

# Chapter 1: Our Responsibility in the Sphere of Culture (Part 1)

I thank God for giving me this opportunity to be in the company of the committed and honorable professors. I hope that this will serve as the beginning of a blessed and auspicious movement in discharging our heavy responsibilities and sublime duties in this particular period. At the outset, I beg your permission to touch on the importance of this responsibility so that in the future session, I can deal on the subject matters suggested by the dear brothers.

In the Islamic school of thought, there is a principle called the balance between capability and responsibility. That is, God the Exalted gives responsibility to every person commensurate to the extent of blessing, capability and talent endowed on him. The issue on human responsibility is an important subject with extensive discussions. Before properly embarking on this principle, I will briefly explain it.

## Responsibility Conscious or right-seeking man

Apart from the fact that through his own natural disposition [*fitrah*], man discerns that he is not like animals which are not set free and have no responsibility. Religions have also emphasized this fact. Perhaps, you might have heard that the famous Western philosopher, Immanuel Kant,<sup>1</sup> used to say, “Two things have touched and astonished me. One is the visage of stars in the sky while the other one is the voice in the natural disposition of man. In fact, this nature is the most beautiful voice that exists.” Anyway, through his primary nature, man, more or less, discerns that he has a certain responsibility. However, elucidating and proving this natural discernment is not of our concern in the current issue.

In contrast to the theory of instinctive essence of responsibility, there is another theory which has existed since ancient times and has gained special prominence and momentum in the recent decades. This theory believes that to talk about human responsibility and duty is an old-fashioned and retrogressive thinking which must be discarded. Accordingly, man in the present day demands his rights and claims from the world, nature, God, and government. Today, man is no longer regarded as servant, and God as

his Master. It is now the age of sovereignty and supremacy of man the age when instead of searching for his duty and responsibility, man is in pursuit of claiming for and demanding his rights which have been trampled upon and denied to him for many centuries.

Notwithstanding the second theory, intellect, conscience and natural disposition of man testify that he is responsible and aware of his obligations and duties to which he is responsible a fact that is consensually agreed upon by all religions. Many holy Qur'anic verses bear witness to the responsibility of man. Thus, the Holy Qur'an reads:

فَوَرَبِّكَ لَنَسْأَلَنَّهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ , عَمَّا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

***By your Lord, We will question them all concerning what they used to do. (15:92-93)***[2](#)

وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَلَكِنْ يُضِلُّ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۗ وَالتَّسَالُنَ عَمَّا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

***And you will surely be questioned concerning what you used to do. (16:93)***

وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ ۗ إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُولَٰئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْئُولًا

***Indeed the hearing and the eyesight, and the heart, all of these are accountable. (17:36)***

وَلَقَدْ كَانُوا عَاهَدُوا اللَّهَ مِنْ قَبْلُ لَا يُولُونَ الدُّبَارَ ۗ وَكَانَ عَهْدُ اللَّهِ مَسْئُولًا

***And pledges given to Allah are accountable. (33: 15)***

وَقِفُّهُمْ ۗ إِنَّهُمْ مَسْئُولُونَ

***[But first] stop them! For they must be questioned. (37:24)***

ثُمَّ لَتَسْأَلَنَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَنِ النَّعِيمِ

***Then, that day, you will surely be questioned concerning the blessing. (102:8)***

## **The Principle of Balance between Responsibility and Capability**

In principle, there is no dispute that man is responsible, but the point to which we must pay attention is

that responsibility to all individuals at all times and places is not fixed and identical as it has variance depending on different factors.

One of the factors that make the difference in the degree of obligations is the capability of each person. This is the same principle of the balance between capability and responsibility we have earlier mentioned. Since capabilities of individuals in terms of mental aptitude, physical or bodily prowess, emotional or psychological strength, social status and standing, and the like are not identical, it follows that their responsibilities are also not alike. Every person is responsible according to his or her capacity:

ا يُكَلِّفُ اللّٰهُ نَفْسًا اِلَّا وُسْعَهَا

***Allah does not task any soul beyond its capacity. (2:286)***

Undoubtedly, things that a president or a prime minister can do on account of the position he occupies is not equal to what a common employee can do, and thus, the responsibility of the former cannot be compared to that of the latter.

Another factor that makes a difference in the degree of carrying out the duties is the extent of danger that an individual or a community may face. The greater the danger, the bigger the responsibility. If the society is totally secured and everything is under control, you may relax at night with peace of mind. But if insecurity is prevalent and the security forces are too weak to protect people while thieves and evils are free, you will feel a bigger sense of responsibility for protecting your wife, children, house, and properties. If it is rumored that there are poisoned meat and food stuffs in the market, one may make inquiries and particularly think of what one is going to do.

In sum, when danger is more rampant, feelings to do something about it become much more prevalent in the inner selves. Of course, such feelings cannot be perceived if danger is not anticipated by means of evidence. But sometimes, danger actually exists, but because we are not aware of it and it is not proven to us, no matter how serious it might be, we will have no reaction to it. Thus, we have to sense first the danger so as to realize our corresponding responsibility.

## **The Extent of Capability and Responsibility in the Sight of University and Seminary Professors**

Dear brothers! For different reasons, you are more responsible than others are. One reason is the capabilities and talents that God the Exalted has endowed in you. If your talent were just like the others', you would not become university professors. The fact that you have been able to pursue higher education and research shows that your God-given talent and skills are greater than the others' are. Another reason is your social ranks and the influence that you could have on the youths and the students.

Ordinary people and even heads of offices and ministries cannot play the role of yours. By training the young generation and imparting ideas and views to them, you are actually charting the future of the country. In the future, administrators and heads of the community as well as those who will occupy the most important positions in the country, ranging from the position of the Supreme Leader and the president down to the deputies in the Majlis (Parliament), and other administrative posts, will be none but these youths of university and seminary students. For this reason, the responsibility of the professors, whether teaching in the university or in the Seminary, is greater and more crucial than the others’.

A third reason for which your and my responsibility is greater than anyone else’s responsibility is related to the existing state of affairs. At the present, we are experiencing dangers imposed by our enemies in different aspects, the most serious of which is the cultural one and, as a result, we can sense the enemies’ cultural attacks. If until yesterday, some people used to describe such cultural attacks as attempts of cultural exchanges and ideas, and claim that the so-called conspiracy was nothing but a pigment of imagination, today I do not think that those who have a bit of political understanding, insight and awareness will doubt that a serious cultural danger is threatening our community in general and the young generation in particular.

If we do not make haste to stop the cultural influence of the enemies, we will soon experience total cultural degeneration. Today, the information and communication technology as exemplified by the satellite and the Internet have provided unprecedented tools to the wicked ones. By using them, the enemies are extending on a daily basis the scope of their destructive activities and in an unimaginable speed, they are overrunning the cultural strongholds one after the other.

## **The Present Cultural and Moral Degeneration**

The moral and cultural corruptions that are being witnessed in these days are so critical that even the Westerners themselves are suffering from them while shouting in protest. Definitely, you yourselves know it better and more specific than I do. Here, I will cite one case as an example:

In the Holy Qur’an, the story of the people of Prophet Lut (‘a)<sup>3</sup> is emphatically highlighted. The Qur’an strongly condemns the people of Prophet Lut who used to commit wicked acts and extremely abominable practices of having sexual intercourses with others of the same sex (i.e. homosexuality). Describing this wicked deed as the peak of indecency, the Holy Qur’an says,

وَلُوطًا إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ إِنَّكُمْ لَتَأْتُونَ الْفَاحِشَةَ مَا سَبَقَكُمْ بِهَا مِنْ أَحَدٍ مِنَ الْعَالَمِينَ

***And Lut when he said to his people: You indeed commit an indecency none in the world has ever committed before you! (29:28)***

In the end, because of their persistence in this extremely abominable practice and not paying heed to

the admonitions and warnings of Prophet Lut (‘a), the divine chastisement was sent upon them and all of them perished. This story is related to a small city in one corner of the world with a limited number of people that existed thousands of years ago. As for today, look what is happening in the world! According to statistics Westerners themselves have given, more than fifty percent of the prominent figures in all countries in the world are afflicted with this repulsive act. Moreover, they have become publicly indulged in this wicked act in streets and staged demonstrations and rallies in support for homosexuality.

In some of these countries, members of the parliaments have declared it legal and officially given credence to it by approving pertinent bills. Today, in many countries of the world, the homosexuals have their own exclusive clubs, organizations, cultural centers, libraries, and magazines. I would not have believed in it if I myself had not seen it from a close distance. In one of my trips to the United States for a speaking engagement in Philadelphia, it was an opportunity for me to visit some cities like Washington.

I took a car together with a gentleman who is presently a deputy minister. We reached a crossroad where a handsome and elegant library could be seen in a corner. I said, “It would be better if we could pay a visit to this library.” The gentleman said, “No, it is not advisable for us to get out of the car here.” As I asked for a reason, he explained, “This is a library for the homosexuals and if we get out of the car here, we will be accused of being among them.” Right in that crossroad, I saw handsome men who wore short female dresses while behaving like women.

This is today’s state of affairs in the world. How impudent and insolent this is! Now, by using the data communication technology and the Internet, just imagine how fast and easy this contagious moral virus could be spread. It is not without reason that psychologists and educators in the West are warning against and deeming seriously dangerous the children watching immoral articles through the Internet. Today, by employing advanced technology, the Hollywood movie making is producing very interesting films and distributing them throughout the world, even though the most immoral articles are promoted in these films.

We wish that corruptions would have ended there, but the more serious menace is still the mental one. Just as moral corruptions in the present day are unprecedented, mental corruptions that are currently prevalent are still exceptional. If Satan has been the greatest agent of human mental and ideological corruption from the beginning of creation, today he himself is amazed by the misleading topics and skepticisms put forth by some wicked people! These people are now so well-rooted and established that if one expresses belief in something, they will answer, “What a foolish and stupid person this one is!”

Yes, indeed! The source of pride and intellectuality in the conception of the present man is to say, “I have doubt and skepticism in everything, and there is not a certain, fixed and absolute thing in the universe or anything that can be proved to be so!”

## Preservation of the Relative Balance between Elements of Guidance and Deviation in Every Age

The fact that we should keep in mind is that the divine wisdom dictates that in every age when mental and moral blemishes, corruptions and deviations grow and increase, the means, instruments and opportunities for true guidance and reformation will also be made available at the disposal of mankind. That is, God always keeps the balance between reformation and corruption, guidance and deviation, and He allows corruption and deviation to permeate the society in such a magnitude that if there were those who want to be guided and to tread the right path, they would not succeed in doing so. Today, if the communication technology grants new opportunities for corruption and deviations, the same technology also gives mankind opportunities and means for reform and guidance, which had been unknown before.

Today, many people have become acquainted with and converted to Islam through the Internet. If ever the radio, television, film and cinema, satellite, and Internet have wrong usages and are used to promote mental and moral deviation and corruption, there are also many people who have become familiar with Islam, the Islamic Revolution, Imam Khomeini, and Iran through the same means, and have inclined toward them and embraced Islam. There are many Muslims in the different parts of the world who embraced Shi'ism when they became familiar with the name, path and words of Imam Khomeini (*r*) through satellite and television. I was once a guest of a businessman in Singapore whose business was related to the computer. He said, "At the beginning, I was a Wahhabi,<sup>4</sup> but when I became acquainted with Imam Khomeini (*r*), listened to his speeches, and witnessed his movement, I had the conviction that the true Islam is what Imam Khomeini (*r*) is saying, and in this manner, I became a Shi'ah.

During my trip to some Latin American countries, in one of these countries, probably Chile, the officials and heads of a university there said to me, "We are concerned of the young generation of our country and their future, and we do not know exactly what we have to do. We are placing at your disposal the youths of this university. You come here and on the basis of your own method of teaching, set a program for them and we will give you all facilities. It is because we are certain that the best method of teaching in the present day is the method of you, Muslims."

The head of the said university used to accompany us to guide us and introduce the different parts and centers of the university. When it is noontime, we said that we wanted to pray. They provided a place for us and we performed our prayer. Although he was Christian, the head of the university participated with us in that prayer. As this act of him surprised us, he said to us, "I do not know exactly what you are saying and reciting in your devotional acts, but I really appreciated this state of your prostration. I enjoyed it and I became inclined to participating with you in this prayer."

In Havana, the capital of a country ruled by Communism, a veteran Spanish-origin professor of history stood up in front of the other professors, who were our hosts, and delivered a speech in which he said, "Since youth, I had been interested in studying and conducting research about two figures; the Prophet

of Islam as a world figure, and Khayyam<sup>5</sup> as an outstanding Iranian scholar. However, for some time now, I have found intense interest in something which has cast shadow upon the previous two ones. Today, I am interested in studying the person who has changed the world; namely, Imam Khomeini.” At this point, the old professor of the University of Havana became emotional and lost his normal temperament. He bowed down twice in front of me and kissed my hand, asking me for a copy of the Qur’an in Spanish. This took place in Havana after fifty years of communist rule; a professor who perhaps is the oldest one in the said university.

At any rate, my point is that we should not presume that during this time when the instruments of corruption have multiplied and permeated everywhere, it is too late and nothing can be done anymore. This is a wrong notion and we should never feel hopeless and be dejected. God is All-wise and it does not behoove Him to abandon this world which He has created for the advancement and perfection of human beings and leave it at the hands of some wicked souls. As I have said, if ever the tools of deviation and corruption have multiplied, the new ways of true guidance and reform which had never existed during the time of any prophet or Imam have also come into being.

The social conditions we have today to effect change and make quantum leaps are unprecedented, and we witnessed an example of which in this Revolution and the eight years of resistance and sacred defense. The same youths, who were trained in the corrupt environment and society during the time of the Shah, all of a sudden experienced such a change and acquired such lofty faith and gnosis. They led the eight years of sacred defense heroically, formidably, selflessly, and valiantly, and created enduring and unprecedented epics.

Even today, a deep glance proves that young men and women who are so much willing to grasp and learn mystical topics and points related to the love for God, and are covering within a day a hundred-year journey. If they are properly guided, they will be willing to offer any sort of sacrifice and selflessness and to be heedless of all materialistic enjoyments something many examples of which you witnessed throughout the Revolution and in the battlefronts. Today, the burden of guiding this young generation who has the best talents and the purest natural dispositions lies on the shoulders of you and I.

## **Most of the Great Transformations Owed to the Ideas of Thinkers**

We are talking about responsibility and the subjects I mentioned are meant to make us better understand our responsibility. If you are observant enough, you will see that perhaps more than ninety percent of those who were successful in different aspects and initiated great changes and transformations in the entire world have been scholars from the university and *‘ulama’* from the seminary. In the different fields economic, sociology, politics, religion, and the like you will observe that it is like that; the initial source of change had been the idea of a single person and it has been gradually spread, and finally led to a great transformation. Of course, transformations have not been always positive as there have been also negative ones.

The cases that led to the emergence of moral or intellectual deviations have multiplied exceedingly and become extremely dangerous. Among these deviations, one may refer to the current sexual and moral deviation in the West. As acknowledged by Westerners, the most crucial factor of this deviation was the theory of the famous German psychologist, Sigmund Freud. In studying the causes of psychological disorders, Freud concluded that these ailments are the effect of suppressed desires and cravings, especially sexual desires. Based on this analysis, Freud said that in order to prevent the spread of psychological disorders, sexual freedoms must be granted without restrictions in the community.

Freud may not have had bad intentions and motives in explaining this theory, but whatever the case might be, this theory became the root of sexual promiscuity and moral corruptions that are witnessed in the West. Of course, whims and caprice of people and greediness of the profiteers and opportunists also contributed to the intensity of this wave, but the theory of Freud, anyway, made the first shoot. Nowadays, one of the most profitable industries in the world is focused on sex and sexual matters. The bestseller films in the world are pornographic films, and the most viewed TV channels are those showing more sensual programs and films. The origin of all that has been an idea of a psychologist.

In the perspective of intellectual corruption and decadence, one may also refer to the Marxist thought and its catastrophic consequences. It is a philosophy which ruled approximately a half of the globe in more than seventy years, and as acknowledged by the countries and nations that professed it, it brought about multiple destructive outcomes to them. The Marxist thought which nurtured millions of atheists and deniers of God and violently waged war against religion and God was also a mental product of another German scholar named Karl Marx.

Of course, one must not be heedless of the positive transformations brought about by scholars and *'ulama'*. The great Islamic Revolution of Iran which, as confessed by both foes and friends, was the greatest event of the 20th century, and was also the product of the ideas of a religious scholar named Imam Khomeini. The Imam was no more than a single person and had no money, armament or power. The only thing he had was a sublime idea an idea which at the beginning, perhaps, ninety-nine percent of his close friends and well-wishers did not believe to be realizable. Yet, all of them were witnesses that this man in one corner of the globe at a humble and simple house was able to render helpless the two superpowers of the East and West.

This happened while he was not seeking after power or fame. Although it is normal that after the end of a class session of a professor, the students escort him along the way, the Imam never allowed anybody to escort him along the alley and street, and if ever he found someone doing so, he would emphatically dissuade him from doing it. He was a *marja' taqlid*<sup>6</sup> yet for a long time he did not permit his treatise on practical laws [*risalah 'amaliyyah*] to be published, and when he finally gave consent, he did not will to spend a single penny from the share of the Imam [*sahm Imam*]<sup>7</sup> to be spent on it. I myself know who raised the fund, for the first time, for the publication of his *risalah 'amaliyyah*. He was far away from power and fame, as he kept aloof from them. By relying only on an idea, he was able to affect such a

great transformation a transformation that disrupted all global equations. All of these were positive impacts of an idea.

At any rate, I want to emphasize that a person, a professor in a university or a seminary, can bring about even a global change, whether it is positive or negative. If we pay attention to this fact, we will then realize more the importance of our responsibility and be willing to spend time. And if it is needed, we are ready to postpone our class sessions and sit together to tackle these issues, think about our society and youths, and undertake our mission in relation to Islam and the Muslim community. Now, in view of these matters, the fundamental question can be as follows: In discharging this responsibility, what should be done?

In reply to this question, allow me first to deal with the following preliminary point:

## Importance of the Cultural Revolution

I do not know, dear fellows, to what extent you remember, but during the first years of the Revolution, the late Imam mentioned the issue of Cultural Revolution, and most of the universities in the country were closed for a few years. Some people from different parts of the world came here to see what paradigm this Cultural Revolution the Imam is saying; for, a cultural revolution has a historical precedence and that is related to the cultural revolutionary experience of China which had been founded by Mao Zedong (Tse-tung). Anyway, numerous statesmen and scholars around the world set off and came here to see for themselves what the Imam wanted to do. I can remember it well that a Jewish professor from Australia had come to Qum and I discussed with him some points. He wanted to know what exactly the Imam's cultural revolution was, which I explained to him.

Unfortunately, the state of affairs was such that the Imam failed to properly elucidate his ideal and to materialize it, because the Revolution had been still fresh and there were multiple problems and concerns. Then, it did not take long when the eight-year war was imposed on us that emerged as the most serious problem of the country and so many resources, facilities and thoughts were invested in it. However, the wicked ones inside and outside the country joined together and did not allow the Cultural Revolution that the Imam had in his mind to be put into action.

Thus, if one had such an analysis that all these economic and military pressures and sanctions and other problems were meant to hinder the realization of the Imam's Cultural Revolution, he had indeed not missed the point, and his analysis should not be regarded as improbable. Take a look at Bosnia! Why did they commit all those crimes, mercilessly and brutally killing and beheading thousands of men and women, young and old, and even infants, while those who constitute the associations for the protection of animals and were staging demonstrations for the sake of certain animals sat idle in this case and shamelessly shut their mouths? Was it nothing but a cultural issue at stake? Were these Muslims more than two or three million?

They have neither a large population, nor land, nor wealth, nor armament, nor technology, nor anything else important. Yet, why was this heavy assault brought upon them? The reply is only one thing: Islam and culture! They witnessed that at the end of the twentieth century, a Muslim country at the heart of Europe had come into being and announced its existence. They feared lest Islam and Islamic culture would gradually spread in the neighboring countries and then in the entire Europe, and change everything in the long run. So, they decided to nip this movement in the bud, and they did the same thing in Algeria, Turkey and other Muslim countries.<sup>8</sup> Why was that? It is because they fear Islam. What is Islam by the way? It is nothing but an idea, a culture. As such, they are afraid of ideas and culture.

The conclusion of this relatively long preliminary remark is that in reply to the question, “What should be done?” we have to say, “A cultural movement must be launched.” These discussions should make us realize more than ever our responsibility, and we should not think that intellectual discussion and cultural activity are worthless and that every problem in the country is related to economic issues, foreign policy and the like.

## **The Role of Cultural Movements in the Perpetuity of the Revolution**

We also need to plan for a cultural movement. We have to make clear our path and the form of our movement, understand the conditions we are in, and identify proper solutions. Also, we have to predict the vulnerabilities of this movement and path and to think of the necessary measures to deal with them. The first step along this direction is that we have to think anew, enhance our studies, reconstruct our way of thinking, and commence our work with formidable and fundamental infrastructure.

During the early days of the Revolution, we had an overall idea that global arrogance and its agents must be vigorously resisted, and on the basis of this overall idea we staged action and the Revolution triumphed and reached this point. Now, many people are still attached to these principles, but we have to bear in mind that such an overall understanding is no longer enough for the consistency and perpetuity of the Revolution. For the commencement of the movement and the victory of the Revolution, it was more anchored in emotions and feelings and it then fruited.

However, to continue the movement, the same method can no longer be adopted. Rather, from then on, we have to transfer the essential basis and gravity of the movement from the emotional and psychological aspect to an aspect of understanding and insight. Today, people are no longer kept in the scene through beast-beating, lamentation, slogan, and agitation. Of course, those things must be preserved and kept intact, but the point here is that the essential catalyst of the movement must be designed and focused on cognizance, understanding and cultural engineering. Today, the enemies have also found out the physiognomy of this point, and instead of focusing the gravity of their movement on economic, military and political pressures, they are spending most of their resources, facilities and forces on cultural activities and movements. In doing so, they are trying to penetrate into the camp of the

Revolution and gradually besiege it again.

If we want to prevent this cultural penetration and hinder the infiltration of the enemies, we have to desist from this indifference, lack of planning and dissension. If we want university professors to undertake cultural work and inculcate Islam and Islamic values to the minds and hearts of the students and the youths, we have to arm ourselves first intellectually and culturally, and we have to understand the principles and foundations of Islamic thought and culture as well as the principles and foundations of Western thought and culture and the skepticisms they are casting, so that we can be responsive to the community in general and the young generation in particular, and attend to their intellectual and cultural concerns, problems and doubts.

Of course, God the Exalted is the protector and guardian of His religion:

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ

***Indeed We have sent down the Reminder and indeed We will preserve it. (15:9)***

In the midst of all hostilities and darkness, God will anchor the ship of religion and Islam off the shore of salvation:

هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظَاهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ

***It is He who has sent His Apostle with the guidance and the religion of truth that He may make it prevail over all religions though the polytheists should be averse. (61:9)***

Yet, we have to ask why this preservation of the religion [*din*] should not be through us; and why we should not be among those who have been chosen by God for the exaltation of the word of monotheism [*kalimah at-tawhid*]<sup>9</sup> and the protection of His religion.

We hope that God the Exalted will give such an opportunity to all of us. In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that, today, we have to realize our very sensitive and historic responsibility, and in undertaking this responsibility, we must acquire the necessary readiness by eliminating our intellectual and philosophical shortcomings. We have to bear in mind that if, God forbid, in discharging this crucial duty we are negligent and we act listlessly, we will be held responsible before God the Exalted the Prophet (S), The Holy Imams (‘a), and the martyrs [*shuhada’*] who preserved this blessed tree [*shajarah at-tayyibah*] by offering their blood, and they will not easily forgive us.

<sup>9</sup> Immanuel Kant (1724–1804): the German philosopher considered by many as the most influential thinker of modern times. Describing in the *Metaphysics of Ethics* (1797) his ethical system which is anchored in a notion that the reason is the

final authority for morality, actions of any sort, Kant believed, must be undertaken from a sense of duty dictated by reason, and no action performed for expediency or solely in obedience to law or custom can be regarded as moral. [Trans.]

[2.](#) In this volume, the translation of Qur'anic passages is adapted from Sayyid 'Ali Quli Qara'i, *The Qur'an with a Phrase-by-Phrase English Translation* (London: Islamic College for Advanced Studies Press, 2004). [Trans.]

[3.](#) The abbreviation, 'a stands for the Arabic invocative phrase: 'alayhi's-salam, 'alayhim'us-salam, or 'alayha's-salam [may peace be upon him/them/her], which is used after the names of the prophets, angels, Imams from the Prophet's progeny, and saints. [Trans.]

[4.](#) Wahhabi: follower of Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab, the founder of the Wahhabi sect. For information on Wahhabism, see Ayatullah Ja'far Subhani, *Wahhabism* (Tehran: Naba' Organization, 1996), <http://www.al-islam.org/wahhabism>; [1] Hamid Algar, *Wahhabism: A Critical Essay* (New York: Islamic Publications International, 2002). [Trans.]

[5.](#) Ghiyath ad-Din Abū'l-Fatah 'Umar ibn Ibrahim al-Khayyam (1044–1123) was an outstanding mathematician and astronomer as well as a celebrated poet, philosopher and physician. In *The History of Western Philosophy*, Bertrand Russell remarks that Khayyam was the only man known to as both poet and mathematician. He reformed the solar calendar in 1079 CE with his calendar, *At-Tarikh al-Jalali*, which is superior to the Gregorian calendar and is accurate to within one day in 3,770 years. His work on Algebra, *Maqalat fi'l-Jabr wa'l-Muqabalah*, was highly valued throughout Europe in the Middle Ages. In the West, he is best known for his poetic work, *Ruba'iyat* [quatrains], which was translated by Edward Fitzgerald in 1859. For an overview of his contribution in other fields of science, visit: <http://users.erols.com/zenithco/khayyam.html> [2]. [Trans.]

[6.](#) Marja' taqlid: a scholar of proven learning and piety whose authoritative rulings one follows in matters of religious practice. [Trans.]

[7.](#) Share of the Imam [sahm Imam]: one half of the khums duty (the other half being the share of the Sayyids/Sadat (descendants of the Prophet) [sahm as-Sadat]) to be paid to the living Imam, and in the Age of Occultation [asr al-ghaybah], to the most learned living mujtahid who is the giver's marja' taqlid [source of emulation]. For more information, see Sayyid Muhammad Rizvi, *Khums: An Islamic Tax* (Toronto: Islamic Education and Information Center, 1992), <http://www.al-islam.org/beliefs/practices/khums.html> [3]. [Trans.]

[8.](#) It alludes to the acts of sabotage done against the victories of Islamists in the electoral processes in recent years. [Trans.]

[9.](#) Kalimah at-tawhid: the recitation of la ilaha illallah [there is no god but Allah].

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<https://www.al-islam.org/investigations-and-challenges-muhammad-taqi-misbah-yazdi/chapter-1-our-responsibility-sphere-culture#comment-0>

## Links

[1] <http://www.al-islam.org/wahhabism>;

[2] <http://users.erols.com/zenithco/khayyam.html>

[3] <http://www.al-islam.org/beliefs/practices/khums.html>