Liberating Rationalism from Secularism

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The term "rationalism" has high frequency of occurrence in the intellectual discourse on several levels and in numerous domains especially in the religious-secular debate where the secular side monopolizes speaking in the name of rationalism. At the same time, it seems the side, which advocates an effective role for religion in the public domain with its various fields, takes a conservative stance towards rationalism or even regards it with hostility.

While the secular side flaunts logos of enlightenment accusing its opponents of backwardness, obscurantism, dogmatism or even hanging on to superstitions, the side defending the religious stance charges its opponents of slighting metaphysics and divine revelation in addition to giving reason precedence over religious texts.

It seems that each party has gone overboard in excluding the other. Therefore, there is a need then to break out of this vicious circle and to salvage and liberate the concept of rationalism which has been hijacked by one team and persecuted by another. This cannot be done without conducting a thorough philosophical analysis of the history and the meaning of the concept (through the history of ideas method), which is being attempted here in order to liberate rationalism from secularism

and to show that it is not the private property of one single faction.

Rationalism is not necessarily confined to pure secularists, and it is not always against religion since it is a complex of diverse components and covers a wide range that includes both believers and non-believers.

It would be jumping to conclusion if all rationalists were judged to be of one view concerning religion. There is moderate rationalism on the one hand, and there is radical rationalism on the other. Some scholars saw conformity of rational facts and scriptural events as in the writings of both Ibn Taymiyya and Ibn Rushd (Averroes), each in his own manner. Others, such as Abu Bakr Al-Razi, used reason to steer away from received beliefs as regards the status of the Prophet.

No doubt, many rationalists adopt either a totally or a partially negative attitude towards religion, but some rationalists accept religion in its entirety as given in its fundamental texts. Hence, the views of the rationalists should be judged singly not as one lump.

Rationalism has been used in modern philosophy to describe the trend that stood in opposition to the Christian clergy and religion in general. Hence, some still use the term incorrectly to describe meanings confused with secularism or atheism.

The sheer academic view does not use the term in such derogatory sense. In addition, the Quran values reason and reasoning and puts the thinking individuals and rational, wise people above those who do not use their brains.

Ibn Rushd's (Averroes') book: *The Definitive Answer to the Question of the Connectedness of Islamic Law and Philosophy* is evidence enough of the absence of necessary contradiction between reason and faith.

Additionally, Ibn Taymiyya's book: *Refutation of the Conflict*

between Reason and Revelation shows that pure reason and thinking do not stand, by themselves, against religion-the rational agrees with the revealed[1].

No doubt, some rationalists stand against religion. Many, however, are believers who set God in the heart of their philosophical system; they believe in revelation and seek to establish agreement between reason and belief in different ways.

Accordingly, the paper will study rationalism, disclosing the nature of the differences that characterize rationalists as moderate or radical.

Different reasons and various rationalisms:

Rationalism is a method of thinking which uses reason as a tool of knowledge. It is not only a method used by some philosophers, but it is also the adopted approach of even some fundamentalists, religious jurists and exegetes within their domains and systems of belief or thinking. These various thinkers give reason a pivotal position in either their epistemology or manner of understanding the world. In the case of Islamic philosophy and jurisprudence, reason is resorted to in understanding religious laws, divine revelation, and the application of the Prophet's traditions. Reason is further used to give a human dimension to all that in order to cater for people's needs and to transform facts taken from their historical context into facts within the changing reality.

Rationalism is not a closed doctrine of a certain team of advocates, like for instance in the case of Marxism, Existentialism or Liberalism. It is rather a tendency of thinking of a variety of thinkers and philosophers in different degrees. It is a method of thinking that deems reason to be of pivotal position in generating true knowledge; it believes in the ability of reason to understand existence and to generate the values of right, good and beauty

in addition to determining the criteria of justice[2].

Reason is a tool that enables man to infer results from premises and to know immaterial things, the meaning of things and the connecting relations. It is reason that determines the general principles of every science.

There is a distinction between theoretical reason which deals with the sciences and theoretical knowledge on the one hand, and on the other practical reason which deals with manners and ethics to set the principles of the moral behavior and determines good and evil, virtue and vice, the acceptable and the unacceptable.

In Arabic, the term *'akl* (mind) is described by Ibn Al-Anbari as "a man with reason ('akl) is a man of control over his affairs and views as the word is derived from the expression of controlling the camel by tying its legs. It is said that such a man of control ('akl) is the one

who restrains himself and his passions, which is also clear in saying controlling his tongue. The reasonable thing (ma'kol) is what is controlled within you. A person with no ma'kol is a person without reason. .. 'akl is also making sure of things. It is also the heart (the core of consciousness). This reason ('akl/control/tie) is so called since it restrains a person from venturing into hazards, i.e., imprisons him. It is also said that it is the power of discerning differences, which distinguishes man from other animals"[3].

In Latin, *intellēctus*, perception, is derived from the past participle of *intellegere*, to perceive, and the Romans distinguished between mind (*mens*) and soul (*anima*).

In Islamic jurisprudence, the concept of reason is different from that of the philosophical epistemology. The rationalist Islamic jurists adopt a shared meaning as explained by Al-Sarakhsi who says that reason is, "the choice on which

a person bases what he does or abstains from doing in what goes beyond the senses since doing and abstaining are chosen for wise judgment and good consequences. Therefore, animals lack it, and the good consequences are only achieved after mental meditation. When acts are done according to the manner of the wise, they show the effect of reason used by a person who can distinguish between things. Reason is not initially found in humans; it is added gradually to them by God, so a young person achieves perfection over time. Religious law sets coming of age as the determiner for knowing the perfection of reason. It is this that facilitates things for us since moderation thus becomes a habit. God Almighty knows perfection or imperfection in everyone, but we are unable to see the limit by ourselves. Thus, the criterion is coming of age with absence of disability as apparent to us. The young are not deemed reasonable before they come of age - the purpose being to exempt them from responsibility not to harm them. … The young can, however, give testimony if they display premature abilities as some of the Prophet's companions were witnesses of events and listeners to sayings at a young age and reported them later as grown-ups. .. It is said that reason is the base for every branch of knowledge. Some scholars even called it the mother of all knowledge. People, however, differed a great deal on this before and after the revelation of religious law"[4].

This is the general meaning of reason, but rationalism is a term that acquires its meaning according to each domain of knowledge: epistemology, religion, ethics, logic, and natural and mathematical sciences. However, the most common use occurs in philosophy (epistemology), in scientific knowledge and in how far this is related to approaching religion (revelation and prophecy) studied

according to rational criteria.

First: Structural Constants of Rationalism:

The sources and principles of rationalism are various, which is a consequence of how differently rationalists see the nature of reason. As a result, they reach different conclusions especially with view to religion. However, with some analysis we can monitor a number of structural constants of rationalism. Putting in consideration qualitative differences among rationalist philosophers, we shall sum up the most significant of these constants in the domains of epistemology and religion.

1. The mind controls nature:

The basic common idea of the rationalists concerning their theory of knowledge is considering reason the source of truth and all sciences. It thus negates the role of experience and the senses. In certain cases, "reason has precedence over other ways of acquiring knowledge"[5]. There are "the denial of objective law in nature and the deduction of particular conditions of experience, particular principles, postulates and propositions *from the subject*, from human consciousness, and not from nature"[6].

Rationalists believe in the law of causality and the necessary relation between cause and effect, as in the relation between heat and the expanding iron. Causality is essentially connected to reason since reason when analyzed ends structurally with causality.

This view of the mind was reflected in the European languages where the word "*ratiō*" -and its derived forms in French (*raison*) and English (*reason*)-refers once to reason (consider, think) and once to causality.

Speaking of causality is thus speaking of rationality since causality, with its two constraints: necessity and universality are

deduced by rationalists from mind not from human nature.

This basic view is the structural constant which distinguishes all rational philosophies from purely empirical philosophies which see causal and necessary connections in the objective laws of external nature while completely independent from the human mind. Lenin says, "The really important epistemological question that divides the philosophical trends is not the degree of precision attained by our descriptions of causal connections, or whether these descriptions can be expressed in exact mathematical formulae, but whether the source of our knowledge of these connections is objective natural law or properties of our mind, its innate faculty of apprehending certain *a priori* truth"[7].

Rationalism, in the theory of knowledge, is the doctrine that sees certain knowledge deduced from the mind not from experience or the senses. It is not deduced from the heart and feelings. Truth is reached through the mind since it must be universal that includes all the parts; it is necessary as the results must necessarily be deduced from the premises.

For instance, the proposition "all metals expand with heat" is a universal proposition since the result "expansion" is a necessary outcome with no exception of the premise "heat" since any metal when heated expands.

Philosophical rationalism sees universality and necessity as two logical qualities of true knowledge that cannot be deduced from experience. Universality can only be deduced from the mind itself, whether from the priori concepts of the mind (like the Descartes' theory of priori ideas) or the images that solely exist in the form of priori tendencies of the mind which experience stirs. Absolute universality and absolute necessity

exist before experience takes place. The judgments and priori images are completely independent from experience (Kant).

In this way, rationalism stands against empiricism that sees true knowledge as coming out of experience not from the mind. Thus, the boundaries of rationalism are built on the fact that it denies that universality and necessity arise from experience[8].

Thus, philosophical rationalism is the view that attributes all knowledge to rational principles. This makes rationalism fit to describe the philosophical views of Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz and Hegel, among others.

Scientific knowledge is described as rational as it springs from rational presuppositions, and references reason in interpreting observations and experience in order to reach universal and necessary laws for nature, depending on the mind.

2. Mental testing of religious propositions:

Those who accept religious beliefs after testing them through reason are described as rationalists. These adopt the view that religious claims must be tested against reason[9]. The description also fits the believers who interpret religion in the light of reason. John Locke (1632-1703), a rationalist in religion and an empiricist in knowledge, believes that divine and moral principles can be proven through the evidence of reason. However, there are philosophers who deny that, such as David Hume (1711-1776) who denies that possibility can prove them[10].

Philosophers generally differ on the relation between reason and revelation; some see it as a relation of harmony and compatibility while others see it as a relation of opposition and contradiction. Still others see complete dichotomy: reason covers one domain and revelation another.

Many philosophers accept religion and its beliefs but interpret them in the light of reason and prove them with rational evidence. For instance, Ibn Rushd sees reason as the base in this issue. If a contradiction arises between reason and revelation, revelation has to be interpreted in a manner to make it compatible with reason. This can be done by "extracting the metaphorical meaning of the words-the literal turns metaphorical-within the context of Arabic linguistic and cultural conventions which give a thing the name of other things when they are similar, causative, consequent or comparable and so on" [11].

Reason is an established base of religious law since the latter called for using reason to consider creations. Ibn Rushd says, "Religion urged a look into creations and encouraged it. ... As religion called for looking into creations through reason and required knowledge of them through it, many verses of the Book of God Almighty expressed that clearly…" [12].

Since religion here required a look into things through reason and used expression (to look into and consider) denotes deducing the unknown from the known. "As religion urged reaching knowledge of God Almighty through considering his creations as proofs, it is even better and necessary, for those who want to know God and his creation through proofs, to start first by knowing the kinds and terms of proofs…" [13].

Ibn Rushd bases the relation between man and God on the grounds of "reason" and "the unknown" and not on "reason" and "the irrational". Man can know the truth and understand it through discovery of the world and its creatures, adopting the method of rational research in existence. He says, "Philosophy points at the maker through considering the made since the created indicate a creator through knowledge of its

creation. When knowledge of creation is good, knowledge of its creator is better"[14].

Knowledge of God is possible through knowledge of the world. This knowledge of God is not beyond reason or its criteria.

The discourse used by Ibn Rushd saved reason from engaging with the negative unknowable, turning it into interacting with a productive epistemological relation with truth/God as an unknown that can be known. In contrast, the German philosopher Leibniz, for instance, engaged the mind with a one-sided dialogue with the unreasonable, which always stays out of the reach of reason.

Some rationalists do not allow belief in the supernatural, such as David Hume and Immanuel Kant. Hume, for example, denies all supernatural things as he says,

"But suppose, that all the historians who treat of England, should agree, that, on the first of January 1600, Queen Elizabeth died; that both before and after her death she was seen by her physicians and the whole court, as is usual with persons of her rank; that her successor was acknowledged and proclaimed by the parliament; and that, after being interred a month, she again appeared, resumed the throne, and governed England for three years: I must confess that I should be surprised at the concurrence of so many odd circumstances, but should not have the least inclination to believe so miraculous an event. I should not doubt of her pretended death, and of those other public circumstances that followed it: I should only assert it to have been pretended, and that it neither was, nor possibly could be real. … but I would still reply, that the knavery and folly of men are such common phenomena, that I should rather believe the most extraordinary events to arise from their concurrence, than admit of so signal a violation of the laws of nature[15].

However, some other rationalists, such as Leibniz, accept miracles and give them rational justification.

In any way, "a little philosophy inclineth man's mind to atheism, but depth in philosophy bringeth men's minds about to religion" as Francis Bacon says.

Second: the inception and development of rationalism

Rationalism is a trend with a long history. It is also the stance of a large number of thinkers with some roots in the ancient oriental thought especially in Egypt and India. It started as a philosophical trend in Greece with Socrates and Plato.

1. Rationalism and fables: a possible combination for the Greek

It may be common knowledge that the Greek age was one of rationalism par excellence, but this is not true in its entirety. Religions, in the mystic magical sense, were rampant in the Golden Age of the Greek civilization before Alexander. This Greek civilization was a combination of rationalism and superstition. Popular, pagan religions were so dominant that spurning them by Socrates led to his execution. At the same time there were other mystic creeds such as this Orphic[16] sect to which Pythagoras belonged. Both Greek life and temples teemed with pagan priests and myths.

However, in the midst of all this, rationalist philosophers emerged. Socrates (469-399 BC) sought universal rational concepts. He adopted a rationalistic approach that uses irony and generation of ideas. He used to mock his opponent in debates, to pose questions that seemed silly, and then try to disprove the interlocutor's reply. Thus, he applied the midwifery of ideas. He based his method on the notion that the truth is latent in the mind of every person. The truth is innate and only needs to be extracted in the right way from the mind of man.

Following Socrates, philosophers moved their interest from metaphysics and the universe to man and ethics since Socrates sought to make the human mind reach the constant, universal, moral principles.

Plato (427-347 BC), the first rationalist in ancient Greek philosophy, set a complete theory of knowledge whose most important characteristic was rejection of knowledge coming from sensations as doubtful. Thus, the senses should be ignored in acquiring true knowledge, the mind being the base of all knowledge. True knowledge is purely rational and pure reason is the only tool to reach eternal truth, the world of Ideas or Forms, without any help from the senses. The world of the senses is a world of ghosts reflecting the real world which only reason can see.

Since Plato glorified purely rational knowledge, he considered mathematical thinking the model of true knowledge. At the entrance to his Academy he inscribed the motto, "Let no one ignorant of geometry enter here."

Through his dialogues, the features of his theory of knowledge appear. His theory can be divided into four distinct stages which make up his dialectic method that he mentioned in the Republic (*Politeia*). These are:

1– Shadows and reflections of physical things.

2- Belief about physical things themselves.

3- Mathematical reasoning or objects.

4- Philosophical understanding.

Plato makes seeking the good the aim of his dialectic. The good is related to right, and virtue implies urging man to philosophize. Additionally, the good is related to beauty as well. Hence, the Platonic dialectic includes three values: right, good and beauty.

Plato divides the objects of knowledge into four:

1- ideas (forms)

2- mathematical objects

3- physical objects

4- shadows and reflections (of physical objects)

At the top of existence is the good, or absolute good, which is the highest object of knowledge[17].

At the beginning of the Greek civilization, rationalism did not stand against popular religion. Later it denounced it, so religion turned to be the target of either direct open war or indifference, ignored by emerging philosophies, as in the case of Xenophanes who launched a serious attack on Greek religion. The antagonism reached its peak with the emergence or rationalisms that reject Greek religion altogether. Socrates was accused of paying homage to new gods other than these of the popular religions. Moreover, Plato refused to acknowledge the myths of the poets, and in the education part of his Republic he urged erasing the dates of the gods of

Homer and Hesiod. However, at a later time, the Neo-Platonists accepted the significance and total meaning of the popular religion. They understood the meanings implied in the popular religion and integrated their metaphorical meanings and mythical parables into their intellectual rational images. They even employed them to function as an alternative to abstract language in the form of metaphorical linguistic style to express their rational thoughts.

2. Islamic philosophers: when the rational agrees with the revealed

Islamic philosophers saw the mind as an abstract essence that perceives what is absent through deduction, using different tools. The abstract is perceived by tools of reason; the concrete is perceived by the senses in a direct manner. They saw the mind in a practical way. It is the "tie" that controls the camel (the etymological origin of the Arabic word *'akl* is "the rope

that ties"). It thus restrains the wise from stooping to folly[18].

It can be said that *'akl* (the mind) is a polysemous word:

1- It means "good sense"; people with good sense can differentiate between good and bad.

2- It is the benefit of the experiences that man acquires over the years, building up universal judgments that serve man's interests.

3- It also denotes the good qualities of man that show in his movement, rest, speech and choices.

These three meanings are what the consensus of Muslims calls *'akl*[19].

The term mind, on the other hand, refers to man's ability to perceive a spectrum of non-material objects, such as:

First, he perceives the identity of material things, i.e., to know their essence not appearance.

Second, he perceives general meanings which are neither partial nor concrete, such as means and ends, good and evil, virtue and vice, right and wrong, essence and appearance, causality and existence.

Third, he perceives relations among things or among the parts of one thing.

Fourth, he perceives general principles of each science and of sciences in general.

Fifth, he perceives the existence of non-material things[20].

Muslim Theologians and some Muslim philosophers, such as Al-Kindi, Al-Farabi, Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna) and Ibn Rushd (Averroes), attempted to employ reason to express Islamic beliefs and ideas and defend them against their detractors. These thinkers sought to reconcile Islam and the rationalism of the Greek.

Some thinkers, especially Ibn Taymiyya, noticed how the Greek thinkers stayed away from the empirical logic. He tore down their logic showing that it does not come

up with anything new. Similarly, some Western logician also rejected the Aristotelian logic[21]. Ibn Taymiyya explained that they were right in mathematics, physics and a great deal of astronomy[22], but the Muslim philosophers "were better and more accurate, with more knowing hearts and better expressive tongues"[23].

Despite this highly critical stance towards Greek rationalism, Ibn Taymiyya opined that philosophy is not all wrong as the philosophers who were enlightened by the light of the prophets and had independent rational thought without blind imitation of Greek philosophy were of more correct views and more adequate expression. He gives the example of Abu Al-Barakat Al-Baghdadi in his book *the Valuable of Wisdom* which Ibn Taymiyya describes, saying it "proved the theology of God through the particulars, and refuted views of his predecessor[24]; he also proved

God's qualities and acts"[25].

3. The European Middle Age: reason turns from master to slave

In the European Middle Age thought, there was vacillation between Platonic rationalism and Aristotelian rationalism which had elements of empiricism. The question of creating conformity between reason and belief remained a big issue. The Platonic ideas appealed generally to the earlier writers of the old church who adapted their ideas to them.

Gradually, Aristotle started to replace Plato when a tendency to establish a system of beliefs acquired dominance. Christian theology turned into a coherent system of thoughts and principles after the Synods issued decrees with definite religious formulas.

A number of philosophers and clergymen contributed to turning religious principles and teachings into philosophical doctrines; these include Saint Augustine, Boethius,

Cassiodorus, John, Bede, Alcuin, Anselm and other clergymen who were versed in Platonic philosophy.

Eventually, others came forth to base their studies on Aristotle's logic and theories. The quiet, isolated life in the monasteries gave the monks ample time for meditation, which boosted the spread of Aristotle's ideas (translated at that time from Arabic).

In the European Middle Ages[26], rationalism was infiltrating into religion, adopting its beliefs as absolute postulates. Hence, reason turned into a servant of the Christian creeds, both the Greek Orthodox and the Roman Catholic. Reason was considered the tool of religion by Augustine (354 - 430), Anselm (1033 – 1109) and Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) among others who used philosophical thought to justify beliefs and to defend them against doubts and criticisms[27].

Thomas Aquinas, for instance, sees that revelation controls reason; he thinks, "truth cannot stand in contradiction with truth. Consequently, no truth of belief can negate a truth of reason, and vice versa. However, since the human mind is weak and meager, and since the mind of the best of philosophers, if compared to the mind of an angel, seems much less than the mind of a simple peasant compared to that same philosopher. Hence, once a truth of reason appears to us as if it contradicts a truth of faith, we can be sure that this alleged truth of reason is nothing but falsehood and illusion. If only we could be careful and accurate in discussion we shall see the falsehood" [28].

Before the greater schism of Catholicism and Protestantism in Europe at the end of the Middle Ages and the emergence of religious reform, a group of Italian philosophers started questioning the idea of conformity of reason and faith. "They were dubbed 'Averroists' because they were adherents of a

famous Arab author, who was called the Commentator by pre-eminence, and who appeared to be the one of all his race that penetrated furthest into Aristotle's meaning. This Commentator, extending what Greek expositors had already taught, maintained that according to Aristotle, and even according to reason (and at that time the two were considered almost identical) there was no case for the immortality of the soul"[29].

The Averroist Aristotelians "desired to maintain two opposite truths, one philosophical, and the other theological" [30]. They thought their doctrine was rationally proved in a decisive way; hence, they declared that the mind definitely sees the human soul as mortal while religion is certain of its immortality.

This distinction led to doubt while bishops and the clergy staunchly rejected the dichotomy of reason and faith. In the time of Pope Leo X (1475-1521), the Lateran Council condemned the dichotomy, and "scholars were urged to work for the removal of the difficulties that appeared to set theology and philosophy at variance"[31].

However, the doctrine of the incompatibility of religion and reason "continued to hold its ground *incognito*. Pomponazzi (1462-1525) was suspected of it, although he declared himself otherwise; and that very sect of the Averroists survived as a school. It is thought that Caesar Cremoninus, a philosopher famous at his time, was one of its mainstays"[32].

4. *Modernity: reason is freed from the authority of the Church*

At the beginning of the Modern Age, new variables concerning man's nature appeared, most important of which was the dominance of the mechanical

view of the world, i.e., seeing the world as a functioning machine.

This view has widened the gap between religion on one side and philosophy and science on the other. It has also broadened the distance between the material and the spiritual-two contradictory worlds. Nature is material, and is governed by mechanical inevitability. In contrast, the soul is immaterial and is governed by a mechanism that is not inevitable. The human ambition is overwhelmed by a tendency to control while the soul is still moved by the religious feeling.

Therefore, there arose a dire need for reconciliation between the material and the spiritual, the scientific and the religious. Some modern philosophers adopted stances towards religion and its beliefs which generally reflect this need.

On the other hand, some other modern and contemporary philosophers have espoused

stronger rationalistic trends, darted towards unbiased truth and attacked religion. Thus, a conflict between faith and reason has erupted.

The philosophy of the Modern Age was launched by René Descartes, who was considered the father of Modern Rationalism by many[33], since he derived his ideas from purely rational thought as a first premise from which he deduced truth. He said, "*cogito, ergo sum*" (I think, therefore I am.)

However, it seems that Descartes derives from Aquinas' view towards revelation as controlling reason[34].

A distinction should be made between the Cartesian rational method and Descartes' non-rational doctrine in many aspects. The method provides the correct steps of the thought process in the attempt to reach truth, but a doctrine is a set of views and ideas of the thinker on the world, man and God.

The method suggested by Descartes is, no doubt, a rational one. However, in actual reality, he did not fully apply his own method on his doctrine. Some aspects of his views on God, the world and man include some non-rational components.

It cannot escape one's notice that Descartes' method seems to be rational as is apparent in the rules included in either his booklet *Rules for the Direction of the Mind*, or the four rules he set for his method in his book *Discourse on Method* (1637); they are rational rules. However, when his doctrine is scrutinized, it transpires that the controlling logic is non-rational where we find non-rational concepts present in the structure of the doctrine. If we apply the Cartesian method on his doctrine, we shall discover that his doctrine is rife with irrational statements.

The deductive method of Descartes, as Bernard Le Bouyer de Fontenelle (1657-1757) says is, "beaucoup plus estimable que sa philosophie même, dont une bonne partie se trouve fausse, ou fort incertaine, selon les propres règles qu'il nous a apprises"[35] (much more estimable than his philosophy itself, a large part of which is false or uncertain to a great degree, if we apply the right rules that he taught us).

To look into the method first, Descartes set forth his method historically in his *Rules for the Direction of the Mind*, which is known as Regulae as its original title in Latin, in which Descartes wrote, it was *Regulae Ad Directionem Ingenii*. It was Descartes' early basic word, written in early 17th century, probably between 1626 and 1628. It was not completed and was only published posthumously in 1701. However, a Dutch translation appeared in 1684. His original plan was to divide the book into

three sections with twelve rules each, but the last part was lost and the second part was incomplete. A total of 19 rules were elaborated while rules number 19, 20 and 21are mentioned only as titles.

The first twelve rules deal with our conception of simple problems which can be apprehended in a certain way. They also cover intuition and inference which are the two basic epistemological processes that create clear distinct knowledge for Descartes.

The following twelve rules cover the problems that are completely apprehended, such as these problems that can be solved in mathematics and geometry[36].

In his second book, *Discourse on Method*, he mentions four rules that must be followed in every method that seeks the truth. These rules are sufficient, if followed accurately, to arrive at a certain truth. The rules are intuition, analysis, synthesis, and enumeration and review.

Descartes defines the content of these four rules as follows:

"The first is never to accept anything for true which I did not clearly know to be such; that is to say, carefully to avoid precipitancy and prejudice, and to comprise nothing more in my judgment than what was presented to my mind so clearly and distinctly as to exclude all ground of doubt.

The second is to divide each of the difficulties under examination into as many parts as possible, and as might be necessary for its adequate solution.

The third is to conduct my thoughts in such order that, by commencing with objects the simplest and easiest to know. I might ascend little by little, and, as it were, step by step, to the knowledge of the more complex; assigning in thought a certain order even to those objects which in their own nature do not stand in

a relation of antecedence and sequence.

And the last is to make enumerations in every case so complete and reviews so general that I might be assured that nothing was omitted."[37]

The reader of these four rules, and the previously mentioned twenty-one, will judge them as definitely rational. Hence, he would expect Descartes' religious thought to be saturated with the spirit of rationalism. Descartes, nevertheless, proceeds to set a rule that contradicts his first rule-his religious stance is absolute acceptance without application of the rules of methodical doubt.

Descartes here does not express the spirit of a modern philosopher; he rather retreats to the tendencies of the theology of the Middle Ages.

It may be said that a philosopher such as Ibn Rushd expresses the modern spirit more as he considers reason the base. When there is

conflict between reason and revelation, revelation should be so interpreted as to be compatible with reason through interpreting the text metaphorically[38]. For instance, "hand" is power, and "eye" is insight, etc.

Of the 17th century rationalists, Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677) imposed a mathematical geometrical deductive method of reasoning. He also identified four modes of perception, the highest being the intuitive rational knowledge. The four levels are:

1- **Hearsay**: this is knowledge we acquire through hearing, such as knowing about one's date of birth. This goes at the lowest level of knowledge.

2- **Vague experiential experience**: we get it through the senses, such as "fire burns". This is vague confused knowledge.

3- **Understanding of cause and effect**: this is where we have no clear idea of the cause, but we

deduce the cause from the effect.

4- **Rational intuitive knowledge**: this is such as knowing that two parallel lines never meet and knowing the properties of a geometrical form from knowledge of its definition. Therefore, mathematics is the model of certain rational knowledge since it is clear and distinct. The mind can arrive at it by itself and it depends on perceiving the thing through its definition or identity[39].

That is why Spinoza adopted the mathematical method in deducing the essence of his philosophy of existence and knowledge in his *Ethics,* where he followed the Euclidean geometry in his book *Elements*. The most important of its features are *Definitions, Axioms, Propositions* and *Proofs.*

Spinoza even used the same geometrical mathematical terms used by Euclid such as QED and corollary[40].

Other 17th century rationalists include Geulincx (1624-1669) and Malebranche (1638-1715) and other minor Cartesian thinkers.

Most important among the rationalists of that time is Gottfried Leibniz (1646-1716) who says that there are two kinds of truth:

1- Truths of reason: these are essential necessary truths; their opposites are impossible.

2- Truths of fact: these have no necessity; they are accidental and probable; their opposites are possible[41].

Therefore, Leibniz rejects empirical knowledge of the senses since it is contingent and uncertain. Rational knowledge is permanent and its principles are present in man's common sense. It depends on non- contradiction and sufficient reason[42]. The principle of non-contradiction insures absence of contradiction between premises and conclusion. It is thus completely

consistent. The principle of sufficient reason means postulating that the veracity of a fact or even its mere existence and the truth of a proposition cannot be ascertained without sufficient reason to prove it as such and not any other[43].

Leibniz argues there is complete consistency between the truth of reason and the truth of religion. He sees no conflict between them; the two are consistent. However, the method of arriving at religious truth is different from that meaning to arrive at the truth of reason. The first is supernatural revelation; the second is rational acquisition of truth through the natural means.

Two paths to truth are there then, but it is one truth that takes one of two names, religious or rational, according to the path trodden. Based on this conformity between the two types of truth, Leibniz bases faith on reason although, in many cases, he puts faith above reason describing reason as incapable of

understanding the beliefs of faith.

He says, "I assume that two truths cannot contradict each other; that the object of faith is the truth God has revealed in an extraordinary way; and that reason is the linking together of truths … the human mind can attain naturally without being aided by the light of faith" [44].

On the other hand, Leibniz refuses to claim that there are two separate truths, religious and rational. That is why he disdains the view of some Aristotelian philosophers of the 15th and 16th centuries, who adhered to the belief that there were two contradictory truths: rational and religious[45].

Truth is one, and it is wrong to separate reason and religion since "the necessary truths and the conclusive results of philosophy cannot be contrary to revelation. When some philosophical maxims are rejected in theology, the reason is that they are considered to have only a physical or moral

necessity, which speaks only of that which takes place usually, and is consequently founded on appearances, but which may be withheld if God so pleases" [46].

It seems to Leibniz that some misunderstanding takes place in the use of the relevant expressions. He attributes that to the fact that religious thoughts were explained with the purpose of justifying faith in an insufficient manner that did not reach a comprehension of how things happened.

Moreover, Leibniz argues that if we can believe in religious mysteries by reason of the proofs of the truth of religion, we shall be able to uphold them against objections. "Without that our belief in them would have no firm foundation; for all that which can be refuted in a sound and conclusive manner cannot but be false. And such proofs of the truth of religion as can give only a moral certainty would be balanced and even outweighed by such

objections as would give an absolute certainty, provided they were convincing and altogether conclusive" [47].

As has been shown before, Leibniz rejects the theory of two contradictory truths, confirming that the truth is one with no contradiction between what reason sees and what religion says. What then if a contradiction between the text of the Scripture and a proven judgment of reason arises? The literal meaning of the text may state something that is logically impossible or at least physically impossible. What is more reasonable: to reject the literal meaning or to discard the philosophical principle?

Leibniz answers, "It is certain that there are passages where to abandon the letter occasions no difficulty, as when Scripture gives hands to God and attributes to him anger, penitence, and other human affections. Otherwise, it would be necessary to array ourselves on the side of the anthropomorphists,

or of certain English fanatics who believe that Herod was really changed into a fox when Jesus Christ called him by that name. It is here that the rules of interpretation are in place, and if they furnish nothing, which combats the literal sense in order to favor the philosophic maxim. If in addition the literal sense has nothing which attributes to God any imperfection, or entails any danger in the practice of piety, it is safer and indeed more reasonable to follow it" [48].

Following the literal meaning in this case is necessary even when it is not understood by the mind; God's wisdom, as Saint Paul says, is regarded by people as foolish because they judge things according to their experience alone-experience that is extremely limited-so everything that does not conform to it seems absurd to them. Leibniz sees this judgment of men as "rash, for there is indeed an infinite number of natural things which would pass with us as absurd, if they were told to us, as the ice which was said to cover our rivers appeared to the King of Siam. But, the order of nature itself, not being of any metaphysical necessity, is grounded only in the good pleasure of God, so that he may deviate there from by the superior reasons of grace. Although he must proceed therein only upon good proofs which can come only from the testimony of God himself, to which we must defer absolutely when it is duly verified [49].

Resorting to a different angle as well, Leibniz handles the relation between reason and faith as he distinguishes between what is above reason and what is against reason. Theologians used to use this distinction before. They put religious mysteries in the area beyond the power of reason-these are the mysteries which no one can comprehend and correctly explain.

On the other hand, they determined what stands against reason as all concepts that have been disproved with the right evidence that cannot be refuted. The mysteries of religion were thus seen by them as not contradicting reason; they are simply beyond the power of reason[50].

Leibniz argues, "The distinction which is generally drawn between that which is above reason and that which is against reason is tolerably in accord with the distinction which has just been made between the two kinds of necessity. For what is contrary to reason is contrary to the absolutely certain and inevitable truths; and what is above reason is in opposition only to what one is wont to experience or to understand. That is why I am surprised that there are people of intelligence who dispute this distinction and that M. Bayle should be of this number. The distinction is assuredly very well founded. A truth is above reason when our mind (or even every created mind) cannot comprehend it"[51].

Moving to the 18th century, we find David Hume (1711-1776), as an example of the philosophers who dealt with the question of religion. He is a rationalist, but adopts a stance opposite to that of Descartes. His views on the theory of knowledge are different and controversial. Thus, it is sufficient to mention here his stance towards religion which is one of denial and refusal of any form of religion.

The same century witnessed the contributions of Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) who sought a resort to faith and developed a philosophical doctrine of ethical faith at the expense of faith based on revelation.

Kant establishes four principles for the reinterpretation of religious texts whose literal sense stands against reason. These principles overlap and are as follows:

First, any religious text that contains any facts that stand against reason must be reinterpreted so that these facts are positioned within rational and practical limits in order to involve a moral value that affects life. Thus, any anthropo-morphological facts should be understood as a means to simplify divine ideas to the ordinary person, and not as consecrating any similarity between man and God. Similarly, all texts related to human will should be interpreted in the light of confirming man's freedom and responsibility with the purpose of reinforcing the theoretical bases or morality. That is because without freedom there is no possibility of establishing morality.

Second, faith has a value as a tool of ethical behavior. Hence, if some texts set a certain belief above morals, the texts should be reinterpreted so that they serve a moral function since a belief that has no moral function is valueless and should not be an essential part of religion. The moral behavior is the only behavior which has value and occupies the most important position.

Third, religious texts should be reinterpreted in order to show man's complete responsibility for his acts. Man with his own volition is responsible for either ascending or descending morally.

Fourth, with his own work, man should seek to reach moral perfection[52].

In the 19th century, rationalism took the form of absolute idealism with Hegel (1771-1834), the German philosopher and the greatest in history, who combined the objects of philosophy and religion in one object, God or the Absolute. The difference between the two only exists in the manner of expression. While philosophy expresses its object in an intellectual abstract manner, religion uses a metaphorical form of expression. The Spirit in religion takes a special attire that can seem concrete, using figurative

language as it abode. Philosophy dwells in thought which is also its tool of expression. Thus, philosophy and religion differ in form but unite in their common object[53].

Hegel's rationalist approach is his own; it is the dialectical method where a thesis develops a contradictory antithesis, then the two interact and are resolved into a coherent synthesis. The process goes on where the new thesis develops its antithesis and so on.

There are of course, in the 19th century, rationalist philosophers other than Hegel, but the dominant trends of that century revolved round social positivism, evolutionism, and dialectical materialism.

Attempting to discover the extent of the spread of rationalism in the current time, we face a real difficulty because rationalism is not a closed doctrine with a group of adherents, such as in the cases of Marxism, Existentialism or Liberalism for instance. It is rather a tendency of thought and an intellectual methodology. Thus, it is not possible to speak of the extent of its spread as can be done with Marxism, Existentialism or even Buddhism.

It can be generally said that rationalism, whether in philosophy, religion, ethics, literature or any other discipline of the humanities, has a considerable presence in academic institutions and research centers as well as among intellectuals and authors. However, these writers and authors are not consistent in their understanding of rationalism; neither do they reach the same results, especially in what is related to religion.

Rationalism, in its epistemological aspect, has been under brutal attack from logical positivism whose major thinker, Alfred Ayer, even argued that the positivist project aims basically at bringing down rationalism, destroying the base on

which it stands. He aimed at refuting the principal rationalism thesis since "the only necessary truths about the world which are known to us are known through thought and not through experience. So that if we can show either that the truths in question are not necessary or that they are not "truths about the world," we shall be taking away the support on which rationalism rests"[54].

Despite the serious attack that rationalism endured, it survived and took a new form with Noam Chomsky, the great linguist. He contributed to a rational theory of the nature of language, advocating the rational vision of the effort to acquire knowledge. He said people are born with an innate knowledge of the universal rules of language. In spite of the differences among languages, all the languages of the world share one common deep structure which includes the subject, the verb phrase, the noun phrase, etc[55]. Therefore, man has

an instinctive marked schema of language in his brain, i.e., hereditary, programmed language, the role of experience being merely to activate it[56].

Thus, rationalism put an appearance in the theory of knowledge again.

Third: Rational criticism of rationalism

1. Triangle of disinformation: radical rationalism, uncertain rationalism and irrationalism:

Islam rejects the radical rationalism of the atheists and others who considered reason infallible and who denied the other sources of knowledge.

It also rejects the stance of those who hastily rebuff religious creeds basing their stance on uncertain rationality. It, additionally, rejects those who impulsively reinterpret religion in a manner that suits their uncertain views and those who

consider reason the sole source to arrive at absolute truth.

At the same time, Islam also rejects the stance of those who refuse to use their minds, and describes such people as mere cattle. Islamists themselves are not enemies of reason; they do not consider themselves, in the words of John Esposito, enemies of culture or progress. They only refuse westernization and secularization which mean subjugation to the West and its values and interests after the Muslims struggled long to shake off its control[57].

Islam does not reject all types and levels of rationalism. It only refuses radical rationalism which ignores all sources of knowledge except reason. It advocates rationality built on well-formed proofs as a stage in the process of thinking, aiming at reaching the truth. This is clear in the Quranic call to thinking and how the Quran addresses thinking people.

The Quran uses direct proving methods. It also uses particular proofs in discussing its particular propositions when such propositions are set forth. It calls on the listener to scrutinize these proofs on rational grounds and in an objective neutral way. So much so that some analysts say that there is similarity between Quranic inference and logical inference. In his book *The Correct Balance*, Abu Hamid Al-Ghazali showed how the principles of logical syllogism and its different forms are used in Quranic inference.

Some analysts argue that there is a similarity between the Quranic text and the rationalist philosophy in following the methods of proofs.

For instance, in his Sorbonne PhD dissertation, Dr Muhammad Abdallah Deraz says, "The best evidence of the similarity of the Quranic content, in particular, and philosophy is that when the Quran expounds its view of right and virtue. It does not only remind the mind of them and keeps raising

the issue for thought and meditation, but it also gives evidence and justification" [58].

The Quran puts forth propositions that are supported by evidence of logical reasoning, such as proving the divine unity when it states, "If there had been in the heavens or earth any gods but Him, both heavens and earth would be in ruins" [59]. Here, the Quran displays a conditional proposition with an implied negative antecedent and an affirmative consequent.

Moreover, the Quran calls for using evidence: "say, Produce your evidence, if you are telling the truth" [60]. Reason is proof and evidence which the denier of the Quran cannot use in an adequate way against the propositions of the Quran. The Quran further refutes the claims of some philosophies and religions which claim that faith has a domain that reason does not enter, so whosoever wants faith has to deactivate his reason and just follow in the footsteps of the ancestors.

The Quran asserts the valid evidence of reason, referring to mind, reason, thinking and meditating in different terms dozens of times.

One of the synonymous words of reason, in Arabic, is *"hijr"* (interdict), since reason interdicts a person to do ugly acts of bad consequences [61]. Ibn Qodama says "Reason is called *"hijr"*, i.e., "reason" as mentioned in the Quran: "Is this oath strong enough for a rational person?" [62] It is so called as it forbids the rational person to commit ugly acts with bad consequences. In religious law, it is disqualifying a person from the free use of his property" [63].

Another synonym of reason in Arabic is *"nuhya"* (forbid) [64]. Ibn Manzour, the lexicographer, says, *"nuhya* (pl. *nuha*) is the mind in both singular and plural as in the Quranic verse "There are truly signs in all this for people of understanding". [65] And *nuhya* is

the mind which forbids doing what is ugly; a man with mind (*nuhya*) is restrained by it from committing unseemly acts. Some interpreted that *nuhya* comes from *nehaya* (end). Thus, the mind of a person makes him end up using reason and consideration[66].

The Arabic word *qalb* (heart) is used as a synonym of "mind" [67]. The Quran makes this use in verses such as "There truly is a reminder in this for whoever has a heart"[68] (heart = mind)[69]. Another synonym of mind is *fuad* as in "The Prophets' own heart did not distort what he saw."[70] The word *fuad* may denote the heart[71].

The mind is also called *lob* (core) as "it is the faculty that knows right and follows it. A man will have no core (heart/mind) until he detects right and follows it"[72].

To sum up, Islam advocates moderate rationalism, scientific thinking and methodic doubt. It rejects extremist rationalism, the stance of those who hastily rebuff religious creeds basing their stance on uncertain rationality and those who consider reason the sole source to arrive at absolute truth. At the same time, it refuses the stance of those who do not use their minds as the Quran describes them as mere cattle. Islam considers the controlled mind the base of responsibility and the distinguishing merit of man who thus can rule on earth in the name of God.

It is time, then, to liberate rationalism from the trends that monopolize it. It is not necessarily connected to them in a positive or a negative sense. Rationalism is an aspect of a reason-based stance whether it springs from religion or reality. It is a genuine step in a method of thinking, but it is not the only or final one.

2. Relation of reason to the irrational

Some irrationalists have

exerted their best efforts trying to justify superstitions and to raise them above the limits of reason as extreme facts which reason cannot comprehend. The mind is insufficient and limited and has to accept myths with absolute submission.

This, no doubt, stunts the mind's critical abilities in the face of the irrational. It stops the intentionality of thought in its attempt to comprehend the unknown which represents a challenge and provocation to the capabilities of the mind.

There should be a distinction between two types of relations: the relation between reason and the unknown in the scientific domain, and the relation of reason to the irrational, i.e., relation to superstitions for those who believe in them.

On the one hand, the relation of reason to the unknown should be a productive positive one since the unknown can become known with constant research. This relation represents the base on which scientific knowledge of world and existence is established.

On the other hand, the relation between reason and the irrational is a submissive negative one; it strips the mind of its efficacy and deprives it of the ability to comprehend mysteries and pass judgments on them while requesting from it total submission to them.

Justifying superstitions by putting them above reason means depriving intellectual consciousness of its role in comprehending the world, of distinguishing between right and wrong and of its efficiency that motivates it to discover the unknown or at least gradually shrinking its presence.

Some take great pains to rationalize the means which consecrate a break off with the unknown, reinforcing a community

of sorcerers and surrendering to the author of mysteries.

Some philosophers were driven in their philosophical attitudes by scientific motives; others were driven by religious and moral motives; still others were driven by both.

Russell says, "When we try to ascertain the motives which have led men to the investigation of philosophical questions, we find that, broadly speaking, they can be divided into two groups, often antagonistic, and leading to very divergent systems. These two groups of motives are, on the one hand, those derived from religion and ethics, and, on the other hand, those derived from science. Plato, Spinoza, and Hegel may be taken as typical of the philosophers whose interests are mainly religious and ethical, while Leibniz, Locke, and Hume may be taken as representatives of the scientific wing. In Aristotle, Descartes, Berkeley, and Kant, we find both groups of motives strongly present."[73]

The choice is always there between reason as an ideology (i.e., reason as an intellectual doctrine that is dogmatic and rationalizing) and critical reason (i.e., as an epistemological tool that criticizes superstitions and illusions).

It can be said, accordingly, that historical, political and doctrinal biases drove some philosophers, such as Leibniz and Hegel to choose reason as an ideology, while using reason as genuinely itself drove others, such as Ibn Rushd, Pierre Bayle and Kant to choose reason as criticism. Making ideology contain reason ended up with reason losing its function as a measure and a standard.

Thus, it transpires that some thinkers established the use of reason as an answer that tries to rationalize and justify. They did not bet on critical rationalism, which represents the real

philosophical choice and opens existence up as a field of issues that do not go above rational consciousness. This makes mysteries and vague notions lose their artificial lofty status created by fear of facing them. This has been the practice of all critical, rational tends which sent winds of objective criticism to blow away illusions and idolized concepts. They heeded no reactionary authority which made reason accept self-deception. Then, they gave reason its merited role in searching for the meaning of any phenomenon, revealing the falsehood of mysteries with no objective content, and prosing questions that seek interpretation not justification.

Therefore, it seems that reason for biased wrong rationalism is the reason/answer/justification, while reason in critical rationalism plays the role of the reason/ question/ interpretation.

3. Illusions of reason's unchangeableness and oneness:

Rationalism as an epistemological trend had not heeded the importance of experience in forming knowledge until Kant set up his philosophical system. Reason for him turned from a source of commonsensical ideas (Plato, Descartes) into a structure with priori principles that find a pattern in impressions of the senses and rebuild them to allow for experience. Experience itself is not possible without universal priori principles of reason.

Rationalism has gone too far in searching for certainty outside experience. Most rationalists, especially excluding the contemporary ones, considered reason as a closed, stable final entity.

No doubt, turning reason into a closed system leads to succumbing to illusions. There must be other sources of knowledge such as reality, revelation, empirical and mathematical science and insights.

The major loophole in the stance of many rationalists is the belief in the unchangeableness and oneness of reason, which means that reason is stable and does not develop or know variations.

This loophole exists in the thought of Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Spinoza and Leibniz as they conferred this absolute stability on reason's form, categories and principles.

Contemporary epistemology has proven this conception wrong because reason, like any phenomenon, is changeable and can develop. In every new historical phase, it goes beyond itself and rebuilds itself anew.

Conclusion:

Thus, it has been shown that the secularist camp raises slogans of enlightenment and accuses its opponents of reactionary, obscurantist and dogmatic ideas in addition to sticking to superstitions. Secularists claim they own the absolute rational truth while their opponents persecute rationalism.

It has been found out that rationalism is not a closed doctrine with a team of proponents as in Marxism, Existentialism or Liberalism. It is rather a tendency of thinking of a variety of thinkers and philosophers (or even fundamentalists, religious jurists and exegetes within their domains and systems of belief or thinking). These various thinkers give reason a pivotal position in either their epistemology or manner of understanding the world. In the case of Islamic philosophy and jurisprudence, reason is resorted to in understanding religious laws, divine revelation, and the application of the Prophet's traditions. Reason is further used to give a human dimension to all that in order to cater for people's needs and to transform facts taken from their historical context into facts within the changing reality.

Rationalism is an intellectual approach that puts reason in the center of the attempt to generate true knowledge. It believes in the ability of reason to comprehend existence and to create or deduce right, good and beauty in addition to standards of justice. The meaning of the intended rationalism is determined within the relevant context: epistemology, religion, natural and mathematical science, but the most common use of the term is related to the theory of knowledge and approaching religion (as revelation and prophecy) as a source of knowledge.

Rationalism is not necessarily against religion since it is a complex of diverse components and covers a wide range that includes both believer and non-believer as reason is by nature relative. It would be jumping to conclusion if all rationalists were judged to be of one view concerning religion. Rationalisms are various. There are moderate and extremist rationalisms. Rationalists do not adopt one stance towards religion. Some, such as Hume and Kant, do not allow belief in supernatural acts, but others, such as Leibniz, accept them after giving them rational justifications. Some scholars saw consistency between rational facts and scriptural events as in the writings of Ibn Taymeya. Others, such as Abu Bakr Al-Razi, used reason to steer away from received beliefs as regards the status of the Prophet.

No doubt, many rationalists adopt either a totally or a partially negative attitude towards religion, but some rationalists accept religion in its entirety as given in its fundamental texts. Hence, the views of the rationalists should be judged singly not as one lump.

Generally speaking, Islam rejects the extreme rationalism of the atheists and those who see reason as infallible and those who refuse all sources of knowledge other than

reason. Islam also rejects the views of those who hastily snub religious creed based on rational doubt, or haste to interpret this creed in order to suit uncertain views. On the one hand, it refuses to consider reason the only source of knowing absolute truth, and on the other, it rejects the stance of those who do not use reason describing them as mere cattle.

Islam does not reject all types and levels of rationalism; it simply rejects closed radical rationalism which refuses all sources of knowledge but reason. It calls for rationality based on evidence as a stage of thinking in the attempt to reach the truth. It considers controlled reason a justification for bearing responsibility.

It has been shown how some irrationalists have exerted their best efforts trying to justify superstitions and to raise them above the limits of reason as extreme facts which reason cannot comprehend. The mind is insufficient and limited and has to accept myths with absolute submission! This, no doubt, stunts the mind's critical abilities in the face of the irrational. It stops the intentionality of thought in its attempt to comprehend the unknown which represents a challenge and provocation to the capabilities of the mind. The relation of reason to the unknown should be a productive positive one since the unknown can become known with constant research. This relation represents the base on which scientific knowledge of world and existence is established.

Some take great pains to justify the means which consecrates a break off with the attempt to know the unknown, reinforcing a community of sorcerers and surrender to the authority of mysteries! There is also an available choice between reason as an ideology (reason as a static, justifying intellectual doctrine) and reason as criticism (an epistemological tool to criticize superstitions and

illusions). Therefore, the role of reason in wrong, prejudiced rationalism is the role of answer/justification, while the role of reason in critical rationalism is the role of question/interpretation.

Therefore, it is high time to liberate rationalism from the trends that monopolize it. It is not necessarily confined to these trends in existence and non-existence. It is rather an aspect of the rational stance which springs from reality or believes in a religion. It is a genuine step in the thinking method, but it is not the only and final one. There has to be other sources of knowledge such as reality, revelation, and the empirical and mathematical sciences.

Notes:

(١) ابـن تيميـة، درء تعـارض العقـل والنقـل، تحقيق محمد رشاد سالم، الرياض، دار الكنوز الأدبية، ١٣٩١ هـ.

(٢) يوسف كرم، العقل والوجود، دار المعارف، ١٩٥٦، ص٧.

(٣) محمد بن مكرم بن منظور الأفريقـي المـصري، لـسان العـرب، بـيروت، دار صـادر، الطبعـة الأولى. لسان العرب ج١١ ص٤٥٨–٤٥٩.

(٤) السَرَخْـسي، الأصـول، تحقيـق أبي الوفـا الأفغاني، بـيروت، دار المعرفـة، ١٣٧٢ هــ، ٣٤٨/١.

(5) Robert Audi, *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK, 1995, 2nd edition, 1999, p. 771.

(6) V. I. Lenin, *Materialism and Empirio - Criticism: Critical Comments on a Reactionary Philosophy*, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1947, p. 166.

(7) Ibid., p. 159.

(8) M. Rosenthal and P. Yudin, *A Dictionary of Philosophy*, Moscow, Progress Publisher, 1967, pp. 378 - 79.

(٩) أورمسون وآخـرون، الموسـوعة الفلـسفية، نقلها عن الإنجليزية: فؤاد كامل وآخـرون، القاهرة مكتبة الأنجلو ١٩٨٢م. ص ٣١٢.

(17) See: محمد أبـو ريـان، تـاريخ الفكـر د. الفلسفي، ج١، ص ١ وما بعدها

(١٨) الجرجـانى، كتـاب التعريفـات، بـيروت، دار الكتاب العربي. مادة عقل.

(١٩) ابن سينا، رسالة الحدود، ص ١١-١٢.

(٢٠) مراد وهبه، المعجم الفلسفي، القاهرة، دار قباء، ١٩٩٩، ص ٤٥٨.

(٢١) الرد على المنطقيين، مصدر بمقدمة سليمان الندوي، نشره عبـد الـصمد شرف الـدين الكتبي، بمباي، المطبعـة القيمـة، ١٩٤٩م. ونقض المنطق، تحقيق محمد بن عبد الرازق حمزة، و سليمان بن عبـد الـرحمن الـصنيع، القاهرة، مكتبة السنة المحمدية،١٩٥١.

(٢٢) ابن تيمية، الرد على البكري، ج١/ ص١١٤

(٢٣) المرجع السابق، ج١/ ص١١٥.

(24) That is to say Avicenna.

(25) Ibid., Vol. I, p. 247.

(26) The period of history between classical antiquity & the Italian Renaissance, i.e., from the fall of the Roman Empire in the B.C. 5th C to the beginning of the 15th C.

(27) Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, trans. by E. S.

(10) S. Blackburn, *The Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy*, Oxford University Press, 1996, p. 98.

(١١) ابن رشد، فصل المقال فيما بـين الـشريعة والحكمة من الاتصال (*The Definitive Answer to the Question of the Connectedness of Islamic Law and Philosophy*) تحقيـق د. محمـد عـمارة، بـيروت، المؤسـسة العربيـة، ١٩٨١، ط٢، ص٣٢.

(12) Ibid., p. 22.

(13) Ibid., p. 23-24.

(14) Ibid., p. 22.

(15) David Hume, *An Enquiry concerning Human Understanding*, 1748, pp. 114 - 116.

(16) Orphism is mystical Greek religious and philosophical cult derived from the myth of Orpheus. It involved stories of creation, reincarnation, and punishment after death, and had a large influence on Pythagoras and Plato. Simon, Blackburn, *Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy*, OUP, 1996.

Haldane & F. H. Simon, London, 1952, Vol. 1, p. 72.

(٢٨) اميـل برهيـه، تـاريخ الفلـسفة: العـصر الوسـيط والنهـضة، ترجمـة جـورج طرابيـشى، بـيروت، دار الطليعـة، ١٩٨٣.ص١٧٤-١٧٥.

(29) Leibniz, *Theodicy*, ed. by Austin Farrer, trans. by E. M. Huggard, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1952, p. 79.

(30) Leibniz, *New Essays Concerning Human Understanding*, trans. by A. G. Langley, New York: Macmillan, 1896, pp. 280-1.

(31) Leibniz, *Theodicy*, p.82.

(32) Ibid. For an extensive discussion of the subject, see: Windeband , *A History of Philosophy*, trans. by J. H. Tufts, New York, Macmillan & Co., 1893, pp. 318 sq. , 339 sq., 359.

(33) We describe Descartes here as a rationalist after the convention of history of thought books.

(34) D. E. Cooper, World Philosophies: An Historical Introduction, pp. 174 – 5.

(35) Bernard Le Bouyer de Fontenelle, *Digression sur les Anciens et les Modernes*, (1688) WikiSource, p. 6.

(36) J. Cottingham, R. Stoothoff & D. Murdoch (Eds.), *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1985, Vol. I, p. 51.

(37) Réné Descartes, *Discourse on Method*, trans. by John Veitch, London: J. M. Dent & Sons (Everyman), 1912, pp. 15-16.

(٣٨) ابن رشد ، فصل المقال فيما ما بين الشريعة والحكمة من الاتصال، ص٣٢.

(٣٩) د. فـؤاد زكريـا، سـبينوزا، بـيروت، دار التنوير، ١٩٨٣، ص ٧١.

(40) See: Spinoza, *Ethics*, Trans. by A. Poyle, Introduction by George Santayana, London: J. M. Dent & Sons (Everyman), 1948, pp. 1-5.

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(45) Leibniz, *New Essays*, pp. 280-1.

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(47) Ibid., p. 78.

(48) Leibniz, *New Essays*, p. 589.

(49) Leibniz, *New Essays*, p. 582.

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(52) Kant, *The Conflict of the Faculties*, trans. by M. J. Gregor, New York, pp. 39 ff.

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