Chapter III

Ideological Foundations of Islam
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In this chapter definition of ideology will be discussed. Also it is shown how ideology is based on worldview. The discussion may throw light over the two main kinds of worldviews vis-à-vis materialistic and Islamic worldview. With regard to materialistic worldview, it will be shown that how it developed as a school of thought. The discussion may cover the causes i.e., science, socialism and inadequacy of Church (e.g. anthropological concept of God, August Comte’s conception of God etc.) responsible for materialist world-view particularly in the Europe. At the end worldview of Tawhid, status of man and religion will be discussed.

The term ‘ideology’ - composed of the word ‘ideal’, which means thought, fancy, concept, belief and the like, and the word ‘logy’, which means logic, science, or knowledge - can be defined as the science of beliefs and ideas.¹ Ideologue, according to this definition, is an advocate of a particular belief or ideology. In this context, ideology consists of those particular beliefs or ideas adhered to by a particular group, a social class, or a nation, or a race. Ideology, according to Shariati, comprises three stages. The first stage is the way we conceive and receive the universe, existence and man. The second stage consists of the particular way we understand and evaluate all those things and ideas, which form our social and mental environment. The third stage entails those proposals, methods, approaches and ideals that we employ to change the status quo with which we are not satisfied. It is the third stage that an ideology must begin to fulfill its mission by providing its advocates with desired proposals, aims and ideals, and particular plans on whose basis the prevalent condition of a society must change and progress.²

² ibid., p.155
of ideology, discussed by Shariati, is called world-view. Worldview is how one considers the universal phenomenon. If one discerns it devoid of any aim, design, goal and purpose, he reacts to it in the same way. In contrast to it, if he perceives it otherwise, having a special direction, goal and purpose, he responds and reacts with full responsibility and determination. This understanding of universe in a particular way is termed as a ‘world-view’ and from this world-view, there emerges a particular ‘belief’ on the basis of which one’s reacting to the world is called ‘ideology’. So every ideology depends on its worldview. Every school of thought whether monotheistic, naturalistic, materialistic, whether idealism or fascism or Marxism, without any exception should be based on any foundation, i.e., a world-view. If one has no worldview, his all beliefs, information is just like a man who has accumulated a heap of house-hold goods of various kinds in a hooch poach way, which never gives a domestic view. An individual’s attitude towards the world is often bound to determine his actions. One is reluctant to keep the door open during dreadful and dark night, as long as he does not recognize one who is knocking at the door. As long as one does not know whether he has to attend the funeral ceremony or a marriage function, we cannot chose a well-suited dress for him. As long as one does not know about the climatic conditions of the city he is going to visit, cannot chose clothes befitting the atmosphere there. The image that existence imprints in one’s mind will have direct influence upon his deeds, beliefs, social behaviour and private life. The way he lives has much to do with the way he perceives the outside world. For example how Umer-e-Khayam perceives this world, he says, “No one has left this earthly abode and

3 It is pertinent to mention here that according to Islam the primordial nature of human beings is familiar with God. In other words, they are aware of God deep in their conscience. Thus, all doubts and denials of God arise because of human beings’ deviation from their true nature: “And when thy Lord brought forth their descendants from the lions of the sons of Adam and took them to witness against themselves. “Am I not” said He, “your Lord?” They said, “yes, we witness”. (Qura’n 7:22)

5 ibid., pp.18,19.
6 Mohsin Qarayati, Majmua Darshei az Qura’n, Qum, Payez 1366, p.13.
ever returned; and when nobody is aware of the world hereafter!” is the world-view and “so enjoy what is before you”, is ideology. Thus the world-view and ideology have a sort of cause and effect relationship. Hafiz Shirazi says, “Since our destiny has been made in our absence (i.e. without asking man, what is his wish, every man has been given his nourishment) is a kind of detrimental world-view of Hafiz: “So never find fault, if you receive (sustenance) in a measured limit”, is the ideology of Hafiz.7 Shariati quotes holy verse of the Qura’n “Everything (that exists) will perish except what faces towards Him” (28:88)8 It means that in the life and in the man only one thing is everlasting and which values is what effort takes its course towards the direction of God; and all other is subject to flux and will pass away, is a kind of religious world-view. It puts forth a particular way of life; a code of conduct - is the religious ideology.9 Shariati opines: to study the world-view of any school of thought, any particular social group or nation is to study the types of cultural forms, patterns, and characteristics that group or nation has developed and cherished.10 According to Shariati, the peculiar spiritual and material aspects of his society often influence the world-view of an individual. Shariati quotes Henry Bergson that the worldview by an individual living in a closed society is a confined world.11

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7 Ali Shariati, n.4, p. 21.
8 This is the transcription of Shariati (her chiz nabod shudeni ast juz anchi roo besoyi ooe dared). But other translators have put it “Everything (that exists) will perish except His face”. (Ref The Holy Qur-an, English translation of the Meaning and Commentary, Revised and Edited by the Presidency of Islamic Researches, IFTA, Saudi Arabia). Sheikh Muhammad Sarwar has translated the holy verse, “Everything will be destroyed except God. To Him belongs judgment and to Him you will all return”. (Ref The Holy Qura’n Arabic Text and English translation, (Tr) Sheikh Muhammad Sarwar, Islamic Seminary, USA.
9 Ali Shariati, n.4, p.21,22.
11 ibid., p.226. The closed society or religion, in the view of Bergson, is that which confines itself within the walls of its peculiar beliefs, traditions and cultural elements. This kind of society is seen to be static, unaffected by the passage of time. But the open society is that which has removed all the hindering confines and established open cultural relations with other societies and civilizations. Because of this openness, it has benefited from perpetual progress and prosperity.
Materialistic World-view

Shariati has made a mention of materialistic world-view. As a philosophical school it holds that there is only one fundamental reality in the universe and that is matter. It maintains that all the elements, phenomena, processes, actions and reactions in nature can be explained as manifestations of this primeval matter. Moreover it denies any conscious intelligence and definite will to the universe. And it claims that the universe was not created by any intelligent will or force, nor was there any reason underlying its creation in the very beginning. In this way, the universe is like an idiot-house owned by a mindless and senseless idiot in which a diversity of elements have crowded and blended together on the basis of their physical and chemical relations to make nothing. But amid these man is the only unique element that has been able to reach the stage of self-awareness in this aimless, absurd, and futile domain of nothingness.\textsuperscript{12} Shariati opines that man’s alienation from the universe, and his conflict with it, often results from his conceiving it from the viewpoint of materialism. This type of outlook will inevitably lead him to the rationale that he is not and can not be compatible with this unconscious material system. This type of world-view is called by Shariati ‘closed world-view’ (jahan benye-basta).\textsuperscript{13} In such a limited i.e. materialistic world-view, man sees the world as insane and the sky to be devoid of any feeling, sense, and divine power. He can not find any meaning and purpose in existence, no inherent law and order in nature. So he does not seem to see any difference between an act of suicide and a feat of sacrifice, for he believes in the absence of any divined sponsoring power to meet out reward and punishment. He believes that it is only man who can respond to the needs and desires of his own kind. In this unfeeling and absurd world it is only man who has been able to become aware of himself and

\textsuperscript{12} Saying of Sartre, quoted by Ali Shariati, n.l, p.229.

\textsuperscript{13} Ali Shariati, Jamia Shinasi Adyan, Iran, n.d p. 16.
of the fact that he must learn to live with his own species. Thus men have become conscious, and consciousness has helped them to feel responsible for one another in this alien impersonal world. So they are responsible for man, not for the universe or any metanatural power. This responsibility arises from the fact that all men are condemned to live in a world that can not comprehend them at all. Shariati mentions Heidegger that man is a piece of stone flung out aimlessly into the desert of existence. Into this desert his species is being born without any shelter, any hope, any refuge; but co-existence and collaboration may reduce such threats and anxieties. And only in a community of shared responsibility and effort can a better life be attained.14

The materialistic world suggests the world-view of godless universe where everything is permitted. If there is no God, then everything is permitted then there is no way to distinguish good from evil, murder from sacrifice, because there will not be any divine intelligence, any moral order and universal will, to judge our deeds on earth. To be very simple, if you were alone in your room and were certain that you were not being spied on from anywhere above, under, and around, you would feel to do whatever you wished. But if you were sure that some invisible eye was watching you, you would feel constrained to check your actions. In this way, what is good and bad may depend on how it may please life. So good and bad can not have intrinsic meanings in the universe.15 This is how the materialistic world-view ends in absurdity. Shariati mentions that since the renaissance, which represents the triumph of materialistic world-view over that of religion, the Western society has been exposed to materialism and its by-product: absurdism. Today the spirit of absurdism has exerted its utmost influence on the arts, letters, and philosophies of this century. It is the art of the absurdist artist that tries to find meaning in what he considers to be absurd and meaningless.

14 Ali Shariati, n.1, p.231.
15 ibid., p.232.
Materialism as a School of Thought

Materialism has taken the form of school of thought in 18th and 19th century, which it did not have earlier. What the earlier scholars particularly of Greece and elsewhere have commented about pre-eternity of matter or some other opinions of this kind, does not amount to the negation of God; and the super-natural and that too was individual tendency towards materialism. The inclination towards materialism in ancient times did exist, both among the educated as well as illiterate classes. In the modern ages too the case is similar.

Causes Responsible for Materialistic World-view in Europe

Shariati has mentioned two main causes for the development of materialistic worldview in 18th and 19th century i.e., Science and Socialism. He opines that in the modern ages, when feudalism was replaced by bourgeoisie, religion was greatly challenged. It is due to this fact because feudalism was supported and justified by religion; feudalism was the infrastructure of the society, and religion its superstructure. The new bourgeoisie launched extensive attacks against the vestiges of feudalism, its religious and cultural heritage. Thus this new trend paved the way for replacing the religion by science.

Shariati, however, never claims that science possessed the capacity to guide the man for achieving his high ideal goals, rather science was itself exploited and was put in the service of capitalism. It never meant to him that by exploring the causes responsible for mysterious phenomena made people suspicious about truthfulness of religion. However, materialists themselves make a great effort to present the matter as such, and they try to convince others that the cause of growth and prevalence of materialism during the 18th

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16 Murtaza Mutahhari, Ital-e-gerayesh beh maddigari, Majmua A’athar, Vol.1, Intisharat-e-Sadra, Qum, 22 Behman 1372, pp.475.
17 ibid.
and 19th centuries was the emergence of scientific theories and that it was the spread of science which resulted in mankind abandoning the religion and being drawn towards it. Shariati also never held science itself responsible to negate the precious gifts of human soul, but indeed it is rationale of the bourgeoisie, which has always spoken in the language of science and shielded itself with science.

Shariati held inadequacy of the Church, whether due to its theological ideas or its inhuman attitude towards the masses and especially its intolerant attitude towards new thinkers (scientists), responsible for such a drifting of masses in Europe towards materialism.

Anthropological Conception of God

The Church painted a human picture of God and presented Him to the people in an anthropological form. Those who were brought up to conceive God with their human and physical features under the influence of the Church, later, with advances in science, came to find that these ideas were inconsistent with scientific, objective, and sound rational criteria. Walter Oscar Lundberg has mentioned two causes i.e. inadequate theological ideas and the violent conduct of Church responsible for degradation of religious tendency and advocating of materialism. Flammarion in the book *God and Nature* observes: ‘The Church presented God in this manner’: “The distance between his right and left eye is 12000 leagues”. It is obvious that persons with even a meagre knowledge of science could not believe in such a being.

19 Murtaza Mutahhari, n.16, pp.475, 476.
20 Ali Shariati, n.18, p.55.
21 Walter Oscar is one of the scholars who presented a scientific argument for the existence of God, in the book titled *The Evidence of God in an Expanding Universe*, (Ed) John Clover Monsma. The said book is consisting of forty articles by forty scientists belonging to various fields of specialization, wherein each scholar has presented arguments proving the existence of God in accordance with his own specialized area of study.
22 Quoted by Murtaza Mutahhari, n.16, p.481.
Auguste Comte’s Conception of God

Flammarion quotes a statement of Auguste Comte, the founder of positivism and what is known as scientism, which offers a good view of the way God was pictured by such scholars as Auguste Comte living in the Christian environment of that time. Flammarion says: Auguste Comte has said: “Science has dismissed the Father of nature and the universe from his post, consigning him to oblivion, and while thanking him for his temporary services, it has escorted him back to the frontiers of his greatness”. What Auguste Comte wants to convey is that earlier every event that took place in the world was explained by relating it to God as its cause. When it was, for example, said that fever is caused by God and when science discovered that fever is not caused by God but by a certain kind of bacteria; here God retreated one step. Henceforth the theist was forced to say that we would shift our argument to the bacteria: Who created the bacteria? When science also discovered the cause of bacteria by identifying the conditions in which they come into existence. Again God had to retreat one step, and the argument proceeded by asking the cause of that cause. God’s retreat continued, and, at last, with the spread and expansion of science the causes of a large number of phenomena were discovered. Even those phenomena whose causes were not yet discovered were known for certain to possess causes belonging to the category of causes already known. Thus man had to dismiss God for good with an apology, because there no longer remained any place and post for Him. The state of God at this stage was that of an employee in an office in which he was initially given an important post, but with the recruitment of more competent individuals his responsibilities were gradually taken away and eventually, when he was divested of all his earlier responsibilities, there remained no post and place left for him. At this time the manager of the office

23 ibid., p.483.
approaches him, thanks him for his past services, and with an excuse hands him the dismissal orders and bids him farewell once and for all. Taken together, the observations of Auguste Comte suggest that in his opinion God is something similar to a part and factor of this world, albeit mysterious and unknown, by the side of other factors. How wrong and misleading this kind of thinking is, and how ignorant it is of the station of the Divine! Qur'a'n says, “They measured not God with His true measure” (6:91).

There were two other aspects in which the Church committed major mistake. Firstly, it places certain scientific notions inherited from earlier philosophers and Christian theologians in the rank of its religious tenants, considering opposition to them to be heresy. Secondly, it did not stop at exposing the heretics and excommunicating those whose heresy had been proven and confirmed, but instead, like a violent police regime, it investigated the beliefs and convictions of persons by employing various tactics and tried to detect the faintest signs of dissent to religious beliefs in individuals and groups and persecuted them in an indescribably ruthless manner. As a result, scholars and scientists did not dare entertain any ideas opposed to what the Church considered as science; that is, they were constrained to think in accordance with the Church’s thinking. The intense repression of ideas which was a common thing from the 12th to the 19th century in countries like France, England, Germany, Holland, Portugal, Poland and Spain, naturally resulted in the development of a general extremely negative reaction towards religion. The tribunals held by the Church and known as the Inquisition courts were initiated with an objective reflected in their very name given to them. Shariati mentions before that the Renaissance scientists and thinkers were deprived of intellectual freedom; nevertheless they strove to express their ideas, resisting censorship and persecution. But if found opposed to the dominant spirit of the
time and the authority, they would be persecuted, or humiliated in a most demeaning way, or even lynched in most horrible manners. Will Durant says:

“The Inquisition had a special procedure of inquiry and prosecution. Before the inquisition held its tribunal in a city, the summons of faith were communicated from the church pulpits. The people were asked to inform the inquisitors of any heretics or pagans that they knew of. They were encouraged to denounce and accuse their neighbours, friends and relatives. The informers were promised total secrecy. Anyone who knew a heretic and would not denounce him or hid him in his house faced denunciation and excommunication... The method of torture varied from time to time and from one place to another. Sometimes the accused was left to hang with his hands tied behind his back. Or he would be bound in say a way that he could not move, then water was poured into his throat so as to suffocate him. Or his arms and fists were so tightly bound with ropes that they cut into his flesh and reached the bones.”

The number of victims between the years 1480-1488 that is in eight years exceeded 8800 burnt on stakes, and 96,494 condemned to severe punishments. According to estimates, from the year 1480 to 1808 more than 31,912 were condemned to death by fire and 291,450 were condemned to severe penalties.

Shariati adds that despite all these atrocities the thinkers or new stars however endured and struggled hard until they triumphed. These stars intensified the conflicts and brought about the decline of the Middle Ages. Individuals such as Kepler, Galileo, Descartes, Kant, Francis Becon, Roger Becon, and many other familiar figures of the renaissance were some of the

24 Ali Shariati, Makhruta jamia shinasi farhangi, n.p., Ardebehesht, 1356, p.26
26 Ibid., p. 360.
most outstanding stars of the time. They were the ones who caused the fall of the medieval church with its theocracy and the established clerical intellectuals; they cut the aggressive hand of Papaism with all its bullying tentacles from the intellectual, moral, mental, and social life of the society.27

Socialism

Socialism was the second blow for the religion and a boost in developing tendency of materialism in Europe in 19th century.28 Socialists tried to attribute the evolution of the scientific mind to man’s active departure from religion. Shariati states:

"Racism, a crass and repugnant, primitive attitude, which had been shunned for centuries, was re-introduced and reinforced and practiced under the name of science too. Class conflict, as a great social force, began to intensify the terror of colonialism. Fallacious ideologies, which had misled and metamorphosed mankind much more frequently than certain decadent and degenerating religions, began to afflict humanity in different ways. Great philosophers were used to justify and support great dictators."29

The new trend of Marxism exploited the weakness and corruption of the religious classes of Christianity and infers from it that religion and religious studies are futile.30 Scholars of Islam have also highlighted other such causes responsible for materialist tendencies in the West. Some of them are mentioned below:

27 Ali Shariati, n.24, p.25
29 Ali Shariati, n.24, p.33.
1. The inadequacies of philosophical ideas like the problem of first Cause, Identity of Man Reality, the Creation for thing's need and cause, eternity of matter etc.


3. Inefficient and Non-specialist scholars to respond different quarries of the free thinkers regarding various serious and metaphysical issues. The religion was presented in such a way as one has either to choose the world or the religion; either God or the freedom.

In such a situation, the West is no longer blamed to have a materialistic tendency.31

Status of Man in Islam

Before explaining the world-view of Tawhid, it is feasible to discuss the very nature of man, his innate, his natural instincts; and what kind of phenomenon does Islam see in man and what status Islam has given to him.

Man in Islam is a bi-dimensional being, a creature with a dual nature. His one dimension inclines to mud and lowliness, to stagnation and immobility.32 Other dimension of man that of the divine spirit, as it is called by Qur'an, 'aspire' to ascend and to mount up to the highest summit conceivable - to God and the spirit of God.33 In human language the lowest symbol of wretchedness and baseness is mud. No creature exists in nature lowlier than mud. Again in human language, the most exalted and sacred of beings is God, and the most exalted, sacred and noble part of every being is its spirit. Thus man is a compound of mud and divine spirit, a composition of two

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31 For further details, readers may go through Itil-e-Garayesh beh maddigari, 8th edition, (Qum: Intisharat-e-Sadra, 1357 H. Sh) by Murtaza Mutahhari.
32 "We have created man out of pure mud-moulded clay" (15:26)
33 "When your Lord told the angels, 'I will create a mortal out of clay, and when I give it proper shape and blow my spirit into it, bow down in prostration for him." (15:29; 38:72)
contradictory elements; a battle field of two extremes or two infinities. God endows him with a free will, which; a free will to opt either of the two. This free will is the trust of God, entrusted to man.\textsuperscript{34} This free-will (a trust from God) made him a Trustee, and no other creature possesses such a capability of carrying the responsibility of this trust on its shoulders.\textsuperscript{35} From this point of view of Islam, man is the only being responsible not only for his own destiny but also for the fulfillment of a divinely entrusted mission in this world, he is bearer of God’s Trust in the world and in nature. It is he who has learned the ‘names’.\textsuperscript{36} Shariati explains:

“In my opinion, the proper meaning of ‘names’ is the truths of science since the name of a thing is its symbol, its defined, conceptual form. The teaching of the names of God means, therefore, the bestowal of the ability to perceive and comprehend the scientific truths inherent in the world”.\textsuperscript{37}

In the opinion of Shariati through these primordial instructions by God, man gained access to all the truths existing in the world, and this constitutes a second great responsibility for man. So it is man, who must fashion his destiny with his own hands.


\textsuperscript{35} “Verily, We proposed to the heavens and to the earth, and the mountains to receive the responsibility, but they refused the burden, and they feared to receive it. Man undertook to bear it; Verily, he was unjust, senseless! (33:72)

\textsuperscript{36} “And He taught Adam all the names” (2:31)

\textsuperscript{37} Ali Shariati, n.34, p.78. Allamah Tabatab’i in the exegesis of this verse states that the Arabic pronoun, ‘them’ used in ‘then presented them’, is made for rational beings, those who have life, sense and understanding. Obviously, the names (or, the named ones) were some living and sensible being who were hidden behind the curtain of the ‘unseen’. He further elaborates that somewhere else the phrase may mean the unseen parts of the heavens and the earth. But in this verse, where Allah intends to demonstrate His perfect and comprehensive power, and to show the deficiency and incapability of the angels, it must mean a secret which is unseen to all the worlds, to all the heavens and the earth; an unseen beyond the sphere of the universe. (Ref Allamah as-Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Tabatabai, \textit{Al-Mizan}, Vol. I, (Tr) Sayyid Saeed Akhtar Rizvi, WOFIS, Tehran, 1983, pp 163-165.)
Shariati metaphases man to a bird capable of flying with both wings. The human soul is thus a stage or a battlefield on which there is continuous struggle between these two opposite poles. What would be the dominant characteristic and nature of an individual’s soul is entirely dependent on the outcome of this struggle. Shariati opines man has neither to neglect the material and corporal aspect of this world, like Husayn b.Mansur Hallaj, who had taken his head between his hands and run through the streets of Baghdad proclaiming, ‘split open this head, for it has rebelled against me! Deliver me from this fire that is burning within me! I am nothing, I am God” Neither one has to neglect the divine source of the truth nor get himself lost in the worldly labyrinths. But has to adopt a middle course, using materiel aspect of human beings for the higher goal like Husayn bin Ali. Shariati says:

“Man has to liberate himself from the prisons of nature, history and society by means of science and from the prison of his inner being (ego) by means of love (i't) and faith”.

Shariati opines that the religion and ideology that man needs to believe in and to find his life upon must fulfill both kinds of need and pay both of them due attention. As is apparent from the philosophy of man in Islam, it is the religion, capable to maintain equilibrium of bi-dimensional man.
**World-view of Tawhid**

Contrary to materialistic world-view the world-view of divine unity is opposed to contrariety in society, in the human race, in the world of existence, between the physical and the metaphysical. In the scriptures of monotheistic faiths, man and nature are seen to have meaning, purposes, and self-awareness. The universe is not accused of being absurd, purpose-less and indifferent to man’s spiritual needs. This kind of world-view holds that the universe is divine, conscious, and responsive to man’s spiritual needs and aspirations. The world-view of *Tawhid* nullifies any kind of trinity or duality. In Islam Allah is *illah* (God) and at the same time a Nourisher (*Rubb*) too; He is Lord (*Ma’lik*) too and at the same time Master (*Melik*) too.44

Shariati considers the world-view of Tawhid not only in the sense of oneness of God, but regards the whole universe as a unity. Shariati has derived from world-view of Tawhid three major branches: (i) Sociology, (ii) Anthropology and (iii) Philosophy of History.45 **Sociology:** He thinks society is existing into two fundamental parallel forms: (a) society based upon *shirk*, which gives birth to the idea and practice of discrimination in the society. It divides society into classes and sub-classes. (b) **Society:** Society based on Tawhid, which has its separate characteristics and never accepts discrimination in any form in the society.46 **Anthropology:** It is not a study of primitive societies etc., but a distinct view concerning the nature of man and his reality. Man being essentially a compound of two opposite things (the lowly substance of clay, from which according to Qura’n he was created, and the spirit of God, which has been infused in him as the life-giving principle), is not a static ‘being’ on the contrary, he is a continuous and inevitable process of ‘becoming’. He always is in the process of becoming and continuing his

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44 Ali Shariati, n.4, p.292.
45 ibid., pp.20-36.
46 “There is the life hereafter which We have prepared for those who do not want to impose their superiority over the others in the land nor commit evil therein”. (28:83)
journey from the lowly principle or pole of clay towards the sublime principle of the spirit of God contained within him. Religion according to Shariati, is the 'way', which leads him towards this sublime direction, but religion itself is not the goal, but simply a means. **Philosophy of History:** According to Shariati, it is also based on Qura’n and which sees the eternity of history as a conflict of forces; in the same way that man himself is the battleground for the competing forces of his low origin, his lowly bodily nature, and the element of divine spirit containing within him. History is also a battleground where Tawhid and *Shirk*, justice and injustice, have continually opposed each other. Cain and Able, the two sons of Adam are the two characters, which play important role in Shariati's philosophy of History. Cain, who murders his brother Abel is represented by Shariati in different forms and acts as ruler and always try to rule over the Abelian type society (down trodden masses). There is an everlasting tussle between these two groups, which make history to move.47 Therefore, sociology, anthropology and philosophy of history are the three subjects, which can be said are particular derivations of applications of general world-view of Tawhid.48 These three in turn form an ideology, which is comprehensive programme for action. 49 It is answer of man’s life, how is it, what is it and what should be done and how it should be. Ideology here paves the way for construction of an ideal society (*Ummah*).50 The *Ummah* is firmly based on Book, Balance and Iron i.e., Culture, Justice and Social Power.51 The formation of *Ummah* goes side by side under the correct form of leadership (*Imamat*). Shariati opines *Ummah* and *Imamat* are part and parcel to each

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48 Ali Shariati, n.4, p.38.
49 Hazrat Ali has said, 'Islam is submission, submission is conviction, conviction is affirmation, affirmation is acknowledgment, acknowledgment is discharge (of obligation), and discharge of obligation is action. (Ref. Maxim 125, Nahjulblagh, Part-3, WOFIS, Tehran, p.682).
51 Mir Mohammad Ibrahim, n.47, pp 81-83.
other. From this ideal society of the Ummah will emerge also the ideal man, the vicegerent of God, with committed will with the three dimensions of awareness, freedom and creativity.

In such a world-view, world is considered to be a living being, possessing a single and harmonious order that is endowed with life, will, sensation and purpose. Just like a vast and absolute man (man likewise resembles the world, but at a small, relative and defective world). In the world-view of Tawhid, every phenomenon and every movement is based on logic and based on reasonable background. Here history is not name of heap of events and occurrences; not having any cause and a definite goal. In such a world-view, man is self-determined, with an open vision trotting a way from 'being' to 'becoming' - a way from mud-moulded clay to the divine spirit of God. Tawhid gives meaning to man's good action. To Shariati, Tawhid is not just a doctrine, in what man has to believe only. Neither it a kind of realism or idealism, but a pure tree which belongs neither to the east nor the west and has its roots in the heavens and its branches reaching towards the earth. Contrary to idealism, it recognizes the existing realities of life, in the body and in the spirit of an individual, as well as in those found in community relationship, those, which reach the depths of a society and can be seen in the movement of history. Islam, as with the realists, admits their existence, but as opposed to realism, does not accept the statues quo but changes them. It changes their essence in a revolutionary way. It carries along with its ideals. It uses realities as a means to reach its idealistic goals, its real desires, which are non-existent

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53 Ali Shariati, n.4, p.104.
54 ibid., p.48.
56 ibid.
57 Ali Shariati, Fatima Fatima Ast, n.d.,n.p., p.48. Idealism negates the present state of affairs, instead only thinks about an ideal future, sacred values, goodness and the highest of needs. An idealist turns its back to the present and thinks in terms of imagery only. A realist, on the other
by themselves. Unlike realists, Islam does not submit to realities, but rather, it causes the realities to submit to it. Islam does not turn away from realities as idealists do. It seeks them out. It tames them through this means, Islam uses that which hinders the idealists as a composite for its own ideals.\textsuperscript{58} To a believer, life is ideology and it gives meaning to his sacrifices. His struggle is not merely a movement but a \textit{jihad}. Shariati says, “Being aware, having faith, being alive, make a person responsible for jihad”\textsuperscript{59} To world-view of materialism seeking voluntary death though for the higher cause is an act of suicide, but to the world-view of Tawhid, it is martyrdom.\textsuperscript{60} It does not only persuade to wage war against the outer corruption, tyranny, injustice and every kind of evil, but also makes one to revolt against oneself through \textit{tawbah} (repentance). In such a situation, man is himself the plaintiff, himself the respondent, himself the layer, himself the judge and himself the criminal and himself passes verdict against oneself. In the words of Shariati, ego is such a kind of prison or such a kind of disease, which rises from one’s internal dungeon. It is a prison which man carries within himself. Here the prison and the prisoner are one, inseparable; the sickness and the sick are the same, and together.\textsuperscript{61} He opines that it is only Tawhid which makes one to revolt against his own-self through love and faith and thus it can liberate man from this very prison of ego.\textsuperscript{62}

Shariati mentions the relationship of man to God, of nature to meta-nature, of nature to God is the same as that of light with the lamp that emits it. He metaphases it with the relationship of an individual’s awareness of his limb and

\textsuperscript{58} ibid.
\textsuperscript{59} Ali Shariati, \textit{Shahadat}, (Union of Islamic Student’s Association in Europe and Islamic Student’s Association in America and Canada, \textit{Khirdad}, 1355) p. 57.
\textsuperscript{60} ibid., p. 56.
\textsuperscript{61} Ali Shariati, n.42, p.36.
\textsuperscript{62} ibid., p.43. Shariati has mentioned the saying of Prophet Muhammad to his companions, when he and his companions were returning once from a warfront: “We are returning from the lesser \textit{jihad}
the limb itself: whose perception is not separate from his limb, nor is it alien to it; but neither is it part of the limb, and still less, the limb itself - at the same time, the limb itself, without his consciousness of it, is a meaningless corpse.\textsuperscript{63} Shariati believes that Tawhid represents a particular view of the world that demonstrates a universal unity in existence, a unity between three separate realities - God, nature, and man - because all the three are not remote from each other, not alien to each other, not opposed to each other.\textsuperscript{64} According to this outlook, the universe is a dynamic system like a caravan in which all the travelers are linked together in the manner of big and small parts of a machine, working together towards the same purpose and aim. The function and meaning of every part is according to the position it occupies in this organic whole. In its dynamic evolutionary course, every part fulfills its share in the system of mutual relationships. Any kind of failure, stoppage, the parts shall effect the whole system.\textsuperscript{65} Tawhid also implies existence of purpose in the creation, everything is based upon carefully organized co-ordination, and a calculated order. There is 'soul' and meaning in every individual part, as it is the work of a Wise Creator. There is therefore purpose and meaning to the entire universe a meaning and purpose which is perceptible in some of its parts. The unseen and manifest according to Shariati does not represent a form of dualism or bisection of being, but considers it a relative classification - relative to man and his means of cognition i.e. epistemological instead of ontological one.\textsuperscript{66} To Shariati the manifest world, which is given the name of 'phenomenon' is knowable and accessible to man's experience,
knowledge and sense-perception is 'appearance', not 'being'.\textsuperscript{67} It consists of the outer and sensible manifestations and traces of a primary, unseen and supersensory reality.\textsuperscript{68}

Qura\textquoteright n considers the outer and sensible manifestations and of the universe as 'signs' (\textit{a\'ayat}). They are indications pointing to the truth and it is only by means of contemplating them in a serious and scientific fashion that one can attain the truth, not by ignoring them and thrusting them aside. The very existence of the universe, with its superb organization and immeasurable meaningfulness, millions of galaxies, each galaxy containing about 1,00,000 stars, rotation of solar system and expanding of the whole universe, change of seasons, day and nights are all signs (\textit{ayats}) of Allah. But the fact is that labyrinth of manifestations and effulgence of God has kept the 'Essence of Truth' in secret. In the words of Hazrat Ali, save Allah every phenomenon (\textit{zahir}) is not an inward (\textit{ba\'tin}) and save Allah every inward is not a manifestation.\textsuperscript{69} It is only Allah, Who is at the same time manifest and at the same time unseen.\textsuperscript{70} Shariati holds that this manner of regarding the 'signs' or phenomenon of the world is closer to the approach of modern science than to that of ancient mysticism.\textsuperscript{71} Tawhid, then, is to be interpreted in the sense of unity of nature with metanature, of man with nature, of man with man, of God with the world and with man. It constitutes a total harmonious, living and self-aware system.\textsuperscript{72} In the worldview of Tawhid, man fears only one Power, and is answerable before only One Judge. He turns to only one \textit{qibla}, and directs his hopes and desires to only one source. And the corollary is that all else is false and pointless - all the diverse and variegated tendencies, strivings, fears, desires and hopes of man are vain and fruitless. Tawhid bestows upon man

\textsuperscript{67} Translated in Persian as \textit{padida} or \textit{padidar} and in Arabic as \textit{Zahira}
\textsuperscript{68} Ali Shariati, n.4, pp.51-52.
\textsuperscript{69} Quoted by Murtaza Mutahhari, \textit{Sukhan}, (Tr) M.A.Ansari, Karachi,1992, p.665.
\textsuperscript{70} "He is the First, the Last, the Manifest and the Unseen, and He knows all things".\textsuperscript{(57:3)}
\textsuperscript{71} Ali Shariati, n.4, p.52.
\textsuperscript{72} ibid., p.53.
independence and dignity: submission to Him alone - the supreme norm of all being - impels man to revolt against all lying powers, all the humiliating fetters of fear and of greed.  

Therefore, it is world-view of Tawhid on which Islamic Ideology is based. Ideology, according to Shariati, is ‘human self-consciousness’. The domain of this ‘self-consciousness extends beyond the pale of all other consciousness such as political, social, technical, artistic, philosophic and so forth. Shariati mentions that all activities of a man whether political, social, technical and artistic depends upon is ideological or ‘self-consciousness’ foundation.

Shariati, while making a mention of various nations like Persian, Romans, Turks, Arabs, Greeks etc. a new spirit of awareness was infused to them by the religion, which enriched them by the valuable philosophy, art, politics and law etc. But Shariati points it out that in its un-ideological form, religion is that which Durkheim defines: a collection of ancestral beliefs and individual feelings; an imitation of socially established modes, religions, rituals, rules, conventions and practices passing from generation to generation. This kind of religion shows the collective spirit of a group of society. It does not necessarily manifest the true spirit and the ideal of humanity. Contrary to this, religion as ideology is a faith consciously chosen to respond to the existing needs and problems of a society. To give direction and purpose to his belief, one has to choose an ideology and this ideology is chosen to change or revolutionize the status quo. If chosen properly man’s ideology will be a substitute to religion in many ways and it will be a religion by all means. 

Ideology in its stage of being imposed rather than chosen is nothing more than

73 ibid., p.55.
75 ibid., p. 16
76 ibid., p. 18
77 ibid., n.1, p.158.
78 ibid., p.163.
a social tradition, a part of culture; for it lacks its original mission. It is not a thing, which man inherits as an geographical, social and phenomenal coercion. Shariati opines:

"Muslims, Buddhists, and even materialists and socialists were to be predetermined geographically, racially and genetically. And they are being affected by same forces now. When conventionalized, ideology is no longer ideology, no matter whether it is religious or irreligious."\(^{79}\)

Ideology through imposition has lost its original fervour and assumed the degenerating form of a social institution. Children of believers, in such an atmosphere of religions were born believers adhering to their ancestor’s ways and beliefs.

**What is Religion?**

Shariati considers religion a road or a path, leading from clay to God (i.e. man to Allah) and delivering man from violence, stagnation and ignorance, from the lowly life of clay and satanic character, towards exaltation, motion, vision, the life of the spirit and divine character. It succeeds in doing so, then it is religion in truth. He is of the opinion that different aspect and dimensions of religion have the meaning of road. In addition to the other significance that have been proposed for it, such as sacred wisdom and so forth, Shariati ascribes the word *din* (religion) itself having the meaning of road.\(^{80}\) Other relevant terms denote the same meaning. Shariati puts forth the example of *silk*: a narrow mountain path; *shari’at*: the path leading down to a river, enabling the thirsty to take water; *tariqa*: a broad path or road leading from one town to another or one land to another; *madhhab*: a highway; *sirat*: a road leading to a place of worship; *umma*: a group of people moving towards a

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\(^{79}\) ibid., p.164.

\(^{80}\) Ali Shariati, n.4, p.66.
common destination under a single leader and along a single road. Shariati does not think it fortuitous or accidental that all the above names and expressions used in the vocabulary of Islam to designate the different aspects and dimensions of religion having the meaning of road. Instead, it is way open for man from ‘being’ to becoming’, which never ends. It is a direction for man in his striving towards God, absolute essence and infinite perfection. In the verse “truly we are God’s and to Him we shall return” (23:60) does not use the word fihi (‘in Him’); it uses the word ilayhi (‘to Him’). That is, we return to God, not in God’ the verse is proposing an orientation of man toward infinite perfection. The distance between clay and God is the distance that man travels in his search for perfection; but he travels unceasingly, in ascent and upward striving to Him Who is infinite, unbounded and unlimited. Thus the movement of man, in Shariati’s view, is from infinite lowliness towards infinite exaltation, and the destination is God, the spirit of God, entreaty; it is impossible for him ever to stop. Hence religion is a way, which leads man to the infinite bounties of Infinite One; the path that has been laid down from clay to God. On account of his dualistic and contradictory nature (clay and spirit), man this dialectical phenomenon, is compelled to be always in motion. His ‘self’ is the stage for a battle between two forces that results in a continuous evolution toward perfection. Shariati, however, points it out that religion itself is not a goal or aim, but is a means. All the misfortunes to the religious societies have stemmed from this fact that means has been taken as goal. He adds that all misfortunes that are overvalue in religious societies arise from the fact that religion has changed its spirit and direction; its role and changed so that religion has become an aim in itself. Shariati opines:

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81 ibid.
“If you turn the road into an aim or destination - work on it, adorn it, even worship it generation after generation for hundreds of years, love it and become infatuated with it so that every time its name is mentioned or your eye glimpses it you burst into tears; if you go to war with anyone who looks askance at it, spend all your time and money on decorating, repairing and leveling it, never have it for even a minute to go in pursuit of your worldly affairs, constantly walk on it, talk about it, and rub its dust into your eyes as if it were some cure - if you do all of this, generation after generation, for hundreds of years, what will you become? You will become lost! Yes, this straight, true and correct road will deflect you and hold you back from your aim and destination. And to be lost in this fashion after having found the road is worse than never to have found the road in the first place.82

However, if ideology, after grasping the positive world view, is chosen, it would be an commitment and if any action taken, would be considered an voluntary action. Shariati mentions that when great prophets emerged amid certain tribes, when they led historic movements to awaken the enlighten humanity, and when they proclaimed their definite slogans in support of the masses of mankind - then adherents assembled around them, irrespective of being a slave, an intellectual or a learned, joined them of their own will. Shariati opines this was the emergence of religion as ideology.83 Shariati mentions the example of Iranians, who accepted Islam as a new ideology, which brought to them a new fervour, social order based on justice and equality, imamat and efficiency in government. They began to find in the slogans of this ideology remedy to their long-suffered pains and troubles caused by the old tyrannical system.

82 ibid.
83 Ali Shariati, n.1, p.164.
Therefore, one who adheres to his consciously chosen ideology, will attain a particular awareness of life and a distinct path of life and a distinct path of action, of living, and of thinking, with distinct ideals which will form his philosophy of life. Devoted to his ideological aims he will be a lover of the mujahid and a crusader. Devoted to his ideological aims he will be the embodiment of this consciousness and faith, which have led progressive movements in history and awakened the masses of humanity to the facts of their lives in their societies.84

Some Major Errors of Thought

However, scholars have identified some major errors of thought which prevent one to arrive at a right ideology.

(1) Reliance on Presumption instead of Knowledge and certainty. This is one of the main causes of mistakes in weighing and conceiving the world-view and arriving at any right conclusion i.e., ideology. Descartes says, "I accept nothing as true which I did not clearly recognize to be so that is to say carefully to avoid prejudice in judgments, and I accept in them nothing more than what was presented to my mind so clearly and distinctly that I could have no occasion to doubt it".85

(2) Personal Desires and Bias. To have correct judgment, a person should keep his complete impartiality towards what he thinks about and should research only for reaching the truth. Already loaded with some perceptions and assumptions cannot reach the pinnacles of truth, though we may name it the output of 'research'.86 In the path of research if man does not retain his impartiality in rejecting or confirming an argument and if his personal bias is for one side or another, he will consciously judge in favour of his personal leanings and this may cause deviation from the truth.

84 ibid., p.181.
85 Dalph M. Eaton, 'Discourse on the Method of Rightly Conducting the Reason and Seeking for Truth in the Science, 1927, Part-I'.
86 Ali Shariati, n.13, p. 92.
Qura'n has made a mention of such an error. "... they follow but a guess and that which (they) themselves desire.." (53:23) (3) **Haste:** Confirming or rejecting anything in haste without reaching the point of certainty is considered a great error in ideology. (4) **Traditionalism and obsession** with the past, i.e., accepting ideas of the ancestors without weighing and examining them, is another obstacle of right ideology. (5) **Hero-worship** is another cause for deviation of thought. According to Shariati, it includes the Fascists and Nazis, as well as great scholars like Carlyle. Shariati quotes Emerson:

"Give me the names of ten powerful personalities, and I will tell you the whole of human history, without ever studying it. Tell me about the Prophet of Islam, and I will tell you about the whole history of Islam. Present me with Napoleon, and I will expound for you the whole history of modern Europe."87

Shariati divides the Hero-worshipers into two groups. The first group consists of those who believe that a great personality like the Buddha, Moses or Jesus appears and changes human society. They are pure hero-worshipers. Second group consists of those who believe that initially a personality appears and then he is joined by a group of the elite, the outstanding geniuses of his people, so that a team comes into being. It is this elite team which directs society on a path correctly be called 'elite-worshipers'.88

**The Sources of Correct World-view and Ideology in Islam**

In Qura'n mention of two kinds of signs (a'ayat) have been made. (i) Cosmological signs and (ii) Psychical signs (afaq and anfus). The phenomena of the world (earth, plants, rivers, vegetation etc.) come within the

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87 Ali Shariati, n.34, p.46.
88 ibid., p.47.
range of cosmological signs. But what exists beneath human conscience fall under the domain of psychical signs. Islam has given more importance to the psychical signs than cosmological signs. The two above terms are both mentioned in the Qur'a'n:

"We shall (continue to) show them our signs (evidence) in the world (a'afaq) and within their souls (anfus) until the truth becomes clear." (41:53)

According to Qur'a'n there are two kinds of guidance; one is general sort of guidance, hidden in the very innate nature of man (fitri) and other that which is acquired or attained (iktisabi). Qur'a'n wants to convey that as long as, one may not lit the candle of general guidance which is lying hidden in his conscience, the acquired guidance is not of any use to him. The holy verse of Qur'a'n says:

"Have you seen the one who calls the religion a lie! It is he who turns down the orphans and never encourages the feeding of the destitute". (107:2)

In the above verse it is wondered that man being a human; how he rejects the religion. But after clarifying that one who has gone astray from humanity, rejects religion, and it is he, who turns down the orphan. Being polite to the orphan is the characteristics of humanity and it is the very instinct of humanity that one should have a kindness towards orphan and encourages the feedings of the destitute. So as long as one is not attentive towards one's inner conscience, the source of his first guidance, he cannot enjoy the bounties of religion, the second step of particular guidance.

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89 For example to read a passage from a book, the tube light or sunlight is required. But prior to these requisitions the light of education and the eye-sight, are the preliminary ones for a reader.
Mission of Prophets

What prophets have offered is a thing, whose exigency is lying beneath the natural instinct of man, i.e. for which man is in need to quench the thirst of his human essence. Shariati describes that at beginning all human beings were equal in characteristics. In Barbaric periods when Prophets were sent they shuttered the brains of people and in the words of Imam Ali: “They (Prophets) exposed the treasures of nature then all the intellects came out from the graves of monotonous nature of thinking. This scene of revival of intellect and thinking was like the day of resurrection / reckoning. There was movement in it”. Hazrat Ali after making a mention of creation of universe and Adam, points towards the cause of sending Prophets says:

“Then Allah sent His messengers and series of His prophets towards people to get them fulfill the pledges which lies beneath their own innate (fitrah), to recall to them His bounties, to exhort them by preaching, to unveil before them the treasures which lie deep hidden in this conscience.”

It means that prophets were sent to revive the pledge of human conscience and make people attentive to the valuable treasure that lies hidden under the debris of their innate (fitrah) and they strive hard to put the term into action. For this very reason prophet has been called by God ‘one who reminds’ (mudhakir). Scholars of Islam have identified two kinds of instincts or innate (fitrah) which lie beside each other i.e. conscience of logic (fitrah-e-idraki) and other conscience of feelings (fitra-ahsasee). Conscience of logic, lying hidden in the innate of man, needs no formal education or any school, but

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90 Ali Shariati, n.52, p.35
91 Nahjul-Balagha, Sermon-1.
93 “Therefore do thou remind for thou art one to remind” (88:21).
is itself a reason for its existence, like religion or worldview of Tawhid. Other is conscience of feelings that makes one to step forward towards religion or Tawhid. Islam is the religion, which according to Qura'in is harmonious to the very innate of man.

"Be devoted to the upright religion; it is harmonious to the nature which Allah has designed for man. The design of God cannot be altered. Thus is the upright religion, but many people do not know". (30:31)

God has designed characteristics of humanity and morality, chastity and modesty in the essence of all human beings and this design of God can not be altered. So every man has been created on this natural essence. Prophet has said, "Every infant is born on the very nature of Islam". Therefore, Prophets have been sent on the mission to put the human race on right tract and not to let them to take their inner instincts erroneously. Their way of working is like a mother and a patron, who never leaves a room for the child to take everything as its food to appease his appetite. Prophets mission was of the same type i.e., to tame the innate tendencies of human beings not let them to fell a prey of superstitions.

Shariati brings to home the fact that the renaissance was a sad consequence of the adamant attitude of the focillised Christian clergy class, who opposed science and knowledge without any cogent reasons, except to satiate their self-imposed craving for ascendancy. Renaissance in turn was relapsed into the so-called scientism aided by capitalism and decadent socialism, where material affairs and conditions were wholly and solely responsible for all the changes which were unfolding in the universe (Dialectics of Nature) or human society (Historical materialism). But Islam in

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94 Murtza Mutahhari, n.92, pp. 612, 614.
95 Sahi-Bukhari, Kitabie-Jenanz, Chapters 80, 93.
96 Mohsin Qarayati, Majmua Darshi az Qura'n, Mosase Der Rahi Haq, Qum, Payez 1366, p.17.
no sense could be blamed in any case for this sorry state of affairs. The revolutionary dimensions of Islam could be easily presented to the world in a very remarkable way, by highlighting the Clay and Angelic aspect of man as envisaged by Islam. The *Tawhidic Welten chung* of Islam was a complete model for an integrated and all invigorating worldview, which leads to the teleological dimensions of the universe in the myriad of materialistic and atheistic theorizing of modern philosophers. Science and faith could be adjusted and accommodated in this scheme of things and a justified structure of ideology, which could cater the material and spiritual requirements of craving human beings was round the corner. Shariati convincingly brings forth such a balanced and well organised system of ideas, which neither negates the reality of matter and physical world, nor advocates total absorption in the mundane aspects at the cost of real and higher ideas of human existence i.e. servitude to Allah and service to mankind. Shariati calls the *asma*, mentioned in the Qur'an scientific truths and thus interprets Islam in a most suitable holistic manner, which facilitates both the clergy and the laity.
Graph showing the idea of Ali Shariati’s Worldview of Tawhid