

P O S T I S I A

M A G A Z I N E

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SHAHID MORTEZA MUTAHHARI





Profile

The Cultural Council of the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Nairobi promotes mutual understanding and cultural co-operation among people of Kenya and Iran in line with the principles of the cultural agreement between Iran and Kenya.

The Cultural Council aims to create enduring partnership between our two friendly states' cultures by creating opportunities to connect with the latest skills, ideas and experience from Iran.

Activities

Library:

The Cultural Council has a very rich library consisting of myriad of books in the field of Persian language and literature. Besides, books on human sciences, history of Iran, Islamic studies, world history, religion, Islamic philosophy, a large number of books on social sciences, political science, culture and art are also available for readers and scholars.

Film and Art Division:

The film and art division consists of video and audio tapes of classical Persian music, art books, calligraphy models, attractive sceneries, handicrafts and various prominent Iranian films. In addition, film festivals and cultural exhibitions in various parts of Kenya are also organised by this Office.

Public Relations Department:

The department arranges meetings with prominent personalities from the domain of Kenya art and culture. Organises seminars, round table discussions and cultural programmes.

Information Centre:

The centre provides necessary information about Iranian art, culture and all other facets of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Distribution Unit:

This unit is responsible for providing Persian books, periodicals, magazines to the Persian loving people.

Persian Language Teaching Centre:

This unit is responsible for organising Beginners, Intermediate and advance level Persian courses for interested students. Besides, the unit has introduced Persian language teaching programme in Kenyan Universities.

Scholarship for Kenyan Students

We offer scholarships to study in the Islamic Republic of Iran to pursue either Bachelors, Masters or PhD. Please visit www.irankenya.org for more information.

Translation Unit:

The Cultural Council also does translation of books from Persian to English.

Contents

■ Editorial.....	4
■ Ambassador Teacher's Day Message	5
■ Teacher's are the architects of the country's future: Ayatullah Khamenei	6
■ Teacher's Day in Iran.....	8
■ Biography of Martyr Morteza Motahhari	12
■ Ayatullah Morteza Motahhari's role in the Islamic Revolution	13
■ The generation of the youth or the mindset of the youth	14
■ Imam Khomeini recommends reading Shahid Morteza Motahhari Books	15
■ Motahhari: Pioneer of anti-zionism struggle	17
■ Mutahhari: A Teacher	18
■ The Criteria for humanity: The discourse of Ayatullah Morteza Motahhari	20
■ The modest dress brings dignity to a woman	23
■ Some of Martyr Morteza Motahhari Books	25



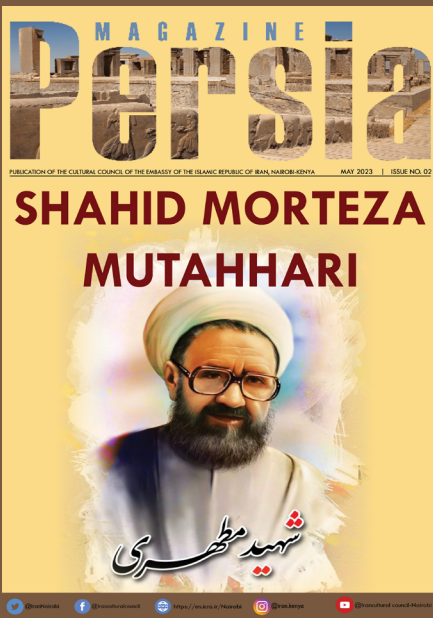
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Editorial

Welcome dear Reader of the online Edition of Persia Magazine. Once again, we have another special issue with a special focus on martyr Ayatollah Murtada Muthahari, a prominent shi'a jurist, philosopher, theologian, thinker, and writer of the twentieth century.

He was a student of 'Allamah Tabataba'i and Imam Khomeini and was considered to be one of the most influential contemporary Iranian clerics in expounding upon Islamic teachings

Ayatollah Morteza Muthahari was one of the most prominent intellectual and cultural figures of modern time.

With a very high command of Islamic teachings, he met the myriads of the needs of the present generation. Having novel ideas, creative thoughts, and a proper understanding of Islam, Ayatollah Muthahari played an important role in the enlightenment of enthusiasts, especially teachers and academics.

Muthahari was one of the main axes of coordination among ulema and university professors during the exile of Imam Khomeini. He has always been regarded as a very knowledgeable expert of Islam and a powerful philosopher who

was aware of the conditions of the time.

Teachers are proud of being associated with the name of a great martyr such as martyr Muthahari and in fact this great professor could be considered as a great model for all the teachers as well.

That's why in Iran Ordibehesht 12 in the Iranian calendar corresponding with May 2 Iranians celebrate Teachers Day in honour of the martyrdom anniversary of Morteza Muthahari.

Muthahari has also written many books on Islam, Iran, and historical topics. He did mostly work on giving lectures about Islam rather than writing books. However, after his death, some of his students worked on writing these lectures and managing them in order to publish them as books.

Hope you will learn one or two things about this great intellectual and scholar in this edition of Persia Magazine.

Enjoy your read.

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Ambassador's Teachers Day Message

The 12th of Ordibehesht (the second of May) in the Iranian calendar is named Teacher's Day after the martyrdom of Morteza Motahari on this day in 1979.

Professor Motahari had taken fundamental steps in enlightening the literate classes, especially the cultural stratum of the society, and the profound works of this martyr have been very effective in reviving the original and unimpaired religious thought in accordance with the needs of our transitioning society.

The key role of teachers as implementers of general education and primary role models for students is very important; because teachers are human builders of the next generation. Honoring and bowing to a teacher is honoring and bowing to science.

Glorification of the teacher is gratitude to the person who provides the purpose of

creation and guarantees the health of the trusts entrusted to him. Wherever there is a sweet palate and the shadow of love is wide, the teacher's presence can be found, visible, or hidden.

Teacher's Day is a day to celebrate love and sacrifice. Glorification of those who burned themselves moment by moment and built the society with their knowledge and promised a glorious tomorrow.

Undoubtedly, a society that always respects the teacher, its rate of growth and excellence will be accelerated and its scientific and spiritual health will be guaranteed, and a society that does not appreciate its good people has consented to the death of good qualities and virtues. How narrow-minded it is to live a lifetime with the sun and not talk about the sun! And finally, according to the poet:

*The teacher is a burning candle, from head to toe
and it is a love scattered in the teacher's veins.*

*In the path of art and science, the heart, body, soul,
and all the parts of the teacher burn*

*In the darkness of error and ignorance, there is a burning light,
the seer heart of a teacher.*

عشقی است پراکنده به رگ های معلم
قلب و تن و جان و همه اجرای معلم
نوری است فروزان، دل بینای معلم

شمعی است گدازنده سراپای معلم
در راه هنر سوزد و اندر ره دانش
در ظلمت گمراهی و در تیرگی جهل

Dr Jafar Barmaki

Ambassador

Embassy of the IR of Iran

Nairobi



Teachers are the architects of the country's future : Ayatollah Khamenei



Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Khamenei delivering a speech during the "Teacher's Day"

Imam Khamenei met with a number of teachers on the anniversary of the martyrdom of Ayatollah Morteza Motahhari, which marks National Teachers' Week. During this meeting which took place in the Imam Khomeini Hussainiyah on May 2, 2023, the Leader described teachers as "the architects of the country's future."

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution considered teachers to be trainers of precious jewels, that is, the generation of teenagers and youngsters. He also described teachers as the future architects of Iran, deeming them to be among the best and most noble groups in the country.

Imam Khamenei also expressed his gratitude to teachers across the country because of their efforts. "The value and importance of raising a generation that is knowledgeable, well-informed, intellectual and logical, pious, full of determination and possessors of Islamic ethics and national commitments, to build the future of the country, cannot be compared to anything else," he emphasized.

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution honored the memory of Martyr Motahhari as a person who was the epitome of a "true and perfect teacher," advising teachers to make use of Martyr Motahhari's works.

"Our dear teachers should raise the children of this



“The value and importance of raising a generation that is knowledgeable, well-informed, intellectual and logical, pious, full of determination and possessors of Islamic ethics and national commitments, to build the future of the country, cannot be compared to anything else,”

Imam Khamenei

nation in the same manner that they wish their own children to be raised, [that is,] as happy, proud, wise, educated individuals who display respectable behavior. This important matter will be realized not only through teaching, but also through the behavior and actions of teachers.”

Imam Khamenei considered it essential to revive the feelings of an “Iranian-Islamic identity and national character” in the country’s intelligent youth, adding that students should be correctly taught about [the country’s] cultural, scientific and historical merits and records.

The Leader considered the comprehensive sense of responsibility of the government towards the community of teachers as a real necessity, underlining that “the livelihood of teachers is very important, but the problems that teachers have is not just limited to that. There is a wide range of issues which include skills training, experience training, and attending to the Farhangian (teacher training) University”.

Imam Khamenei considered it impossible to pass through the difficult stages of the country’s comprehensive development without the role and help of the education system. He also referred to the consensus of a number of experts regarding the central role that schools have in solving the country’s problems.

“The solution lies in proper planning and serious efforts to reform schools, and all officials, decision-makers, and members of the public must understand the vital importance of the education system.”

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution criticized the country’s Ministry of Education for its unstable management of affairs.

“A large organization like this will be harmed by the way it is continuously changing ministers, especially because such a change sometimes results in the change of deputies, middle managers, and even school principals,” he emphasized.

Imam Khamenei underlined the need to adapt the structure, content, and education curriculum to the needs of the country adding that the country needs skilled workers as much as it needs scholars and scientists.

The Fundamental Transformational Plan for the Education System was another essential matter that the Leader spoke about with the officials, giving them his recommendations on the topic.

He underlined that the introduction of Islamic concepts and Islamic-Iranian merits are among the necessary tasks that need to be undertaken when updating school textbooks in accordance with the changing times.

When some people talk about changing times, they are implying a change of principles. This is while principles such as justice, fairness and love never change. However, the overlying features such as ways of writing and expression are changeable.”

Imam Khamenei’s final word of advice in this meeting was that attention needs to be given to the matter of a edifying environment in schools. While showing his appreciation to the attention that is given to this issue in the Ministry of Education, he said, “Of course, attention to the edification of students should also be extended to schools.”

At the beginning of this meeting, Mr. Sahrai, Iran’s acting education minister, gave a report on the activities of the past year and the future plans of this ministry.



Teacher's Day in Iran: A Commemoration of Ayatollah Morteza Motahari



Martyr Ayatullah Morteza Motahari

Iran is celebrating Teachers' Day which marks the day in memory of Ayatollah Morteza Motahari who was assassinated on May 1, 1979.

Ordibehesht 12 in the Iranian calendar corresponding with May 1 or 2 is the martyrdom anniversary of one of the most significant ideologists of the Islamic Revolution, Morteza Motahari.

Ayatollah Morteza Motahari was one of the most prominent intellectual and cultural figures of modern time. With a very high command of Islamic teachings, he met myriads of the needs of the present generation. Having novel ideas, creative thoughts, and a proper understanding of Islam, Ayatollah Motahari played an important role in the enlightenment of enthusiasts, especially teachers and academics.

Motahari was one of the main axes of coordination among ulema and university professors during the exile of Imam Khomeini. He has always been regarded as

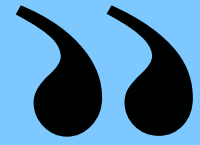
a very knowledgeable expert of Islam and a powerful philosopher who was aware of the conditions of the time.

The awareness of the young generation was an important aim of Motahari and he has written so many books for them, including "Dastan-e Rastan" which received an award from UNESCO in 1965.

Motahari has also written many books on Islam, Iran, and historical topics. He did mostly work on giving lectures about Islam rather than writing books. However, after his death, some of his students worked on writing these lectures and manage them in order to publish them as books.

He served in the Tehran University as the head of the Department of Theology and Islamic Teachings. At the time of his assassination, he was the president of the Constitutional Council of the Islamic Republic of Iran and a member of the Revolutionary Council.

Because of his activities, he was favored by revolutionary people and was hated



The awareness of the young generation was an important aim of Motahari and he has written so many books for them, including "Dastan-e Rastan" which received an award from UNESCO in 1965.

“
Teachers’
Day is a
special
day to pay
tribute to
teachers
and
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include
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to honor
them for
their
special
contributions
in educating
the
younger
generation.

by the anti-revolutionaries group, such as the Islamist Furqan Group. On 1 May 1979, Morteza Motahari was assassinated in Tehran by gunshot after leaving a late meeting at the house of Yadollah Sahabi. The Furqan Group claimed responsibility for the assassination.

The 12th day of Ordibehesht, the second month on the Iranian calendar, which fell on May 1 this year, has been designated as Teachers’ Day in Iran to commemorate the martyrdom of Ayatollah Morteza Motahari, an Iranian cleric, philosopher, lecturer, and politician.

The idea of celebrating Teachers’ Day took root in many countries during the 19th century; however, unlike many other International Days in most cases, the day is marked on various dates for different nations by celebrating a local educator or an important milestone in education. Many countries celebrate World Teachers’ Day, established by UNESCO in 1994, on 5 October as their Teachers’ Day.

Teachers’ Day is a special day to pay tribute to teachers and appreciate their efforts which include celebrations to honor them for their special contributions in educating the younger generation.

Worldwide, teaching is the most influential job. Teachers are known to shape the mind of youth as without knowledge no one can exist in this world. Teachers are capable of imparting good values in children and turn them into responsible citizens.

Teachers are the architect of society and without them, no society can walk in the path of progression. Teaching is an art and a teacher is an artist. Knowledge, contemplation, and creativity are the characteristics of a teacher that go along with the science of the day.

Because of the spiritual impact of teachers, students are highly affected by them so that they may even change the fate of their nation. Most people owe their success to their teachers.

As in many parts of the world, teaching is also sacred in Iran and the young and old sustain undying respect for those who strove so hard to increase their knowledge, honoring them with a small gift or flowers on this day.

Special ceremonies are held on Teachers’ Day in schools, educational institutions, and universities nationwide.

mehrnews.com



Teacher and students celebrate Teacher's Day in Iran



مطهری شهید

I would like to honor the memory of our dear martyr,
the late Ayatollah Motahhari,
who was a teacher in the true sense of the word.
All the qualities that we expect teachers to have were
present in this man.
He was knowledgeable, devoted, attentive,
perseverant, and disciplined.





A BIOGRAPHY OF MARTYR MURTAZA MUTAHHARI

Ayatollah Morteza Motahari's biography

Ayatollah Morteza Motahari, born 1920, received his elementary education in theology from his father, Sheikh Mohammad Hossein in his home town, Fariman in Khorasan province. When he was twelve years of age joined the Islamic Educational Center at Mashhad and pursued his studies there for five years. Then he proceeded to Qom, the great center of Islamic education. He stayed there for fifteen years and completed his education in Islamic Beliefs and Jurisprudence under the supervision of the renowned philosopher Allameh Mohammad Hossein Tabatabai, Ayatollah Khomeini and many other distinguished scholars. Then he migrated to Tehran.

During the period of his education the Motahari felt that the communists wanted to change the sacred religion of Islam and destroy its spirit by mixing their atheistic views with the Islamic philosophy and interpreting the verses of the Qur'an in a materialistic manner. Communism was not the only thing which received his attention. He also wrote on exegesis of the Qur'an, philosophy, ethics, sociology, history and many other subjects.

In all his writings the real object he had in view was to give replies to the objections raised by others against Islam, to prove the shortcomings of other schools of thought and to manifest the greatness of Islam.

He believed that in order to prove the falsity of Marxism and other ideologies like it, it was necessary not only to comment on them in a scholarly manner but also to present the real image of Islam.

Ayatollah Motahari wrote assiduously and continuously from his student days right up to 1979, the year of his assassination. He was one of the most versatile Islamic scholars and prolific writers of recent times, deeply rooted in traditional learning and enamoured of its exponents. He was a Islamic thinker who had fully absorbed a rigorous philosophical training. Much of his work has been published in and outside Iran.

The activities of the Ayatollah Motahari were intolerable for the followers of some other Islamic faction, Forqan, and they, therefore, decided to remove him from the scene. Eventually they succeeded on the 1st of May 1979.

When the sad news was conveyed to Ayatollah Khomeini he, in his condolence message, said: "I have been deprived of a dear son of mine. I am lamenting upon the death of one who was the fruit of my life."

Ayatollah Motahary was a popular figure in the religious circles of Iran. He served in the Tehran University as the Head of the Department of Theology and Islamic Learning's. At the time of his assassination he was the president of the Constitutional Council of the Islamic Republic of Iran and a member of the Revolutionary Council

Ayatollah Motahari's Role in Islamic Revolution

Under Imam Khomeini's leadership, Professor Motahari as one of the trustable followers of leader and the most qualified student, joined the movement. The beginning of these activities was originated in the Islamic associations, mosques, and public circles who reached its climax in the uprising of Khordad 15, 1342. Professor Motahari was arrested and sent to prison by Savak (the former regime's security forces) for his revealing speeches along with 50 outstanding Tehran's clergymen. At 1 AM (Khordad 15), the Savak forces broke into his house and took him to police office and then to " Qezel qal'eh" Prison.

The professor Motahari did his best to form the Muslim and combatants forces so that he could keep the pure policy of the revolution and the associated leadership.

Professor Motahari's activities in "Hosseiniyeh Ershad", "Masjed (mosque) Javid" and "Masjed Aljavad were his climax of cultural activities between 1963- 19 71 (1342 – 1350).

In 1969 (1348) and at the time of the savage attacks of the Israel on the Arabic countries and the out break of a 6-day war between the Israelis and the Arabs, he accompanied with the Late Allameh Tabatabai and Ayatollah Haj. Abolfazl Moosavi Zanjani through release of a statement, invited people to supply the Palestinian Muslims with the necessary aids so that they could help them. Finally, in 1972 (1351) he was arrested by Savak and deprived of giving any lecture and also three religious resistance centers were closed.

During 1971-76 (1350-55) which was influenced by the severe strangulation of the ruling regime, the revolutionary centers were closed one after the other. Professor Motahari began to form the secret gatherings in Tehran and Qom. His audiences were the students of the universities and the

scholars. Furthermore, his efforts aimed at continuity of the resistance, helping the families of the Muslim political detainees and compiling the books for the young generation's guidance.

He played an important role on unifying the two classes of the students of the universities and the clergymen to the extent that his speeches and sessions, served to be a threatening factor for the previous regime.

Nevertheless, he continued his activities and he had contact with the military and non-military groups. He was the exclusive representative of Imam Khomeini who made any contact with him possible. He had the controlling role of the thought policies of movement.

In the late 1976 (1355), his trip to Iraq in order to meet Imam Khomeini, and then the formation of the Militant Ulema Society of Tehran in 1977 (1356), along his consistent presence with the active role in the Islamic Revolution of Iran during 1977-78, his trip to Paris and meeting Imam Khomeini, the formation of the Revolutionary Council in November, 1978 along with his membership in the council as Imam's decree all set his political activities to a new stage which led to the victory of the Islamic revolution on Feb 10, 1978 (Bahman 22, 1357), through God's succor , the twelfth Imam's attention and Imam Komeini's intelligent leadership and the nation's belief and unity.

Before the victory of the revolution, specially in the second half of 1978 which he had very heavy responsibilities, he did not neglect the task of compiling and promulgating the revolutionary Islamic culture. Finally this man who was a scientist and the symbol of resistance, and the combatant who would never give up became martyr by the most ignorant enemies of Islam and revolution or in another words " Forqan " group at 22.



The youth often imagine that since older people tend to be more traditional, they lack freedom of thought, while since they themselves are anti-traditional, they have freedom of thought.

However, following the latest trends is no different than following traditions. Whatever is absurd and not based on proper criteria—whether it be a traditional custom or a modern fad—is foolishness, and the Quran does not accept either.



Excerpt from *Ashnai ba Quran*
(Introduction to the Quran), v. 13, p. 129.

 @mutahhari

The generation of the youth or the mind set of the Youth?

I should state this point here that when we use the phrase the “generation of the youth,” our aim is not to specify the level or age of the youth. Rather, our aim is to speak to that level or group of people who, due to the effects of their own studies and acquaintance with the new civilizations, have developed a specific way of thought and intellect – whether these people happen to be old or young.

However most of these people are from the younger generation and it is because of this that we refer to it as the “generation of the youth,” whereas we see that there are also a great number of “older people” who possess this new way of thinking and there are also many “youth” whose thought pattern and beliefs resemble the older, past generations.

In any case, our intention is to speak in regards to that category of people who possess this specific mode of thinking – something which is increasing day by day. This is a mode of thinking which both the older and younger individuals are beginning to possess and in the future, if God forbid, the correct ways and methods to guide and lead this generation are not put into practice, then we will lose complete control of the future generations.

This issue is a very important issue in our country (Iran) – and even in other Islamic countries where it is still an important issue – however these countries realized this issue earlier than we did and thus, they put forth this issue with great seriousness, while we still have not taken this matter to be very important.

Generally speaking - in our eyes – the younger generation is simply a generation of people who are infatuated with themselves and who merely worship their lower desires.

We think that when they speak to us, we can simply make faces at them, pass a few sarcastic jokes off of the Mimbar or that we can resort to cursing them (for their errors) and speak bad things to them. We think that we can talk to them and make them listen to that which we are saying, make them laugh at what we tell them and then everything will be alright. We think that we can exclaim and cry out to them: “O’ you from such-and-such a (bad) school” and we think that this will solve all of our problems. These are all simply lullabies that we are saying and are only there to keep us in our sleep and prevent us from actually thinking about a way out and a better route to take. In an instant, we will wake up and realize that it is now too late to go back.



Imam Khomeini Recommended to Read Motahari Books

Imam Khomeini, the founder of the Islamic Republic, recommended the young generations, university and seminary scholars to pay special attention to precious works left by Martyr Morteza Motahari.

Ayatollah Motahari was considered right hand and one of the most literate scholars trusted by Imam Khomeini. Motahari always considered himself a pupil of the great Imam and undertook serious efforts to spread genuine objectives of the Islamic Revolution and stood by the Islamic movement through all stages.

Motahari also introduced the pure teachings of Islam and stood against any type of superstitious and wrong beliefs.

Ayatollah Motahari wrote assiduously and continuously from his student days right up to 1979, the year of his assassination.

He wrote at least 60 books and treatises before his life was cut short by a terrorist assassin's bullet at the age of 60 years.

He served in the Tehran University as the Head of the Department of Theology and Islamic Learning's. At the time of his assassination he was the president of the Constitutional Council of the Islamic Republic of Iran and a member of the Revolutionary Council.

Imam Khomeini issued a following historic message on the occasion of his martyrdom.

In the name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful

Truly we are from God and we will return to Him

"Hereby I would express my condolences as well as my congratulation to Islam, the Islamic nation, especially to the resisting nation of Iran for this disaster of losing the honorable Professor Haj Sheikh Morteza Motahhari (May his spirit be sanctified).

Condolence because of the martyrdom of the one

who dedicated his precious life to Islamic aims and he campaigned against the deviations, condolence because of the martyrdom of the man who had no counterpart on Islamology and the other branches of Islamic techniques and those of the Holy Quran.

I have lost a very dear child of mine and I mourn for him who was among the figures who were my life achievement.

Although I have lost a very dear son of mine who was part of my soul, I am proud of such devoted children in Islam.

Terrorists can not terror the personalities of the Muslim brave men. Islamic plans had been so far mixed with the martyrdom. Killing the enemies of God is among the guidelines of the Islamic planning.

Martyr Morteza Motahhari was a great intellectual who through his works, speeches and books, played a pivotal role in spreading the Islamic teachings and awakening the political and social conscience of the Iranian people during

those repressive days of the foreign-installed Pahlavi regime. He indeed possessed a dynamic mind and instilled in the youth, women, and all sections of the society a profound awareness of Islam and their duties in life.

Martyr Motahari considered freedom to be vital and necessary for all live creatures in order to facilitate proper growth and perfection. For instance, a sprout needs fertile soil to grow and turn into a tree, and similarly it is freedom that facilitates the progress towards perfection, since man has been endowed by God with intellect, willpower, and speech.

He divided human freedom into two social freedom and spiritual freedom. Regarding social freedom, he has said: Social freedom means that human being



should not be exploited by others. Others should not create obstacles in his path of growth or exploit his intellectual and physical capacities to their own benefit. One of the goals of the Prophets of God was to make people aware of social freedom, in order to rid minds of slavish attitudes.

According to Martyr Motahhari, Prophets were sent by God to teach man to achieve spiritual freedom by preserving human dignity, intellect and conscience, through abstention from carnal desires and selfish attitudes. And to achieve this, a person should control his/her anger and strengthen the willpower to reject the temptations of unlawful earnings. Then only a person could be considered free in the real sense of this word.

Ayatollah Motahhari made it clear that for achieving spiritual freedom, self-purification is necessary, as taught by all Prophets, especially the Last and Greatest of God's Messengers, Prophet Mohammad (PBUH). He wrote: The main program of Prophets is spiritual freedom, while the main loss of our era is that we always speak of social freedom but we do not speak of spiritual freedom of human being. In our era, the manmade schools of thought speak no word regarding spiritual honesty, whereas social freedom is impossible to achieve without spiritual freedom.

Imam Khomeini trained several scholars like Motahhari who contributed to intellectual growth of the Iranian nation and entire Muslim world.

Imam Khomeini (R) the founder of the Islamic

Republic advised scholars and academics to explore the works of Martyr Morteza Motahhari in order to gain access to pure and dynamic Islamic thought and teachings.

The great Imam recommended the Islamic scholars at seminaries and universities to pay special attention to Motahhari academic and spiritual legacy.

Imam emphasized that most of his academic works were of great value and reflected the real teachings and stances of Islam on a various range of topics.

Motahhari was right-hand and reliable advisor to Imam and is considered among the important figures who contributed to victory of the Islamic revolution.

He stood by Imam during tough years of struggle against the Western imperialism and the Shah's despotic monarchy.

Motahhari wrote several books on Islam, jurisprudence, philosophy, theology, logic, and historical topics.

Several of his lectures and speeches were classified and compiled into books. His martyrdom anniversary day is marked as Teacher's day across Iran and among religious circles across the globe

Motahhari opposed materialistic schools and other deviant groups who present inaccurate ideas with Islamic emblems under the pretext and banner of Islam.

The great Imam believed that Motahhari's thought could strengthen the pillars of revolution and protect its legacy.



زندگی نامه شهید
مطهری و روز معلم



Motahhari, pioneer of anti-Zionism struggle

Iranian Philosopher Morteza Motahhari was a pioneer in struggling against Zionism and always described Zionism as a concept based on arrogance and tyranny.

He also believed that Palestinian nation is an oppressed one and urged support to the nation. Ayatollah Motahhari believed that helping Palestinians is the duty of all Muslims.

He once opened an account in an Iranian bank to collect public aid for the people of Palestine 1970 at time when the now-defunct Pahlavi regime had banned all sorts of comments against the Zionism and 'Israel'.

He announced the account in a public ceremony and was briefly arrested days afterwards by the regime's guards.

Below is a biography of the professor in brief.

Ayatollah Morteza Motahhari, born 1920, received his elementary education in theology from his father, Sheikh Mohammad Hossein in his home town, Fariman in Khorasan province. When he was twelve years of age joined the Islamic Educational Center at Mashhad and pursued his studies there for five years. Then he proceeded to Qom, the great center of Islamic education.

He stayed there for fifteen years and completed his education in Islamic Beliefs and Jurisprudence under the supervision of the renowned philosopher Allameh Mohammad Hossein Tabatabai, Ayatollah Khomeini and many other distinguished scholars. Then he migrated to Tehran.

During the period of his education the Motahhari felt that the communists wanted to change the sacred religion of Islam and destroy its spirit by mixing their atheistic views with the Islamic philosophy and interpreting the verses of the Qur'an in a materialistic manner. Communism was not the only thing which received his attention. He also wrote on exegesis of the Qur'an, philosophy, ethics, sociology, history and many other subjects.

In all his writings the real object he had in view was to give replies to the objections raised by others against Islam, to prove the shortcomings of other schools of thought and to manifest the greatness of Islam. He believed that in order to prove the falsity of Marxism

and other ideologies like it, it was necessary not only to comment on them in a scholarly manner but also to present the real image of Islam.

Ayatollah Motahhari wrote assiduously and continuously from his student days right up to 1979, the year of his assassination. He was one of the most versatile Islamic scholars and prolific writers of recent times, deeply rooted in traditional learning and enamored of its exponents. He was an Islamic thinker who had fully absorbed a rigorous philosophical training. Much of his work has been published in and outside Iran.

Ayatollah Motahary was a popular figure in the religious circles of Iran. He served in the Tehran University as the Head of the Department of Theology and Islamic Learning's. At the time of his assassination he was the president of the Constitutional Council of the Islamic Republic of Iran and a member of the Revolutionary Council.

Ayatollah Morteza Motahhari was at the helm of Islamic intellectualism in the years of 1340s (1960s) and 1350s (1970s). Ayatollah Motahhari had innovative theories and clarified the Islamic ideology to the young generation.

Motahhari laid the foundation of intellectual approach to social issues in line with the Islamic ideology and overcame the then imported ideologies from either the East or the West.

Ayatollah Motahari was faithful, brave, polite, self-confident and an advocate of justice in his debates. He stood against the Marxist and liberal thoughts for several years through his adequate theoretical knowledge and put forward an illuminating picture of the Islamic ideology for the young intellectuals overwhelmed by the imported ideologies.

IR Leader Ayatollah Sayyed Ali Khamenei has advised the young generation to read Ayatollah Motahhari's books. Addressing thousands of teachers on the occasion of Teacher's Day and the martyrdom anniversary of eminent Islamic philosopher, Ayatollah Khamenei said all the works of Motahhari are like everlasting sources of light that illuminates the minds and hearts of all individuals.



Mutahhari a Teacher

In 1952, Ayatullah Shaheed Murtadha Mutahhari (r) left Qum for Tehran, where he married the daughter of Ayatullah Ruhani and began teaching philosophy at the Madressah Marwi, one of the principal institutions of religious learning in the



capital. This was not the beginning of his teaching career, for already in Qum he had begun to teach certain subjects - logic, philosophy, theology, and Fiqh while still a student himself. But Ayatullah Shaheed Murtadha Mutahhari (r) seems to have become progressively impatient with the somewhat restricted atmosphere of Qum, with the factionalism prevailing among some of the students and their teachers, and with their remoteness from the concerns of society. His own future prospects in Qum were also uncertain.

In Tehran, Ayatullah Shaheed Murtadha Mutahhari (r) found a broader and more satisfying field of religious, educational, and ultimately political activity. In 1954, he was invited to teach philosophy at the Faculty of Theology and Islamic Sciences of Tehran University, where he taught for twenty-two years. First the regularization of his appointment and then his promotion to professor was delayed by the jealousy of mediocre colleagues and by political considerations for Ayatullah Shaheed Murtadha Mutahhari (r)'s closeness to Ayatullah Khumayni (r) was well known.

But the presence of a figure such as Ayatullah Shaheed Murtadha Mutahhari (r) in the secular university was significant and effective. Many men of Madressah background had come to teach in the universities, and they were often of great erudition. However, almost without exception they had discarded an Islamic worldview, together with their turbans and cloaks. Ayatullah Shaheed Murtadha Mutahhari (r), by contrast, came to the university as an articulate and convinced exponent of Islamic science and wisdom, almost as an envoy of the religious institution to the secularly educated. Numerous people responded to him, as the pedagogical

powers he had first displayed in Qum now fully unfolded. In addition to building his reputation as a popular and effective university lecturer, Ayatullah Shaheed Murtadha Mutahhari (r) participated in the activities of the numerous professional

Islamic associations *anjumanha* that had come into being under the supervision of Mahdi Bazargan and Ayatullah Taleqani, lecturing to their doctors, engineers, teachers and helping to coordinate their work. A number of Ayatullah Shaheed Murtadha Mutahhari (r)'s books in fact consist of the revised transcripts of series of lectures delivered to the Islamic associations.

Ayatullah Shaheed Murtadha Mutahhari (r)'s wishes for a wider diffusion of religious knowledge in society and a more effective engagement of religious scholars in social affairs led him in 1960 to assume the leadership of a group of Tehran Ulama known as the *Anjuman-e-Mah-nayi Dini* ("The Monthly Religious Society"). The members of this group, which included the late Ayatullah Beheshti, a fellow student of Ayatullah Shaheed Murtadha Mutahhari (r) in Qum, organized monthly public lectures designed simultaneously to demonstrate the relevance of Islam to contemporary concerns, and to stimulate reformist thinking among the Ulama. The lectures were printed under the title of *Guftar-e-Mah* ("Discourse of the Month") and proved very popular, but the government banned them in March 1963 when Ayatullah Khumayni (r) began his public denunciation of the Pahlavi regime.

A far more important venture in 1965 of the same kind was the foundation of the *Husayniya-e-Irshad*, an institution in north Tehran, designed to gain the allegiance of the secularly educated young to Islam. Ayatullah Shaheed Murtadha Mutahhari (r) was among the members of the directing board; he also lectured at the *Husayniya-e-Irshad* and edited and contributed to several of its publications. The institution was able to draw huge crowds to its functions, but

this success which without doubt exceeded the hopes of the founders, was overshadowed by a number of internal problems. One such problem was the political context of the institution's activities, which gave rise to differing opinions on the opportuneness of going beyond reformist lecturing to political confrontation.

The spoken word plays in general a more effective and immediate role in promoting revolutionary change than the written word, and it would be possible to compose an anthology of key sermons, addresses, and lectures that have carried the Islamic Revolution of Iran forward. But the clarification of the ideological content of the revolution and its demarcation from opposing or competing schools of thought have necessarily depended on the written word, on the composition of works that expound Islamic doctrine in systematic form, with particular attention to contemporary problems and concerns.

In this area, Ayatullah Shaheed Murtadha Mutahhari (r)'s contribution was unique in its volume and scope. Ayatullah Shaheed Murtadha Mutahhari (r) wrote assiduously and continuously, from his student days in Qum up to 1979 the year of his martyrdom. Much of his output was marked by the same philosophical tone and emphasis already noted, and he probably regarded as his most important work *Usul-e-Falsafa wa Ravish-e-Ri'alism* ("The Principles of Philosophy and the Method of Realism"), the record of Ayatullah Taba'tabai's discourses to the Thursday evening

circle in Qum, supplemented with Ayatullah Shaheed Murtadha Mutahhari (r)'s comments. But he did not choose the topics of his books in accordance with personal interest or predilection, but with his perception of need; wherever a book was lacking on some vital topic of contemporary Islamic interest, Ayatullah Shaheed Murtadha Mutahhari (r) sought to supply it.

Single handily, he set about constructing the main elements of a contemporary Islamic library. Books such as *Adl-e-Ilahi* ("Divine Justice"), *Nizam-e-Huquq-e-Zan dar Islam* ("The System of Women's Rights in Islam"), *Mas'alayi Hijab* ("The Question of the Veil"), *Ashna'i ba Ulum-e-Islami* ("An Introduction to the Islamic Sciences"), and *Muqaddima bar Jahan biniyi Islami* ("An Introduction to the Worldview of Islam") were all intended to fill a need, to contribute to an accurate and systematic understanding of Islam and the problems in the Islamic society.

These books may well come to be regarded as Ayatullah Shaheed Murtadha Mutahhari (r)'s most lasting and important contribution to the rebirth of Islamic Iran, but his activity also had a political dimension that admittedly subordinate, should not be overlooked. While a student and fledgling teacher in Qum, he had sought to instill political consciousness in his contemporaries and was particularly close to those among them who were members of the *Fida'iyan* Islam, the Militant Organization founded in 1945 by Nawwab Safawi.



The Criteria for Humanity: The Discourse of Ayatullah Morteza Mutahhari

Date : 5/1/2007

I have been asked to discuss the question of the criteria for humanity. If we were to do so from the viewpoint of biology, this would be an easy matter since we would be dealing with the human body and the place of human beings in the animal world, in which case there is no difference between individuals. By the standard of anatomy, medicine, and, even to some extent, psychology, there are no major differences between two or more individuals.

But is humanity limited to the body? Is human perfection and mobility confined to man's physical aspect? In humanistic sciences there is talk of perfect and imperfect man, of the low and high kind. What type of human being is ethically and socially worthy of respect because of his or her perfection, or deserving of contempt because of his or her imperfections? This is a topic which has always attracted attention not only in human knowledge, but also in various religions. For example, the Quran speaks of human beings who are higher than angels and worthy of homage by the latter. It also mentions human beings who are inferior to animals.

What is the criteria which measures the differences between human beings? This question is not only related to religion. Materialistic philosophers, too, who do not believe in God and religion, discuss the question of man, humanity and superior and inferior beings.

What is the criteria according to these philosophers? Can we say that human beings are equal genetically, but that they differ in knowledge. That is, something which is acquired not inherited, so that a person with more know-

ledge is higher than one with less? Is this related to academic knowledge which gives superiority according to the level and stage of one's studies? Do we respect people only in proportion to their learning? Is Abudhar honoured because he was more learned than his contemporaries? Is Mu'awiyah blameworthy and disliked because he had inferior knowledge?

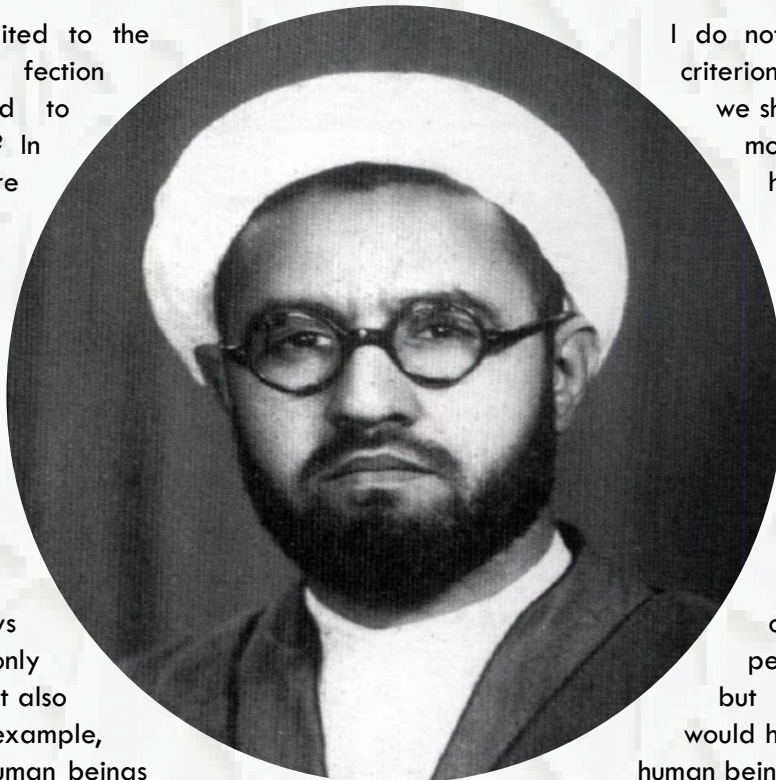
Part II.

I do not believe that learning is a criterion for humanity. If it were so, we should say that Einstein was the most endowed with qualities of humanity since he was the most learned man of his time.

Another view is that although knowledge is one of the requisites of humanity, and although the importance of awareness of the self, of the society and of the world cannot be denied, it is inadequate. This view claims that humanity is measured by character and disposition. A person may be very learned, but if he has a bad character, would he be considered to be a real human being?

An animal behaves according to its instincts and it possesses no will to rule over its instincts. When we call a dog a faithful animal, its faithfulness is instinctive. An ant is prudent by instinct. There are also human beings in the world who have a disposition resembling that of an animal. They possess their natural instincts, but have done nothing to refine themselves, and are condemned only to follow their nature.

The awareness of an animal is limited to its own time and place, while man's awareness allows him to know the past and have an idea of the future and also step beyond his own area and even his own planet. But the question of





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The awareness of an animal is limited to its own time and place, while man's awareness allows him to know the



past and have an idea of the future and also step beyond his own area and even his own planet. But the question of character is a different matter. Knowledge is related to what one is taught, while character is related to training and the forming of habits.

I do not think that knowledge as a criterion of humanity is acceptable and I will later explain what type of people support it. The second view, i.e., characteristics as a criterion of humanity, has more supporters. But we may ask what kind of characteristics and dispositions? One of the answers to this question is that love is the desired criterion, love, which is the mother of other fine dispositions. Thus, if one bases one's character on the love of human beings, one has real humanity. Such a person is as interested in others as in one's "self" or even more interested in them.

In religion this is called self-sacrifice. There is a statement in a book that there is an instruction in all religions to love for others what you love for yourself, and dislike for them what you dislike for yourself. This has been stated in our traditions. This is the logic of love. As we know, in the Hindu schools and in Christianity, much emphasis is laid on love. But they have gone so far as to lose sight of everything else and maintain that love is to be a course of action in all circumstances. Thus the love of both these ideologies is a kind of stupefaction and the adequacy of love as a criterion of humanity is to be discussed.

Part III.

But if we accept the love for other human beings as the criterion, the issue will be solved more easily than if we accept knowledge as the criterion. For example, concerning our preference for Abudhar over Mu'awiyah, we are in a better position to judge them on the basis of love. Mu'awiyah was a selfish and ambitious man who exploited others by force. Abudhar was the reverse, and although he had all the possibilities and even though Mu'awiyah was prepared to offer him many privileges, yet he was anxious about the fate of others, particularly those who were oppressed by Mu'awiyah. That is why he arose against this wicked man and spent his last years in exile where he died. Thus, we call Abudhar human as he loved others, and we consider Mu'awiyah inhuman as he was only interested in himself.

Or, similarly, why do we think Hadrat Ali, peace be upon him, is a perfect human being? Because he felt society's pain, and his "I" had become "We". His personality attracted all others. He was not an individual separated from others. He was a limb or organ of a whole body. He himself said that a pain in one part of society, as in a body, made itself felt in the other parts, one of which was himself. Ali had declared this long before the humanistic philosophy of the twentieth century claimed it as an ideal.

When he heard that a governor appointed by him had

attended a feast, he wrote him a letter of protest which is quoted in the Nahj ul-Balagha. It is not mentioned what kind of a feast it had been, whether there had been drinking or gambling or dancing. The governor was considered guilty by Hadrat Ali because he had participated in an aristocratic feast which was not attended by any poor people.

He says, "I never believed a governor and representative of mine would attend such a party of the nobility." He then describes his own life and says that he felt other people's pain more than his own and their pain prevented him from feeling his own. His words show that he was a truly learned and wise sage. Yet the reason why we honor him so deeply is not only because of his wide knowledge, but because he was human. He was not unaware of the destiny of others.

Another school of thought considers resolution and will-power as the criterion for humanity. It claims that if a person can dominate himself, his instincts, nerves and passions by his will-power and reason and not be dominated over by his inclinations and desires, he is really human.

Part IV.

There is a difference between desire and will. Desire is an attraction by an exterior force, a relation between man and external objects, like a hungry man drawn by food, or sexual attraction. Even sleep is an attraction. So is desire for rank and position. But resolution is something internal, which liberates one from the urges of desire. It places desires at the disposal of will-power to employ them as it considers expedient. Most of our past moralists emphasized resolution as a criterion for humanity. People, unlike animals, which are ruled by instinct, can decide to act against their own inclinations. Thus a person of resolution is more human than one who cannot control the "self".

Another criterion for humanity is freedom. What does this mean? It means that to the extent that one tolerates no force, and is not captivated by any power and can choose freely, one is human. In modern schools of thought, much emphasis is laid on freedom as one of the criteria of humanity. Is this view correct or not? It is both correct and incorrect. As a requisite for humanity, it is correct, but as the sole criterion for humanity, it is wrong.

Islam has laid great emphasis on self-control. I relate a story here in connection with it. It is narrated that the Prophet was passing by a place in Medina where a number of young men were testing their strength by lifting a heavy stone. When they saw the Prophet, they asked him to act as judge. The Prophet agreed, and at the end of the competition he said, "Do you know who is the strongest? It is he who controls his anger and does not allow it to overcome him. He must not use his anger in a way contrary to God's satisfaction and should be able to dominate over his own desires."

A woman wearing a blue hijab is shown from the chest up, holding a large bouquet of pink and purple flowers. She is also holding a string of wooden prayer beads (tasbeeh) in her hands. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

*The Modest
Dress
Brings
Dignity
To
A
Woman*

The modest dress brings dignity to a Woman

There is one issue which remains to be discussed. It is one of the criticism they have made against the modest dress which says that the modest dress deprives the honor and respect of a woman. You know that human dignity has become one of the important goals of humanity since the words about human rights have developed. Human dignity is respected and it must be followed; all human beings share in this whether man or woman, black or white, or whatever nation or creed. Every individual has this right to human dignity.

They say that the Islamic modest dress opposes a woman's dignity. We accept the right of human dignity. The discussion is whether or not the modest dress, i.e., the modest dress which Islamic precepts mention, is disrespectful to women, an insult to her dignity. This idea came into being from the idea that the modest dress imprisons a woman, making her a slave.

Enslavement opposes human dignity. They say because the modest dress was introduced by men to enable them to exploit women, men wanted to captivate woman and imprison her in a corner of her home. Thus, it is to have overlooked or insulted her human dignity. Respect, honor and nobility of a woman call for not having a modest dress.

As we have said and we will further describe later, that is, we will deduce from the verses of the Holy Qur'an that we have nothing which would serve to imprison a woman and the necessities of the Islamic modest dress are not to imprison a woman. If a man has duties in his relation to a woman or a woman has duties in relation to a man, the duty is in order to strengthen and solidify the family unit. That is, it has a clear purpose.

In addition, from the social point of view, it has necessities. That is, the well-being of society demands that a man and a woman commit themselves to a special kind of association with each other or the ethical sanctities and ethical balance and the tranquility of the spirit of society, demand that a man and a woman choose a special way of relating to each other. This is neither called imprisonment nor enslavement nor does it oppose human dignity.

As we observe if a man leaves his house naked, he is blamed and reproached and perhaps the police will arrest him. That is, even if a man leaves his house with pajamas on, or with just underpants, everyone will stop him because it opposes social dignity. Law or custom rules that when a man leaves the house, he should be covered and fully dressed. Does this oppose human dignity to tell him to cover himself and leave the house?

On the other hand, if a woman leaves her house covered within the limits that we will later mention, it causes greater respect for her. That is, it prevents the interference of men who lack morality and ethics. If a woman leaves her house covered, not only does it not detract from her human dignity, but it adds to it. Take a woman who leaves her home with only her face and two hands showing and from

her behavior and the clothes she wears there is nothing which would cause others to be stimulated or attracted towards her. That is, she does not invite men to herself. She does not wear clothes that speak out or walk in a way to draw attention to herself or does not speak in such a way to attract attention.

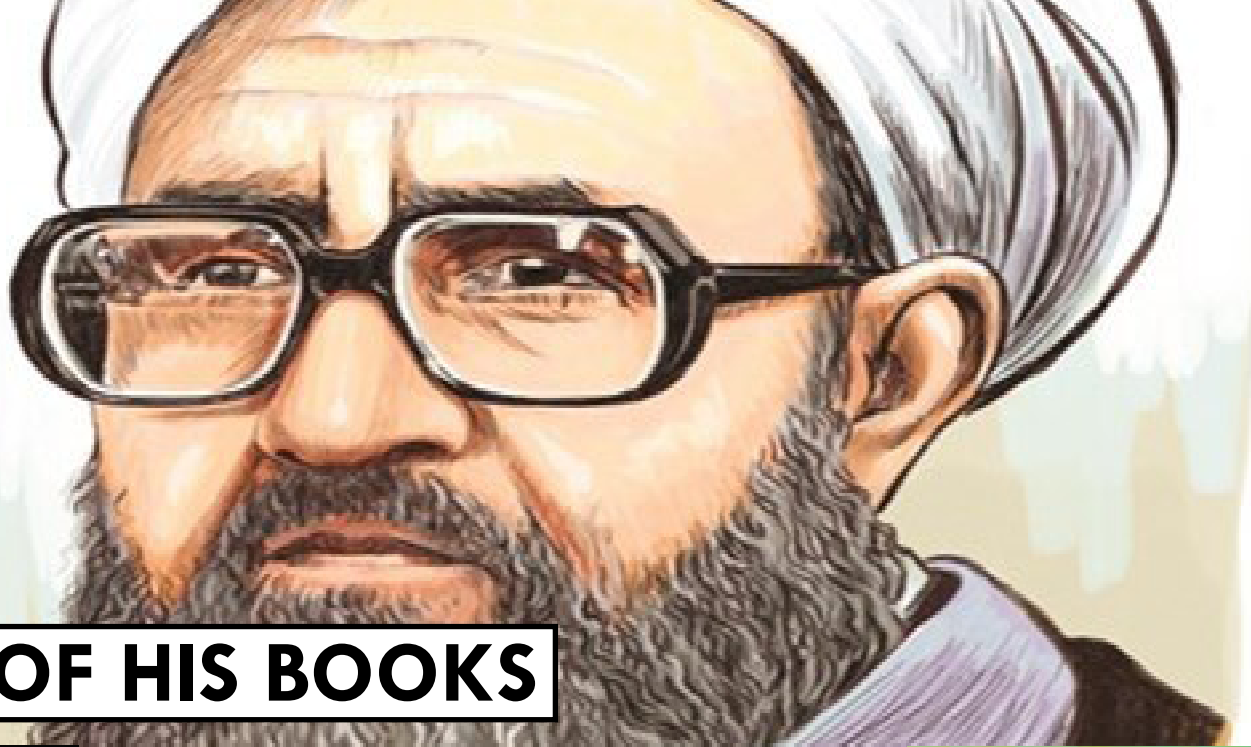
Sometimes the clothes of an individual speak. His or her shoes speak. The way she or he talks says something else. Take a man, for instance, who speaks in such a way so as to say, "Fear me," or dresses in such a way opposite to that which is customary. That is, with a traditional cloak, a beard and a turban, etc., communicates to the people, "Respect me."

It is possible that a woman wears clothes in such a manner that a human being, a respected human being, would associate among people and it is possible that she wears clothes and walks in a way which stimulates; "Come and follow me." Does the dignity of a woman, the dignity of a man, or the dignity of society not cause a woman to leave her home serious, diligent and simply dressed in a manner not drawing the attention of everyone she passes by.

She should be such that she does not distract a man and turn his attention from what he is doing. Does this oppose a woman's dignity? Or does it oppose the dignity of society? If a person says something, which existed in non-Islamic societies, that the modest dress was to imprison women, that a woman must be placed in a locked house and she should have no right of association outside the home, this does not relate to Islam. If Islamic precepts were to say that it is not permitted for a woman to leave her house; if we were to ask whether it is possible for a woman to buy something from a store where the seller be a man and they said no, it was forbidden; if a person asked, "Is a woman permitted to participate in meetings, religious gatherings?" and we were to say no, it is not permitted; if it is possible for women to meet each other?; if someone were to say all of these were forbidden, that a woman must sit in a corner of the house and never leave her home, this would be something, but Islam does not state this.

We say this is based on two things. One is based upon that which is good for the family. That is, a woman must not do anything that would disturb her family situation. For a woman to leave her house to go to her sister's house if her sister is a corrupt and licentious person or even to visit her mother wherein the effects of the visit bring chaos to the house for a week, they say not to under such circumstances. The family must not be disturbed.

The second basis is that leaving the house, according to the Holy Qur'an, must not be in order to flaunt oneself, to disturb the peace and tranquility of others, to prevent the work of others. If it is not these things, there is no problem.



SOME OF HIS BOOKS

