedāyat al-tālebin*; *Šarḥ al-manzuma*; *Asrār al-hekam fi'l-moftatah wa'l-moqtatam*; *Asrar ol-Ebadah*; *Ta'liqat*; *Nebrās al-hodā*

'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī (1903_1981)

Muhammad Husayn Tabataba'i or Sayyid Mohammad Hossein Tabataba'i (1903_1981), was an Iranian scholar, theorist, philosopher and one of the most prominent thinkers of modern Shia Islam. He is perhaps best known for his *Tafsir al-Mizan*, a twenty-seven-volume work of tafsir (Quranic exegesis), which he produced between 1954 and 1972. He is commonly known as Allameh Tabataba'i and the Allameh Tabataba'i University in Tehran is named after him.

He received his earlier education in his native Tabriz city, mastering the elements of Arabic and the religious sciences, and at about the age of twenty set out for the great Shiite university of Najaf to continue more advanced studies. He studied at Najaf, under the supervision of masters such as Ali Tabatabaei, Mīrzā Muhammad Husain Na'ini, Sheykh Muhammad Hossein Qaravi Esfahani.

In philosophy the most important of his works is *Usul-i falsafeh va ravesh-e-realism* (The Principles of Philosophy and the Method of Realism).

List of some of his publications: Tafsīr-i al-Mīzān; Shi'iḥah dar 'Islāam; The Principles of Philosophy and the Method of Realism (Usul-i falsafeh va ravesh-i ri'ālism); Ḥāshiyah 'Alā Kifāyah al-'Uṣūl_Hashiyah kifayah

Murtadā Muṭahharī (1919-1979)

HeMorteza Motahhari" (1919_1979), was an Iranian Twelver Shia scholar, philosopher, lecturer. Motahhari is considered to have an important influence on the ideologies of the Islamic Republic, among others. He "authored over fifty books, which dealt with theology and philosophy as well as practical issues such as sexual ethics. He attended the Hawza of Qom from 1944 to 1952 and then left for Tehran. He was considered as one of the pupils of Akhund Khorasani and besides he was admired by Ayatollah Mara'shi Najafi.

Some of his Publications: Tawhid (Monotheism); Adl -e- Elahi (Divine Justice); Nubuwah (Prophet-hood); Ma'ad (The Return, a book on Islamic eschatology); Hamase -e- Husaini (Husaynian Epic); Seiry dar nahj al-balaghah (A Journey through Nahj al-Balaghah).

Mahdī Ḥā'irī Yazdī

Mahdī Ḥā'irī Yazdī was an Iranian philosopher and Shia Islamic cleric. He was the first son of Sheikh Abdul Karim Haeri Yazdi, the founder of Qom Seminary and teacher of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, who became the leader of the Iranian Revolution and founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Some of his works In Persian: *Hekmat va Hokumat* (London 1994); *Kavushha-ye Aql-e Nazari*; *Hiram-e Hasti*; *Kavushha-ye Aql-e Amali*; *safare Nafs* (the journey of soul); *Analytical philosophy*

In English: *The Principles of Epistemology in Islamic Philosophy: Knowledge by Presence*. SUNY Press 1992

Jawādī Āmulī (1933-present)

Abd Allāh Jawādī Āmulī (1312SH/1933) is a Shiite philosopher, jurist, exegete of the Qur'an, a professor of the Islamic Seminary of Qom, and a Shiite marja'. He was a student of Imam Khomeini and Allama Tabataba'i and has taught Islamic philosophy, mysticism, jurisprudence, and Quranic exegesis at Islamic seminaries of Qom and Tehran for about sixty years. He has written many books, including his exegesis of the Qur'an, Tasnim, and his exposition of al-Asfar al-arba'a, Rahiq makhtum.

He began his religious studies in the Islamic Seminary of Amol in 1948. He studied Arabic literature, logic, principles of jurisprudence, jurisprudence, the exegesis of the Qur'an, and hadiths at an intermediary level within five years.

In 1950, he moved to Tehran, where he studied in the Seminary of Marvi for five years. There, he attended the lectures of Muhammad Taqi Amuli, Abu I-Hasan Sha'rani, Mahdi Ilahi Qumsha'i, and Muhammad Husayn Tuni. In addition to jurisprudence and principles of jurisprudence, he studied philosophy and mysticism, and at the same time, began to teach certain seminary courses. In 1955, he moved to the Islamic Seminary of Qom, where he attended advanced seminary lectures by scholars such as Ayatollah Burujirdi, Sayyid Muhammad Muhaqqiq Damad, Mīrzā Hashim Amuli, Imam Khomeini, and Allama Tabataba'i.

Some of his works: *Mafatih al-hayat*; *Zan dar ayina-yi jamal wa jalal* (woman in the mirror of beauty and glory); *Shari'at dar ayina-yi ma'rifat*

Miśbāḥ Yazdī (1935-2021)

Muhammad Taqī Miṣbāḥ Yazdī(1935-2021), was a mujtahid, philosopher, Qura'nic exegete and a professor in the Seminary of Qom. He has been the head of Imam Khomeini Educational and Research Institute.

His teachers include Ayatollah Burujirdi, Imam Khomeini, Allama Tabataba'i and Ayatollah Bahjat. Misbah Yazdi has been one of the most important theoreticians and defenders of the theory of Absolute Guardianship of the Islamic Jurist in Iran in the last decades. Misbah Yazdi wrote several books concerning Islamic disciplines, such as Qur'anic exegesis, Islamic philosophy and Islamic doctrines. His works include Amuzish falsafa (Teaching philosophy), Akhlaq dar Qur'an (Ethics in the Qur'an) and Nazariyya-yi siyasi-yi Islam (Islamic political theory).

Mullā Bāqir Sabziwārī (1017-1090AH)

Muhammad Bāqir b. Muhammad Mu'min Khurāsānī Sabziwārī, known as Muhaqqiq Sabziwārī(1017_1090AH), he was a Shi'a scholar and expert in politics.

Kifayat al-ahkam and *Dhakhirat al-Ma'ad* are his most important jurisprudential books.

Some of his teachers: Muhammad Taqi Majlisi; Al-Shaykh al-Baha'i; Haydar Ali Isfahani; Hasan Ali Shushtary

Āqā Husiyn Khunsārāī (1016_1099AH)

Agha Hossein Khansari, full name Hossein ibn Jamal al-Din Mohammad Khansari, known as Mohaghegh Khansari and also known as "Master of all in all" (Arabic: استاد الكل في الكل, (1016_1099AH), He was one of the high-level scholars and was one of the great Iranian jurists of Isfahan.

Some of his works:

Hashieh bar Mohakemat; Masharegh al-Shomoos fi Sharhe al-Doroos; Taligheh bar Hashieh Mohaghegh Sabzevari; Resaleh Ejmae

'Abd-Al-Razzāq Lāhījī (1072 AH/1662)

'Abd-Al-Razzāq Lāhījī, (1072 AH/1662) known as Fayyāḍī, was an Iranian theologian, poet and philosopher .His mentor in philosophy was his father-in-law Mulla Sadra. According to Madlung, Abd-Razzaq taught at the Masumieh madrasah. There his prominent pupils included his sons Hasan and Ebrahim as well as Qazi Saeed Qommi.

Works:

Gawhar-e morād (Tehran, 1271 AH), a detailed exposition of his theology; *Sarmāya-ye īmān; Dīvān*, a volume of his poetry; *Tašrīqāt*.

Mul·lā Muhsin Fayd Kāshānī (1598–1680)

Mul·lā Muhsin Fayd Kāshānī (1598–1680) was an Iranian Twelver Shi'i Muslim, mystic, poet, philosopher, and muhaddith. was born in Kashan to a scholarly family. When he reached the age of twenty, he travelled to Isfahan for further study. However, after a year in Isfahan, he moved to Shiraz to study Hadith and Fiqh. Then joined the circles of great scholar Shaikh Bahai and studied philosophy under Mir Damad. Sadra gave Fayz one of his daughters to marry, they later had a son named, Muhammad Alam al-Huda, who followed in his father's footsteps.

Works: *Muhjah ohjat-al-Beydā'za*; *'Ayn al-yaqīn*; *Abwāab- aol-Jienāan*; *Sharḥ al-'Uṣūl*; *I-Kāfi the comment of Safi*; *Wāafī*; *Shāafī*; *Mafāatīḥi'h al-Sharāayiyi*"

Mullā Ṣadrā (1571_1640)

Ṣadr ad-Dīn Muḥammad Shīrāzī, more commonly known as Mullā Ṣadrā, (1571_1640). Shi'i Islamic mystic, philosopher, theologian, and 'Ālim who led the Iranian cultural renaissance in the 17th century.

He mastered all the lessons related to Persian and Arabic literature, as well as the art of calligraphy. he also learned horse riding, hunting and fighting techniques, mathematics, astronomy, some medicine, jurisprudence, and Islamic law. And he was mainly attracted to philosophy and particularly to mystical philosophy

Some of known works: *Sharḥh 'Uṣūl Usool Al-Kāafī*; *al-Mabda' wa a'l-Mma'āad*; *Arshiyyah*; *Sharīḥ al-Hhidāayah*; *Ikssīr al-'Āarifīn*

Sayyid Abu 'l-Qāsim Dihkurdī (1855-1934)

Sayyid Abu 'l-Qāsim Hosseini Dihkurdī Isfahānī, (1234-1313SH/1855-1934), prominent jurist, Hadith scholar and cleric.

Sayyid 'Alī Shūshtarī (1807-1867)

Sayyid 'Alī Shūshtarī, Shi'a scholar and mystic. Most prominent student: Mullā Husseinghi Hamedani.

Sayyid Ismā'īl Ṣadr (1842-1920)(38)

Shi'a Sayyid Ismā'īl Ṣadr(1258-1338AH/1221-1299SH/1842-1920), Shi'a scholar and Marja'in 14th century AH. Sayyid Abu 'l-Qāsim Dihkurdī's student.

Sheikh 'Ishrāq (1154–1191)

Shahāb ad-Dīn" Yahya ibn Habash Suhrawardī also known as Sohrevardi, i (1154–1191),

philosopher and founder of the Iranian school of Illuminationism (hekmat-e eshrāq) an important school in Islamic philosophy.

Some of his Persian works: *Risalat al-Taal-Tayr*; *Safīr-i Sīmurgh*; *Rūuzī bāa Jamā'aat-i ṢūSufīyāan*; *Fī ḤāHalaat al-ṬTufūlliyyah*

Some of his Arabic works: *Kitāab al-Ttalwīḥāhat*; *Kitāab al-Mmuqāqawamaht*; *Kitāab al-Mmashāari' wa a'l-Mmuṭāotariḥāhat*

Sheikh Hāshim Qazwīnī (1891-1960)

Sheikh Hāshim Modares Qazwīnī(1270-1339SH/1891-1960), Shi'a scholar and seminary teacher. Mīrzā Mahdi Gharawī Isfahānī's student.

Sheikh Maḥmūd Ḥalabī (1900-1997)

Mahmoud Taulaei known as Sheikh Maḥmūd Ḥalabī, (1279-1376SH/1900-1997), jurist, politician and the founder of Hojjatieh- _Mahdavieh association(an organization with the aim of fighting the Baha'is and providing the ground for the emergence of Imam Asr , which was established in 1332 by Sheikh Mahmoud Halabi).

He Was impressed by Mīrzā Mahdi Gharawī Isfahānī. Then he learned the basics of jurisprudence, principles and logic from the researcher, Mīrzā Mohammad Baqer Modarres Razavi and Mīrzā Jafar Shahrestani. He passed the high levels with Sheikh Mohammad Nahavandi and Mīrzā Mohammad Kefai. He studied jurisprudence with Seyyed Hossein Tabatabai Qomi.

Sheikh Mujtabā Qazwīnī (1900-1967)

Mujtabā Qazwīnī known as Sheikh Mujtabā Qazwīnī(1279-1346SH/1900-1967), Iranian Shi'a scholar and cleric. Mīrzā Mahdi Gharawī Isfahānī's student. Some other Masters: Seyed Ali Hosseini Sistani, Seyed Ali Hosseini Sistani, Mohammad Mehdi Rokni Yazdi.

Works: Bayāan -aol-Fuorqāan fī Tawḥīhid -ael-Qur'āan; Risāliha dar Ma'rifat-u-nol-nafs

Shiyykh 'Abd al-Nabī Kujūrī (1292-1377SH)

SAyatollAh Shiyykh 'Abd al-Nabī Kujūrī(1292-1377SH), seminary's teacher in Mashhad. Also used Mīrzā Mahdi Gharawī Isfahānī's standpoint.

Works: Qawā'iavid-i Falsafieh; Qawā'idva id-aol-Nafs

Shiyykh 'Alī Namāzī Shāhrūdī (1915-1985)

One Shiyykh 'Alī Namāzī Shāhrūdī(1294-1364SH/1915-1985), one of the Shi'a scholars and authors in Mashhad. Student of Mīrzā Mahdi Gharawī Isfahānī. Namazi learned the basics and high levels in Mashhad from his father and other scholars of that land and memorized the whole Qur'an in his early youth. .

His most famous work is the book Mustadrak Safinat al-Bahar in Arabic and in ten volumes.

Shiykh Ghulām Ḥusayn Muḥāmī (died in 1954)

Ghulām Ḥusayn Muḥāmī(died in 1333SH/1954), Tendency to critique mysticism and philosophy. Mīrzā Mahdi Gharawī Isfahānī's student.

Shiykh Kādhim Mahdawī Dāmghānā (1898-1981)

One Mohammad Kādhim Mahdawī Dāmghānā(1277-1360SH/1898-1981), one of the great jurists and prominent lecturers of Mashhad Seminary. Mīrzā Mahdi Gharawī Isfahānī's student. He went to the holy city of Mashhad to continue his education and studied Arabic literature, logic with Mīrzā Abdul Javad Adib Neyshabouri and Fazel Bastami and then in 1352AH he traveled to Najaf and he had Masters such as Mīrzā Naeini , Agha Zia-ud-Din Iraqi and Haj Seyyed Abolhassan Isfahani .

Siyyid Muḥammad Banīhāshimī

He Siyyid Muḥammad Banīhāshimī pursued his seminary and university studies together, teacher and scholar. Assistant Professor of Islamic Azad University is one of his activities.

Works: He has authored scores of books and article including: Aftab dar Ghurbat (light in solitude); Raz-e Pinhani wa Ramz-e Paydayi (hidden secret and word to appearance); Ma'rifat-e Imam-e 'Asr (insight to the living Imamm).

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