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Foreword

The present work has its genesis in a series of lectures given to groups of young students at the Quran theological seminary that began in the academic year 1974–75. These lectures which followed a novel method that will be described later, continued up to 1978.

After the victory of the Islamic Revolution the writer continued to teach, lecturing groups of military personnel on such subjects as cognition, cognition of God, justice, and prophethood with each successive audience there were improvements in both form and content, resulting in no small measure from enthusiastic audience–participation. A final presentation of the material was as a series of lectures given to members of the Islamic Revolutionary Guardian Corps (IRGC) on a remote – instruction basis.

The lectures were later broadcast by IRTV, the Islamic Republic of Iran's television network, and they also appeared in the Maktab al–Enqclab '('Message of the Revolution') magazine published by the IRGC'S ideological and political instruction unit. In the spring of 1986, with the publication of the first volume of Osul al–Aqaycd Eslami ('Principles of Islamic Beliefs'), the text of which was based on the revised and expanded text of the lectures as published in Maktab al–Enqelab. Some new material, including sections on the correction of ideology and freedom of opinion, was added at this time.

The original purpose of these lectures and their published texts, which arc the fruit of many years of research into questions of Islamic ideology, was to help correct religious belief by exposing superstition and fostering sound ideology, particularly among ordinary Iranians and the other Persian–speakers to whom they were addressed. The writer has been most gratified by the response so far evoked.

It soon became evident; however, that one of the most significant effects of Iran's Islamic Revolution has been the growing interest in Islam which it has generated among people all over the world. It was therefore decided to produce an English language version of the first pamphlet of the first volume of Osul al-'Aqayed Eslami, and hopefully or the subsequent volumes, which are at an advanced stage of preparation.

The present English text is a translation of the original Persian with a small amount of additional explanatory material deemed useful to the English reader. It also incorporates some minor Corrections

and revisions to the Persian original as published.

In humbling submitting this volume to a wider and relatively unknown readership, the writer hopes that his original purpose will be further served and that English-speaking Muslims will benefit from a fresh analysis of the ground work of their faith. At the same lime he has been encouraged to believe that there is an even larger group of potential readers in the world who have hitherto been deprived of an extensive survey of Islamic ideology. It is to this group in particular that the present pamphlet is most respectfully dedicated.

Mohammadi-ye Reyshahari Tehran March 20 1988

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