

Fatima is Fatima

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Publisher(s):

The Shariati Foundation [4]

Compilation of lectures given by Dr Shariati about the life of Fatima az-Zahra, the daughter of the Prophet and how she is a manifestation and a symbol of the way and an essential direction of 'Islamic thought' and an important source of learning for the Arabs that considered a man without sons as without descendants, while Allah gave the Prophet the best descendants through his daughter. Dr Shariati stresses the importance of her figure and invites all women around the world to look up to her as a universal role model.

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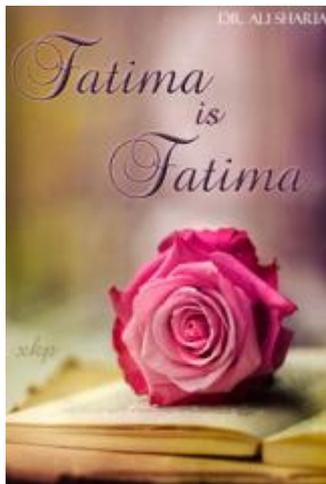
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Introduction

"When the earth is shaken with a mighty shaking, and earth brings forth her burdens, and man says, 'What ails her?' Upon that day she shall tell her tidings for that her Lord has inspired her."
(99: 1-5)

It is 1971, just the beginning of the end of the Pahlavi regime and the monarchical system in Iran. The words of Ali Shariati, the great teacher, the man who redefines Islam as it has been and not as it has become, ring out at the Husayniyyeh Ershad¹ on the night which marks the anniversary of the birth of the daughter of the Prophet of Islam – Fatima (‘a).²

He cries out the question which is upon all women's lips, "Who am I?" "Am I a mother?", "A wife?", "A daughter?", "A friend?", "A biologist?", "A chemist?", "A doctor, nurse, mid-wife, laborer, writer, human being...?" "Who am I?"

It is the very first time that an Iranian woman is confronted with this question. She knows, feels, senses the question with her innermost being but she has never had it expressed for her before. Once expressed, the question, of necessity, begs for an answer which is a genuine and authentic part of that person.

This is the beginning of the Revolution which Iranian women were to undergo but it will take seven long years before it is expressed in society namely, in the Islamic Revolution of Iran.

But we have moved too quickly. We are way ahead of ourselves. We have to return to that night when so many of us were not present, the night when the question was first expressed.

On that night in 1971, he begins the journey to Fatima with this question and slowly but surely unfolds an answer. He lays the groundwork: be authentic, genuine in your search. Search for what? Search for the Truth. Do not be intimidated by external forms and eye catching colors. Be yourself, that which you really

are and not that which you have become. Seek out the Truth.

With this as a base, you face the first obstacle. "How can I be authentic when I still do not know who I am?" He tells us, "You do not know who you are because you have no traditional models to turn to." That is, you have no direction, you have no orientation. Why? Because scholars for the last fourteen centuries have been too busy describing the details of devotions and by doing so, have inadvertently left the models aside. They failed to present Islam to the people in the people's language.

Other than a few responsible and committed scholars, they failed to bring the essence of Islam to light. That is, Islam stresses inner as well as outer freedom. When presented in the form that the Prophet received it, it brings self respect. It opposes tyranny, oppression and colonialism for they foster dependence upon a man made system. These scholars failed to uncover the forgotten concepts of Islam. They ignored its revolutionary dimension.

They stepped over the family of Ali (‘a), Islam as it was at the time of the Prophet and what Shi'ism really stands for. The essential principles, the columns which hold up the personality had been so intricately carved and decorated that their basic form and function had been covered over. Pillars such as *azadeh* – freedom from attachments to this world or inner liberation, being inwardly free and the seeking of justice, all lay dormant within their exterior decoration.

What should be done? One should seek out the methodology set down by the Prophet. Shariati then describes the three methods of the conservative, the reformist and the revolutionary pointing out the pros and cons of each approach. Then he turns his analysis to the method which the Prophet was inspired with. "The Prophet preserves the form," Shariati tells us, "the container of a custom which has deep roots in society, one which people have gotten used to from generation to generation, and one which is practiced in a natural manner, but he changes the contained, the contents, spirit, direction and practical application of this custom in a revolutionary, decisive and immediate manner."

Is this not the very method he puts forth for women? If your culture holds the tradition of a Fatima, seek her out. Retain your outer feminine form but change the contents, for the infiltration of your inner essence by imported contents brought by the enemy in the guise of a friend is far more harmful than the changes one's outer form may take.

The state of one's hemline is a superficial problem resolved one way this year and another way, next. It produces meaningless consumerism. However, when the disease reaches the roots, the inner essence of the form, the form falls away from its society and remains root-less, wandering, without meaning. This is what the enemy, the destroyer of the inner essence of womanhood wants, for root-less forms follow the course of events without ever again taking roots, without any concern for their society, without commitment, alienated and completely capable of being molded into whatever framework is provided.

This is what the Prophet brought when Islam, 'the real sense of submission' was revealed to him. Submit to that which gave you roots, the One God and not the multiple forms which attract one away from one's

roots. Strengthen your roots and your earth so that when there is a 'mighty shaking' as the Qur'an so firmly announces, which at one level can be interpreted as an 'awakening of consciousness', your roots will hold, you will prevail, the outer winds, storms, lightning and thunder can not pull you away.

This takes us to another stage. We have a method but now we need a direction. Will it be that of a realist or that of an idealist? Shariati tells us, "Neither. Both."

Islam admits to all realities – hunger, ignorance, drug addiction, the need for divorce, the weakening of the weak by the strong, oppression and suppression (realities according to realists, must be translated into real forms so they have no problem with imagination, ideology and ideas which they ignore). "But as opposed to realism, Islam does not accept the status quo but changes the realities." Shariati continues, "It changes their essence in a revolutionary way. It carries realities along with its ideals. It uses realities as a means to reach its idealistic goals, its real desires, which are nonexistent by themselves. Unlike realists, Islam does not submit to realities, but rather, it causes the realities to submit to it. Islam does not turn away from realities as idealists do. It seeks them out. It tames them. Through this means, Islam uses that which hinders the idealists as a composite for its own ideals."

With this approach, an independence of thinking develops which, in order to succeed as an answer and not to cause deviation, must branch out from that society's historical roots. Face up to your realities. Tame them. Work through them to reach your ideals.

Which mould does the Iranian woman of 1971 fill? Traditional or absurd? Women of the tradition or women of the new imported mould? The question, "Who am I?" does not concern them. It is directed towards those who "can neither automatically accept their hereditary, traditional form nor surrender to the imposed new forms."

The question is relevant to the woman who wants to decide for herself and who desires a decision that relates to her own culture; for if she is authentically and genuinely searching, she cannot neglect her culture nor can she ignore it. Is she one who serves herself or others? Is she an individual or a social being? Is she aware of the fact that, individualism, that is, 'individual independence,' in the present century, "in one's relationship to one's society (family, tribe or country) or the serving of oneself, replaces the spirit and unity of society and the serving of others"?

As Shariati points out, there are many women whom we cannot see – women who are independent and who rely on their own accomplishments and relate these to their own cultural background. It is for a woman to awaken so that she will not live her life unconsciously imitating borrowed forms and ideas – forms and ideas which neither she nor her ancestors participated in the creation of, thereby being essentially irrelevant to her.

It is here that Shariati develops the concept of Islamic social justice. In Islam it is not sufficient to tell one's self, "Thou shalt not ... this or that." For there is a commitment by which each individual is bound by and that is to be an active participant in society opposing social ills. That is, one should say to one's

self, "Thou shalt not be an oppressor," but one is equally obliged to say to one's self, "Thou shalt help the oppressed."

Ali Shariati was a firm believer in the traditions of, his culture. He realized that you cannot inject ideas from other cultures which have no organic or rational roots. He realized that concepts must be tested according to the cultural and social criteria of that environment. He was able to redefine the basis of the beliefs of his people, his society and his society's perception of itself. He awoke latent ideas. His goal was the development of a dynamic social environment which would be embedded in the historical background and conscience of that society.

To this end, he takes us to the heart of Shi'ism: Fatima, the beloved daughter of the Prophet of Islam. He describes the woman we could not see, the one we thought we knew but only after his guidance did we become aware of the fact that although we related each day directly to her spirit, she had been lost as a model for our daily lives. That is, we had an emotional attachment to her inner essence but we had removed her form.

Shariati takes us to Fatima. He begins with the social customs of the Arabian Peninsula before her birth where according to custom, female children were buried alive at birth in order to save the family from the disgrace of having an unsuitable son-in-law. It was the revolutionary message of Islam which did away with this custom.

God reveals through the Qur'an that the Prophet Muhammad (s) had been given 'the abundant river of Paradise', *kawthar*, and through that river, he shall have abundant progeny although according to Arab beliefs at that time, a man without a son is called 'cut-off'. How could it be? The father of a daughter will have abundant progeny? His wife, over 50 years old, gives birth to a fourth daughter, Fatima. God has kept his promise to the Prophet for through her, the progeny of the Prophet multiplies – through a woman.

Shariati then goes on to further enumerate the honors that Islam has bestowed upon women. There is only one person buried in the Ka'ba, the 'House of God' and that is a woman, a slave, Hajar, the second wife of Abraham and mother of Ismail.

The Prophet always treated Fatima with a love and respect which caused great amazement to the people of the times. Their relationship was such that Fatima became known as 'the mother of her father' for she accompanied him everywhere and she was always protecting and, caring for him.

Although polygamy is allowed in Islam in certain circumstances, the Prophet, because of his love and respect for Khadijah, the mother of Fatima, never married another during her lifetime nor did his cousin and son-in-law, Ali, marry another wife as long as Fatima was alive.

Fatima spent her life in struggle, resisting poverty and difficulties. Her father was forced to spend three years in a valley with his family when his tribe imposed economic and social sanctions against his

message of Islam. After the migration to Medina, her new life as a married woman begins but she continues to face the same hardships and difficulties that she has encountered since childhood.

She is inspired by the spirit and compassion of her father. She grows up in his shadow as her husband, Hazrat Ali, had. They came to know the spirit of struggle and resistance and the turns of fate.

Ali Shariati describes these events and many others based upon Sunni and Shiite sources of the Traditions. At the beginning, in Part One, he has told us, "The only thing our beloved people know about Fatima is the following:

'Fatima was the beloved daughter of the Prophet and detested by Aiesha [the wife of the Prophet after Khadijah's death and the daughter of Abu Bakr, the first of the Orthodox Caliphs]. After the death of the Prophet, Abu Bakr took her grazing land in Fadak. Omar attacked her home with a group of his men. They struck her .in her side and she, six months pregnant, aborted her son, Mohsin.

From then on, her days passed with the taking of her children's hands and walking outside of the city to a place called 'House of Sorrows'. There she would sit and cry. She would speak ill of the usurpers of Ali's rights. She would cry and lament for hours. She spent her short life crying and cursing her fate until she died. She requested in her will that she be buried at night so that those who thought ill of her would not follow her funeral and they would not know where she was buried.'

What we learn in Part two is a far cry from what we had known. Is that a Moslem female child who defends her father against the elders of her tribe? Is that a Moslem female child who, holding her father's hand, accompanies him into the bazaar, listens to his debates and walks with him to her home?

Is that a Moslem woman who stands at the door and defends her husband and her home when usurpers try to burn it down? Is that a Moslem woman who tells the newly elected Caliph that he has displeased God and God's Prophet by not listening to the Prophet's advice and taking only his own interests to heart? Is that a Moslem woman who when she finds injustice and oppression speaks out with the totality of her being, not fearing the outcome of her words for...she knows she speaks with the tongue of Truth?

Let us turn to her last sermon and have her own words tell us what she really believed and practiced. When Fatima was ill with the final sickness which caused her death, the wives of the Emigrants and Companions of the Prophet went to visit her to ask how she was feeling. Abu Bakr had been elected Caliph and Ali was put aside. In reply to them, after asking for the blessings of God for her father, Muhammad, she said:

"By God I am alive while I have nothing but contempt for this world. I detest your men. After I tried to show them who their real enemy was and they did not listen, I put them aside.

"How ugly are the sharp edges of swords when they are broken and then play with people's efforts and struggles which so many have undertaken, destroying the fortifications, breaking spears, making devious

decisions and standing on the precipice of material and personal self desires. What a terrible future they are preparing for by causing the wrath of God and thereby bringing about permanent torment for themselves.

"I tried to awaken them to their acts and show them the burden they had placed upon their own shoulders. They deserve to be slaughtered, to be wounded by swords. Those who act oppressively are far from – the blessings and mercy of God. Woe be to those people. They brought down a leader (Ali) who was at the peak of the mission. Mountains form upon the unconquerable pillars of prophecy, the place of inspiration, the wise and expert dominated by both routine and spiritual affairs. Beware! This is an obvious loss.

"By God, why did they dislike Ali? Were they afraid of the sharpness of his sword in supporting right and truth, his braveness in fighting and martyrdom, his killing of oppressors, his effective blows in words and his anger for the sake of God?

"By God, if they had followed the selection of the Prophet, Hazrat Ali, he would have guided anyone who had gone astray and if one rejected the right reasoning Ali would have shown the error in a way that neither would the rider be hurt nor the horse he is riding upon, wounded.

"If Ali had been leader, he would guide them to a clear, sweet spring of water. The watering spring would be full, its shores clean and sound and he would return them safely to the edge after they had drank from the water.

"He would advise them in things both manifest and hidden without any benefit to himself from their needs and without taking more than a small share for himself – just enough so that he would not go thirsty or hungry. In such a case, worshippers of this world (materialists) would be distinguished from the ascetics and the right ones from the antagonists.

"God says, 'if citizens are faithful and avoid wrong deeds, We will give blessings from heaven and earth to them. But they deny the truths so we captivated them for their deeds. From those who oppressed, the results of their actions will be returned to themselves: They cannot change the traditions of history.'

"Arise! Arise! If you stay a while you will see the wonders of nature, but more wonderful than these is speech. What is their argument? What pillars do they support? What rope do they hold onto? What family do they admire and dominate over?

"What a terrible leader they have elected (Abu Bakr). What a terrible helper they have appointed (Omar). What a wrong and oppressive exchange they have made! By God, they gave superiority to those who deferred their decision to become Moslems rather than to those who were the pioneers. They elected weak ones instead of strong ones. They destroyed those who believe they are performing good affairs. They are corrupters who do not understand.

"Woe be to them! Is it not more worthy to follow the one who guides rather than the one who cannot find his way if he is not guided? What has happened to you? What kind of a judgment is this? You have impregnated the earth with your act. Just wait until the time when it gives birth. I swear to you, instead of milk, you will have buckets full of blood and poison will flow from the breasts of the newborn.

"It is then that the destroyers of rights will lose and those who will come in the future will find and realize the terrible results of what the ancestors have done. So you should be satisfied with your daily affairs and live in peace prior to the storm and terrible revolts.

"For then, the sharp swords of the dominations of the oppressors, anarchy and the rule of tyrants will overcome you. The oppressors will enslave you. No public assets except a small quantity will remain. They will cultivate with force what you have planted with love. At that time you will only sigh for there will be nothing that you can do because you were blind and could not see the truth. They will oblige you because you have turned your faces from the right way and you did not accept it."

Why has Fatima been misunderstood? Why have our women been lost to either outdated forms or new imports? Why has she been exploited? Shariati tells us in the words of Hazrat Ali, "two parties are required in order to bring about oppression. One is the oppressor and the other is the one who accepts oppression. Oppression cannot be one sided. An oppressor cannot perform oppression in the air. Oppression is like a piece of iron which is formed by the striking of the hammer of the oppressor upon the anvil of the oppressed." Thus, women themselves participated in the attack upon their values by allowing themselves to be oppressed and by not searching out their roots.

With the awareness which Shariati brings to us, our coming to know Fatima brings about a responsibility and a commitment to those who first ask, "Who am I" and then search out the answer in the authenticity and genuineness of their own culture. The responsibility and commitment grows through love and faith. Our knowledge becomes illuminated because Shariati has awakened this responsibility within us. With Fatima as our model, we learn to fight injustice and oppression. We turn from ourselves to others. We become actively involved in society's ills because she as she really was, is our symbol, our model, our heroine.

This is not to deny the spiritual presence and essence of Fatima who has inspired thousands of artists, poets, writers and artisans. At one point we learn that the Prophet gave her a prayer instead of the domestic help that she had asked for. She grew from this for this nourished her spirit and strengthened her commitment to God and His people. But it is rather to complement it for as Jalal al-din Rumi tells us, "The physical form is of great importance; nothing can be done without the consociation of the form and the essence. However often you may sow a seed stripped of its pod, it will not grow; sow it with the pod, it will become a great tree."⁴ And as every artisan knows, it is the clay itself which determines the forms that can be created.

Having awoken and become aware to the real Fatima presented by Shariati, Iranian women were able to

arise and play a major role in the Islamic Revolution of Iran. They fought against oppression and injustice side by side with the men. Clothed in the modest dress of what Fatima might have worn, they found no impediments to their freedom to act, to fight, to resist.

After the Revolution, Iranian women who had asked themselves Shariati's question, "Who am I?," are trying to come to know themselves as being 'like Fatima' for one must remember that only Fatima is Fatima.

Laleh Bakhtiar

June, 1980.

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1. A Husayniyyeh is a traditional religious center where the people gather to see passion plays, in particular, those related to the third Shi'ite Imam, Imam Husayn, and his martyrdom at Karbala. The Husayniyyeh Ershad, referred to here, is located in Tehran. It is a center built in the late 60's and has extended the meaning to include a center for lectures about Islam. Ali Shariati was one of the first people to lecture here and drew crowds in the thousands; and people gathered in the streets and surrounding areas to hear him. But as the former regime began to fear his effect, they closed down the center for several years. It was re-opened after the Revolution.
 2. The letter ('a) which follows the name of Hazrat Ali or Hazrat Fatima or the other Imams is the abbreviation of 'alayhi salam, (peace be upon them).
 3. The letter ('s) which follows the name of the Prophet Muhammad ('s) is a customary abbreviation for the benediction *salli 'aLah 'alih wa alihi*, ('may the blessings of God be upon him and his family').
 4. *Fihi ma fi*, p. 19-21

Words for the Reader

To My Beloved Daughters

Mani and Iran

May They Grow In the Light of Fatima

In the Name of God

The Compassionate, the Merciful

To the spirit of my mother, Zahra, the mirror of humility, emotions, and chastity, for whom life was only sorrow, while her existence, for me, was all kindness.

The words you are about to read are from a lecture I gave at the Husayniyyeh Ershad. To begin with, I had wanted to comment upon the research of Professor Louis Massignon about the personality and complicated life of Fatima (‘a). I had wished to refer to the deep and revolutionary influence her memory evokes in Moslem societies, and the role she has played in the breadth of Islamic transformations. These words were, in particular, for the university students participating in my various classes: ‘History and Knowledge of Religions’, ‘The Sociology of Religions’, and ‘Islamology’.

As I entered the gathering, I saw that, in addition to the university students, many others had come. This spoke of the need for a more urgent response to the problem. I agreed to answer the pertinent question of womanhood which is extremely important today for our society.

Women who have remained in the ‘traditional mould’ do not face the problem of identity and women who have accepted the ‘new imported mould’ have solved the problem for themselves. But in the midst of these two types of ‘molded women’, there are those who can neither accept their hereditary, traditional form nor surrender to this imposed new form. What should they do?

They want to decide for themselves. They want to develop themselves. They need a model, an ideal example, a heroine. For them, the problem of ‘Who am I? How do I become?’ is urgent. Fatima, through her own ‘being’, answers their questions.

I would have been satisfied with giving an analytical description of the personality of Fatima. I found that book shops had no books about her and thus, our intellectuals know nothing about her life. I was obliged to compensate for this lack to a certain extent. Thus this present essay, is the same lecture, but expanded to include a biography based upon documented, traditional sources about this beloved person, who has remained unknown or misinterpreted. In this bibliography, I particularly drew from historical documents. Whenever I reached a problem of faith and explicitly Shiite views, I chose Sunni sources, since Shi’ism grew out of the origins of Sunnism, and from the scholar’s point of view, they are irrefutable.

I cannot say that this lecture is without need of criticism. Rather, the reverse is true. It is in great need –waiting for those with pure hearts, those who enjoy to guide, those who are willing to serve, rather than those who show hostility, abuse and make use of slander.

Ali Shariati

June, 1971

Introduction

On this sacred night, it was not planned that such an unsacred person as myself speak. I have gained much from my contact with the work of Professor Louis Massignon. He was a great man and well known Islamic scholar who had written about Fatima.

I was greatly influenced by her blessed life, as well as her effect upon the history of Islam. Even after her death, she kept alive the spirit of those who seek justice and opposed oppression and discrimination in Islamic society. She is a manifestation and a symbol of the Way and essential direction of 'Islamic thought'.

As a student, I played a small role in the preparation of this great work, especially at the beginning of the research and gathering stage. The documents and information which existed had been recorded over a period of fourteen hundred years. They were written in all languages and local Islamic dialects. The historic implications in the various documents and even the local odes and folk songs were studied. I was asked to summarize this work here.

I said to myself, 'I will offer this work here today because it has yet to be published and the great man who began it, has left this world having left this work uncompleted.' People unfortunately do not know about this work. Even Europeans, who are familiar with Islam, do not know about this study. This has also affected our own scholars, who are familiar with Islam through the writings of Europeans, and , therefore, remain uninformed of this work.

I accepted this invitation and I said to myself, 'I will describe the manuscripts to my students, in particular, those who participate in my classes at the Husayniyyeh Ershad. I will give them the scientific and historic results of the deep research of this great man.'

But now I see and sense that the face of the gathering differs. It is not a group gathered for a sermon or a discourse. The women and men who are now here are all intellectuals and educated representatives of the needy of today's generation of this society. They have not come to hear me speak of Fatima in order to gain spiritual reward from this gathering tonight. They have not come to hear a dry, scientific, historic lecture as they have a newer, more urgent, more alive need which is to answer this most sensitive question for those who are affected by our contemporary fate: Who am I?

Who Am I?

In our society, women change rapidly. The tyranny of our times and the influences of institutions take her from 'what she is'. All her traditional characteristics and values are taken away from her until they make her into a creature 'they want', 'they build', and we see that 'they have built!' This is why the most important and relevant question for the awakened woman at this time is, 'Who am I?', knowing full well that she cannot remain what she is. Actually, she does not want to accept modern masks to replace the traditional ones. She wants to decide for herself. Her contemporaries choose for themselves. They consciously decorate their personalities with awareness and independence. They thoroughly ornament themselves. They manifest a design. They reflect a sketch, but, they do not know how. They do not know the design of the real human aspect of their personality which is neither a reflection of their heritage nor their artificially imposed imitative masks. Which of these do they identify with?

The second question which arises from amidst this, stems from the following reasoning. We are Moslems, women of a society who wish to make decisions through reason and choice and relate them to a history, culture, religion and society which received its spirit and origins from Islam. A woman who is in this society wants to be herself. She wants to build herself, 'herself'. She wants to be reborn. In this re-birth, she wants to be her own midwife.

She neither wants to be a product of her heritage nor have a superficial facade. She cannot remain heedless of Islam and she cannot remain indifferent to it.

Thus, it is natural that this question should arise for the Moslem woman. Our people continue to speak about Fatima. Every year, hundreds of thousands of Moslems cry for her. There are hundreds of thousands of gatherings, prayer meetings, festivals and mourning ceremonies in her memory. There are ceremonies of praise, joy, honor and majesty for her where her generosity is expressed through unusual customs. They hold rituals of lamentation where they re-create her sorrows and speak ill of and damn those who offended her. In spite of all of this, her real personality is not known. The only things, unfortunately, that our people know of this great, sacred person are these few items as follows:

'Fatima was the beloved daughter of the Prophet and detested by Aiesha [the wife of the Prophet after Khadijah's death and the daughter of Abu Bakr, the first of the Orthodox Caliphs]. After the death of the Prophet, Abu Bakr took her grazing land in Fadak. Omar attacked her home with a group of his men. They struck her in her side and she, six months pregnant, aborted her son, Mohsin. From then on her days passed with the taking of her children's hands and walking outside of the city to a place called 'House of Sorrows'. There she would sit and cry. She would speak ill of the usurpers of Ali's rights. She would cry and lament for hours. She spent her short life crying and cursing her fate until she died. She requested in her will that she be buried at night so that those who thought ill of her would not follow her funeral and they would not know where she was buried.'

This is the extent of the information about this great person that exists in the memories of our people. Yet, in spite of the little they know about her, the people accept her majesty and power with their whole hearts. They offer her their hearts with all the spiritual strength, faith and will that a people could have or a human community could build.

Be Authentic and Seek Out the Truth

The greatest honor, in my opinion, which has been bestowed upon our Iranian society is bestowed when it chooses Imam Ali, in spite of the sorrow, depression and difficulties which it suffers because of this choice. Our people show us discernment and deep thought; they show us how to oppose oppression and deceit. They open the fists of powerful men, treacherous, dominating people who take away the rights of human beings. They rebel against force and oppression. They come to know deceit, lies and traitors. They oppose oppressive regimes. They do not allow themselves to become attached to or influenced by advertisements and religious leaders who had attached themselves to the institutions of the Caliphate: They discover unknown truths. They seek out the strange, the weak, hidden behind useless curtains. They find strong currents. They are the cause of this society withstanding all it does. They choose Ali (‘a).

It is true that our people came to Islam through the various Caliphates, but we must recognize their insurrections against both the Caliphs and their institutions including those of the Omayyad’s, Abbasids, the Khans, Turkish Khaghanis, Tazis and Mongols. We must distinguish between the people and the Iranians who are attached to their institutions under the name of 'Islam', 'Qur’anic Government', 'Prophetic Traditions', 'The Front of Truth' and 'The Truth of Religion'.

All the expressions of the beliefs and the new founded wisdom of Islam come from the Caliph's institutions: their words from the pulpits and minarets, their books and commentaries upon the traditions, their orations, advertisements, philosophies, men of letters, poets, historians, warriors and even companions and associates of the Companions of the Prophet. Every single one of these groups were extensions of the Caliph or Sultan's institutions.

Loud speakers, transistor radios, films, television, magazines, newspapers, advertisers and theoreticians are extensions of the rulers' class. Those in power who form the times and who are the relatives of the official leaders. relatives of the Prophet and the Imams who are legally appointed in the name of Divine Rule and Traditions are all extensions of the Caliph or Sultan.

These amazing people of ours, under the bombardment of publicity, without having any sort of security, behind the thick, black clouds of the accepted sciences, architecture, theology, government, religion, culture, history, interpretations, jurisprudence and traditions which incidentally happen to coincide with the ruling Caliphate, and confirmed the governing institutions, without even knowing the official language of Islam, cleverly enough know, however, that these are all lies. They know that the Truth is not attached to these eye catching forms.

Rather, the Truth belongs to a man who is alone, who has his home in a corner near the Prophet's mosque and who is surrounded by the ignorance of his tribe. He lives amidst the great political sacrifices of the friends of the Prophet and the great thinkers of Islam.

Beyond the green palace of Damascus and the hanging noose of the fairy tale Caliph of 1001 Nights of Baghdad, Iranians find the abandoned, mud built house of Ali and Fatima and discern that Islam is in –this sorrowful, abandoned, silent abode.

The Iranian people who enter and become acquainted with Islam through the sword of the Caliph, see this truth and know it to be a truth even in the midst of invitations from the religious leaders belonging to the official Islamic Caliphate, whereas the people of Medina and the contemporary Arabs and the Companions of the Prophet do not see or do not want to see it. The great schools and universities of Damascus and Baghdad are also ignorant of this truth.

This is a most difficult and wonderful choice on the part of our people. It manifests the birth of a thought and an awareness which is contrary to any customs they had had. It reflects the greatness and firmness of their spirit. It shows their worship of the Truth. It reveals the spiritual courage of these people who rebel against history and the worldly government of the Caliphate.

The Caliphate, more than any other previous historical political system, governs their institutions. It is always the Caliphate which possesses the powerful military and political forces. It holds the strings to the huge religious capital of thoughts and the unlimited wealth of culture, literature and endowed knowledge.

Our people negate the Caliphate in the midst of all of the confusion of war and jihad (inner and outer spiritual struggle). They never lose their fervor, in spite of the disputes which arise from conquests, the defeats they suffer, the destruction which takes place, the constant building and clamor, knowledge and thought, culture and civilization, revolution and distractions full of cries of religion and the world. They deafen the ear of history and cause the earth to tremble under their feet. These strangers, far away and unknown, hear and know the cries of a lonely man, a man who is a 'stranger in his own town', Ali!

Ali speaks to himself far from the eyes of the town and the ears of the people of the town, in the depths of the night, in the date palm gardens of Bani Najjar, outside of Medina. He tells himself of the pain he feels seeing the destruction of all which he had helped to make. He is afraid when he remembers the lies, luxury and plunder. He knows the force and deceit which have been imprinted upon the familiar faces of the disgraced and condemned Caliphs and Caesars. They are talking of building a new society, covering over religion.

For centuries more, God's creatures will continue to remain deluded. What dirt must be eaten. What efforts must be made so that the Truth be known once again. Truth has been hidden behind those pseudo sacred new clothes and newly created beauties. You see that the first sacrifice of this bleeding and weakening of the weak by the strong in Islam are the `people' and `the fate of the people'. The symbol of both of these is the sacrifice of `he himself' and before him, `his wife' and with tomorrow's

generations of Islam, 'his family' and generation after generation, 'his children'.

Without a doubt, this decision, this discernment by our people is the most difficult, dreadful and frightening moment in history. It has not been easy for us to grasp. All these generations of heroes show intelligence, alertness, persistence of character, personal courage and love of virtues. They indicate how to become familiar with and understand the beauty of mankind and the greatness and majesty of the spirit. They come to know the best values; they learn to descend into the depths and to rise upon waves. They continue to seek the Truth amidst thunderstorms of oppression and terror. All of these generations of angelic heroes live and move against the judgment of history. They themselves create another law. They respond to all the minarets, pulpits and mihrabs. Facing all the great Companions, theologians, judges and traditional religious saints, they rebel. Against the cries of the swords for blood in order to break their strength, in both the East and the West, day and night, all one hundred percent say, 'Yes. Say no!'

When intelligence and thought are added to their faith, they become addicted to blood. They seek after sacrifice and the victory of Truth. They acquire a sense of abundant generosity and courage. They have to suffer sorrow and they have to have the ability to survive punishment, whippings, insults and the pain and terror of imprisonment, wretchedness and loneliness. They require a special kind of sincerity. They need a keen sense of vision to bear treachery, the force of power and fanaticism and yet, remain patient. They sacrifice self worship and fanaticism and games people play with the Caliphate, and the desire to have both God and His fruit. They put aside fear, pious fraud (dissimulation), pretentious sacredness and ostentatious open mindedness...and many other things.

These are a few of the principal elements of Shi'ite experiences – Alavite Shi'ism, not Safavid Shi'ism, that is, not the Shi'ism of the Safavid Shah Abbas, not the Shi'ism which trembles in history when opposed by force and oppression, not that which supports oppression and force, but the religion of justice and innocent government. We are not referring to the Shi'ism which supported the repressed historic collection of ideas or the tribal hatred or verbal love and grudges full of suggestions (not intelligent and practical); Safavid Shi'ism refers only to the Caliph and not to the Caliphate; it pertains to the past and not the present; it relates to that which is beneficial after death and not before death.

It is the purpose of the sanctity of the Alavis to free the Shiites from injustice, governments of force and ignorant leaders. The Alavis give freedom, not the sanctity of the Sufis which is mixed with doubt and is neither useful to God nor to the people of God.

Shi'ism is nothing other than Islam – not that which they tell us: 'Islam in addition, to other things'. No! Shi'ism means pure Islam, Islam minus the Caliphate, pseudo Arabness and those who live in luxury. Shi'ism does not take the two principles of justice and imamate (religious leadership) and add them to Islam – Islam without justice and Imamate is the same as the religion of Islam minus Islam. The same is true for Christianity, Judaism, Zoroastrianism, Vedantism, Buddhism and Taoism.

It is this 'new ignorance' which adds 'government', 'race' and 'classes' to Islam. The wars between the Shi'ites and Sunnis which took place in the past (not in the present where it has become a war of words, history and tribes) are wars for the ideas of imamate and justice against despotism and oppression. The differences in faith and historic, philosophic and religious interpretations all develop from the same front.

Ali has not been added to Muhammad('s). We have taken Ali in order not to lose Muhammad. The descendants of the historical Caesars, Kings, Pharaohs all spoke from Muhammad, yet there is a difference in what they stood for.

We do not replace the Traditions (sunnah) of the Prophet with the family of Ali, nor do we add to them. Very simply and straight forwardly, this is his family. We seek to know, through the Traditions, what he said, what he did and what he wanted but with the help and guidance of his family.

Contrary to what both enemies and lovers today think, Shi'ism is the most traditional sect of Islam. The major difference stems principally from whether or not Ali and the real Shiites tried consciously and correctly, from the beginning, in opposition to innovations and heresy, to remain traditional and retain the traditions.

We see how everything has been mixed with everything else. We see that during the black centuries, filled with blood, while the world is awe-struck by the power of the government of an oppressive Islam and the Caliphate, the Islam of justice and imamate is drowned in the blood of .martyrdom. Shiites accept martyrdom and there. by negate the Caliph's power. This most difficult choice does not come easily!

The cruel punishments enacted by the families of the Omayyad's, the Abbasids, Saladin the Turk and the Mongols bear witness to the fact that the great theologians, the champions of liberty, the seekers of death, and the majority of the worshippers of truth and the desirers of justice and the lovers of virtue have committed themselves to this way and to freedom. The way passes through the Caliphates of Damascus and Baghdad into the land of fire, blood, prison and punishment. It is attached to that small house of Ali which is as large as all of humanity. What things do they not do? Which ones of them do they not kill?

To speak about Ali and Fatima in the history of Islam has not been easy. Poets who have defended this family say, 'I have been carrying the rope of my execution on my back for 50 years.'

This is the fate of all the men and women who have written the history of Shi'ism, a history where each line, each word, has been written with the blood of a martyr.

These courageous front runners of Shi'ism are not familiar with the new philosophy which has been created for us : 'Wait. Be in a state of anticipation, awaiting the hidden Imam. He will come himself and make everything right. He must come himself and restore the religion of his ancestors. The only thing is for us to use 'pious fraud' and have patience.' [The author is referring to a particular way of thought used

by the Caliphate institutions to keep people subdued. The idea is to wait for the end of the world and the return of the 12th Imam, marking the time when all the world will be ruled by justice] .

Ibn Sakit was a great man of letters; he was not among the warriors or champions of justice, but a literary man and an expert in language. His hidden sympathies were with Shi'ism. The Caliph, Mutawakil Abbasi chose him to teach his children. Little by little, Mutawakil's children began to side with Ali and his family. 'Perhaps,' he thought to himself. 'this is the work of their teacher.' One day the Caliph visited the classroom. He sat down and began complementing Ibn Sakit and praising him. He told him how pleased he was with the progress of his children. Then, in the same tone, he asked, 'How do you see my children?' Ibn Sakit, in answering, praised them very highly. Then Mutawakil suddenly asked, 'Ibn Sakit, in your opinion are my children better or Hassan and Husayn, the children of Ali?'

Ibn Sakit had to make a choice. The use of 'pious fraud' here would be weakness and treason. In Alavite Shi'ism, pious fraud is a tactic in order to preserve faith and not as it is used today to preserve the believer.

He did not pause. In his normal voice, in the same tone in which Mutawakil had asked, he answered, 'Qambar, the servant of Ali, is worth more than both you and your children.' Mutawakil ordered that the tongue of Ibn Sakit be cut out. It is these tongues which come back to scourge the tyrants of history.

If the Shi'ites are not conquered, they are tried, Their desire for justice and freedom never dies in their hearts, nor their need for equality, awareness and revolutionary leadership against the enemies who are attached to the institutions of oppression, wealth and hypocrisy. They never forget. They do not let this sacred fire die out. It is not forgotten in the conscience of the people.

The People and the Theologians

Two groups carry this heavy responsibility on their shoulders. These two groups hold the rope of death in their hands for centuries. One is the great, conscious

Shiites who know imamate to be a continuation of prophethood, and wisdom, the continuation of imamate. The second group are the pure, faithful people of ours. They express widespread silence. They suffer punishment at the hands of the Arab Caliphate's household and the Turkish Sultans. Behind their bloodied and peaceful faces is a strength and virility which makes their executioners ashamed. In the midst of government whip lashes, these people are like hard rocks of patience and they say they do not sense any anguish.

Wisdom and Love

Each religion, school of thought, movement or revolution is made up of two elements: wisdom and love. One is light and the other is motion. One gives common sense and understanding, the other, strength,

enthusiasm and motion. In the words of .Alexis Carrel, 'Wisdom is like the lights of a car which show the way. Love is like the motor which makes it move.' Each is nothing without the other. A motor, without lights, is blind love, dangerous, tragic and infers death.

In a society, a movement of thought or a revolutionary school of thought, men of letters who are clear thinkers, aware and responsible, show, through their works, that there is a way to come to know a school of thought or a religion. They show that there is a way to give awareness to the people. The responsibility of the people, on the other hand, is to give their spirits and their strength to a movement. They are responsible for giving the starting push.

A movement is like a living body. It thinks with the brain of scholars and gives love through the hearts of its people. If faith, sincerity, love and sacrifice are at a minimum in a society, people are responsible. But where correct understanding of a school of thought is at a minimum, where vision, awareness, logical consciousness, deep familiarity with the goals of a school of thought are lacking, where the meaning, purpose and truths of a school of thought are missing, the scholars are responsible. Religion, in particular, needs both since religion is a type of lover's consciousness or love of consciousness.

In religion, knowledge and feelings are not treated as separate entities because they are transformed into understanding and faith by means of common sense and the coming to know something.

This is Islam. More than any other religion, it is a religion of the recitation of the book, a religion of jihad, a religion of thought and love. In the Qur'an, one cannot find the boundaries between love and faith. The Qur'an considers martyrdom to be eternal life. It swears one to the pen and writing.

This is particularly true in Shi'ism as its history and culture has shown. Shi'ism is a place from which love, enthusiasm, blood and martyrdom emanate. Shi'ism is a center of the inflamed. Feelings boil. At the same time, it includes meditation and wisdom. It embodies cultural and intellectual sciences. It is a distinguishable movement of revolutionary thought. It is an accident in the fate of man. It is knowledge, love and truth in the name and nature of Ali. The worship of truth is such that truth, without worship, is philosophy and knowledge, and worship without truth is idol worship and lust.

Tears Should Bear Witness to Love

Shi'ism is thus historically born and continues to exist. Its thinkers and scholars, who are manifestations of those religious warriors, seek profundity and logic. They guard the spirit and the Truth. It is they who give the correct orientation to the beginnings of the true Islam. They are to find the inner meaning of things. They come to know endurance. They complete the meaning of faithfulness. They protect the truths of Islam.

Then, in the dizzying arena of life, they lose their way when they begin to write in the name of philosophy, Sufism, science, literature and false asceticism. Public thoughts are stricken by Greek and

pseudo Eastern inclinations.

All of the Shiite people are a manifestation of the truth to which they remain loyal. They follow sincerity, love, common sense and sacrifice. It is they who give up their lives in the way of Ali. They follow the way of Ali during the times when force, punishment and public murders are running the whole of the government. They continue even though lips which are opened in his name are closed and blood which is heated by his light is spilt. Speaking about the family of the Prophet in the supposed 'Caliphate of the Prophet' is answered by being skinned alive and burned.

But today the mass of people still give so much love. They are still so loyal to this house. After the passing of many centuries, full of changes, the birth and death of faith, love and thought, people do not go to the door of the palaces of Baghdad. They do not orient themselves to another direction. We see that they still find their way to the walls of Fatima's house, and cry in pain. Each drop of these tears is a word which our cordial and loyal people use to express their never ending love of the members of this household. This is the language of the common man. Is there a language more simple, more pure, more lacking in hypocrisy than tears, the language without words and without lines? Each element of it is a painful cry, the cry of a desiring lover.

Isn't it true that the eyes express the truth more than the tongue? Aren't tears the most beautiful of poems and the least twisted of loves? Don't they reflect the most consuming of faiths, the warmest of desires and the most fevered of feelings? Aren't they the purest form of speaking and the most subtle form of love? These are mixed all in one heart of love. They mix together, fuse and form a warm drop. This they name a tear.

We see then that our people still 'speak', they speak their thoughts well. Don't be surprised that sometimes I defend crying and other times, I criticize the programs of lamentation in prayer meetings.

Yes! These words of mine are not in opposition. The crying that I praise is something more than 'a program for crying' or 'something to do' or 'a duty' or 'a means to reach a goal' or 'a principle' or 'a rule'. It is something else. Crying is the natural emanation of a feeling. It is a compulsory and instinctive response to love, anguish, desire or sorrow.

As Regi De Bre, the famous French revolutionary, said, 'A person who never cries and who does not know how to cry, lacks the feelings of humanness. He is a stone, a wild, dry spirit.'

Tears which flow, 'cries which are cried, weeping which grows little by little in the heart, then suddenly appears in the throat and stops one's breath and by necessity bursts, is the sincere and natural language of desire and grief, pain and love which all exist in one human being.

But we can sense, without doubt, that one who plans a 'program' around crying and knows it to be a 'goal' and a 'rite', a 'tradition', a 'religious duty' or a 'principal job' or a 'means for gathering profit' or a 'means towards warding off losses' or a 'means allowing one to continue to violate' or 'continue to fail',

those who know it to be a 'means to a goal' and worthy of 'spiritual reward', deludes us.

People who are lovers, people who are apart from their beloved, or people who are in mourning because the death of a loved one has broken their hearts, cry, and are sad. Whenever their hearts recall their beloved, and their tongues speak, their hearts are set afire and their faces shine; their eyes reflect the same pain. Tears flow and all of these are signs of the subtleness and purity of their deep faith and real love.

There is a person, on the other hand, who can be described in the following terms. He sits in the bazaar, his eager eyes looking after profit or in his office, speaking nonsense. He seeks after hypocrisy, usury and work or looks with flattery towards the boss, enlarges himself in front of subordinates and takes on Pharaoh like qualities towards others. At noon –he goes home and sleeps comfortably and peacefully, eats, drinks, sleeps and laughs. In the afternoon, he seeks out his 'health clubs' and the thousand unhealthy ones. When we see him in the late afternoon, according to his calendar, and according to his previous arrangement, he goes to a meeting with a group, from 6:30 to 9:00 P.M., Tuesdays, the first day of the month. They sit down and begin to feel sad. Through much pressure and effort, he manages to make himself cry and if possible, shed tears. After the 'program' and 'crying' and 'mourning' and other things related to them, he drinks coffee and tea and smokes the water pipe. Then, with a lightened spirit and victorious conscience, and with the feeling that he has accomplished an important task and taken a step towards his beliefs and his faith or love, he arises and goes after his work and continues his daily schedule until once again it is time for his 'crying program' and the 'mourning program' according to his plan and design. Would you call such a person who looks so sad, a lover who has seen pain and undergone great difficulties?

Crying which does not contain an obligation, awareness, a knowing of the beloved, an understanding and sensing of faith, is something which is only useful as an eyewash, to cleanse it from the pollution of the air. Don't forget that one of the first people who cried for the great Imam Husayn was Omar Sa'ad [who had ordered his killing] and the first person who forbid and condemned this kind of 'crying for Husayn' was the great Zaynab [Imam Husayn's sister].

But our people cry because they are lovers. They cry so that they can bind their hearts deeply to this beloved family. It is a real pantheon, a real Olympia where several lords live who know no language other than tears. People are neither scholars nor philosophers but rather full of feelings. They are prepared to be sacrificed.

No religion, history or nation has a family such as this, a family where the father is Ali and the mother, Fatima and their sons, Hassan and Husayn and their daughter, Zaynab. They all live under one roof at one time and are one family. At the same time, there has never been so much love, sincerity, faith, poetry and blood given to a family by a nation.

Our people gather a culture around the door and roof of Fatima's house. Through this family comes a

history, full of excitement, movement, courage and virtues which have continued to the present time. This history is like a pure river, life giving for all the past generations of our people, and now in the depths of their spirit, our conscience continues to flow.

These are the only people in humanity who have remained faithful to the sorrow of their beloved family. They are the only ones who mourn for the freedom of their champions of justice. Their faith extends throughout their history. They have not forgotten their virtues, crushed under the feet of sorrow. They continue to mourn. Virtues are destroyed. Truths are tried. Governments create tragedies. They commit murders. But the people continue to seek this movement throughout its history. The fate of their heroes has not been forgotten.

But all this love remains barren, like the rain which falls on a salt marsh. Grass does not grow in this desert. All the sacrifices, investments, readiness, assembling, human strengths, powers and precious energy giving opportunities are useless efforts.

Who Is Responsible?

Scholars! It is they who do not perform their responsibilities in respect to the people. They should give awareness, consciousness and direction to the people and they do not do so.

All our geniuses and great talents occupy themselves with philosophy, theology, Sufism, jurisprudence, principles, literature, meanings, expression, novelties, conjugation and syntax. Through all the years of research, thought and their own scholarly anguish, they write nothing other than 'practical treatises' on how to achieve cleanliness for the ritual prayer, types of uncleanness, the rules of menstruation, and the doubts which arise in ritual prayer.

They leave aside writing treatises on how to speak with people, treatises on how to communicate the religious truths and the philosophy of the pillars of the religion, treatises on how to communicate consciousness and awareness to people, treatises on the understanding of the traditions of the Prophet and the personalities of the Imams, treatises on the revolutionary purpose behind Karbala, introductory treatises on the family of the Prophet and the Shiite movement, treatises on the expression of thoughts and treatises on the faith of the people. All of these treatises are written, but all of them are written without responsibility, without the role of a commander. They pass their responsibilities on to the ordinary speakers in the mosques, not to the mujtahids (religious leaders whose directions for the practice of the faith are followed).

This is why the task of introducing the Prophet's family, the task of the advertisement of religion and the study of the truths of Islam fall prone to the 'failures of the old schools of religion'. It is for this reason that

a group of young people, in order to study Islamic sciences (and to carry jurisprudence forward), enter the schools. If talented, through great efforts, they become jurists or mujtahids or faghih [theologians]. This group is imprisoned as teachers and removed from the community. Those who do not succeed in studying properly, because they do not have the ability, talent or spiritual strength, but, in exchange, have warm, often artistic, voices, are obliged to propagate and advertise the truths of the religion. The third group, who have neither this nor that; neither the science nor at least a voice, take the third way. They become dumb and speechless. They take themselves to the 'sacred door' and, as things would be, they move ahead of both mujtahids as well as the speakers in the mosques.

In the midst of this, be just! What will the fate of the people be? What is the fate of their religion? It is not necessary to think very hard. No. Just look.

It is this. A country which is full of faith and love, a nation which has the Qur'an and the *Nahjul Balaghah* of Ali, a people who have Ali, Fatima, Hassan, Husayn and Zaynab, have a red history but a black fate. They have a culture and the religion of martyrdom, but it is dead.

We see a dream appeared to Joan of Arc, a sensitive and imaginative girl, for her to fight in order to have the king returned. For centuries, her dream has given the inspiration of freedom, sacrifice and the sense of revolution and courage to the enlightened, aware and progressive French people.

Whereas Zaynab, the sister of Imam Husayn, who takes a heavier mandate, the mandate of Husayn in her Ali-like hands, continues the movement of Karbala, which opposed murders, lying, terror and hysterics. She continues the movement at a time when all of the heroes of the revolution are dead and the breath of the forerunners of Islam has ceased in the midst of our people, when commanders of the Islam of Muhammad and the Shi'ism of Ali are gone. But she has been turned into 'a sister who mourns'!

I hear reproachful cries towards the scholars who are responsible for these beliefs, ideas and thoughts of the people. I do not know whether these cries come from the throat of Ali or from the depths of the unconscious consciences of the people.

What are you busy with? Where do you speak from? Why do you not speak? Throughout all of these years, where is one book for people telling them what is in the Qur'an? In place of praise, eulogy, prayer, poetry, song, lamentation and spider webs about the love of Rumi, why have you sealed the lips of Ali among people? A Persian speaking person cannot easily understand what Ali has said, but all of the works of La Martine, the French lover, can be read in Persian, that do you say? All the songs of the ancient Greek woman, Bilitis, with dubious morals, can be read in Persian but the words of Ali, one saying of Ali, cannot be read.

Where is one small, short, correct, recital about the real lives, beliefs and behavior of the Imams? You speak so much about their essences, generousities and miracles but where are the books about them? You breathe their miracles and for their birthdays and days of their deaths you have festivals and mourning ceremonies. Where are the treatises for the Shiite people, enamored of Ali, that say who Ali

was and who Fatima was and how their children lived and how they thought, what they did and what they said?

Our people, who spend their lives in love with the Shiite saints and who cry over the difficulties they faced', who serve them for months and years, who glorify their name, spend money, give their sincerity and their patience to them, deserve to know the real lives of each one of their Imams. Their lives should serve as examples for each one of them. Their lives, thoughts, words, silences, freedoms, their imprisonments, punishments, martyrdoms, should give awareness, life, chastity and humanness to people. But people know them only by their number. [That is, the 6th Imam, the 8th Imam, etc.].

If an ordinary person mourns for Imam Husayn and on the anniversary of his death (*'ashura*) strikes his head with his dagger and bears the pain even with pleasure, and still knows Husayn in an oblique way and misunderstands Karbala, who is responsible? If a woman cries with her whole being, if the recollection of the name of Fatima and Zaynab burns her to her bones and if knowing it is worthwhile, she would, with complete love, give her life for them, and yet, if she does not thoroughly know Fatima and Zaynab, who is responsible?

Neither this man nor this woman knows one line of their words. None of them have read one line about their lives. They can only recall Fatima beside her house at the moment when her side was struck and they only know Zaynab from the moment when she leaves the tents to go together the bodies of the martyrs. They only know her from the morning of the day of 'Ashura up until noon, from then on they lose her. Their awareness of Zaynab ends the day when her work and great mandate, the legacy of Husayn, just begins. Their knowledge about Zaynab ends here. Then, who is responsible?

And, thus, educated and open minded boys and girls judge the situation and say, 'What is the use of this religion of crying and lamentation? What can such a religion do?' Mat knots do all this excitement, love, lamentation and cries for Husayn, Fatima and Zaynab untie for a backwards, imprisoned nation which needs awareness and commitment to negate oppression and in order to seek freedom.

'What pain does this 'religion of remorse', these 'ancient wounds', 'historic lamentations and cursing' treat for our deprived, illiterate women who want their freedom and clear vision. Does one reach the heart of the problem by doing away with love and hatred? People are busy with feelings which passed centuries ago in foreign lands. They relate to lives passed living among strangers. They do not know persecution. They have not sensed the chains of oppression around their necks, nor the oppression which, when falling upon their human shadow, causes them pain. They have never burst in anger or become boiling hot under the remembrance of the chains of oppression which a Caliphate one day hung around the neck of a sick person.

They have not thrown up their hands and struck their daggers upon their heads until they leave their senses. They have not seen them when their consciousness returns, when their heart grows quiet, when their sins become pure, when all responsibility falls from their shoulders, when they even cheat at the

scales of Divine justice and when they tamper with their deeds for the afterlife.

'As a result, when they have performed enough dirty deeds to compare with stars in the sky, foam of the waves of the sea and sands of the desert, with a small amount of surgery, by striking their dagger upon their heads, they completely change their situation and become as innocent as the moment when they were born from their mother's womb, then even God owes them something.'

If people believe that the advantage of the friendship of Ali and their faith in the sanctity of Ali will result in a chemical and acidic reaction which accords with the Qur'an:

'God will change their evil deeds into good deeds. (25:71),

in other words, the soul of this very treason which they commit in this world will change its essence in the other world and it will take the form of good deeds, then who is responsible?

If this imamate and sanctity of Ali, which has for centuries had the strength of a movement desiring justice, seeking freedom and a fighting spirit opposed to oppression and despotic institutions, and if this movement can free awakened and aware people and give them liberty, justice, chastity, independence and motion and if it could change them both socially and individually and if the movement could bring about an intellectual revolutionary leadership which fights against classes and gives life and consciousness to a society and they have not shown this, who is responsible? If the value, influence and effect of following Ali, Fatima and the Imams are transferred from this world to another world and its effect is only measured after death, then who is responsible?

If the promises and covenants of our fathers to this family have had no effect upon their thoughts, their time, their lives and society and if their sons, seeing this ineffectiveness, remain cut-off from their promises and links with this religion and this family, then, who is responsible?

What Did They Miss?

The Family of Ali: Intellectuals vs. the People

Is it that this family is without effect, or is it that our young generation and intellectuals are in error? Or have our mothers and fathers failed in their responsibilities?

Ali is the most manifest of truths and represents the most progressive school of thought which has ever taken human form. It is not a myth. It is a human reality or should be from that which it could be and isn't.

And his wife, Fatima, is a perfect example of an ideal woman; of what a woman could be and no one has become. Husayn and Zaynab, the sister and the brother, who brought such a deep revolution in the history of mankind, give a sense of honor to freedom and disgrace to despotism and oppression.

The house of Ali is like the Kaaba in which children and the inheritors of Abraham reside. The Kaaba is a sign, a symbol and it is real. It is made of stone whereas they are human beings. The Kaaba is the place of circumambulation for Moslems only whereas the house of Ali is the destination of every heart which understands beauty, knows the majesty of humanity, freedom, justice, love, sincerity, strength, encourages jihad and sacrifices to preserve the lives and freedom of the people.

From another point of view, in the difficult and confused space of history, among the palaces, with the Caesars, as history always breathes from them; culture, civilization, religion, thought, discipline and art are turned around. Our intelligent, loyal, lovers of virtue who have known this household, luckless and quiet, have always been sacrificed through oppression and deceitfulness. Our people have tied eternal links to them. All their faith, longing, thought and feelings have been devoted to them. Now, even their language admires them and their means of proof say this. Their hearts beat for them. Their eyes cry with their sorrow. They sacrifice themselves and their possessions upon the way. They withhold nothing.

Look at these poverty stricken, starving people who show their feelings and the faith which they have in each individual member of this beloved family. What things have they not done and what things will they still not do for them?

The spending of money often shows with more clarity the power of faith and sincerity. Let us account for all the time, endowments, and money which people have spent for this family. Even today, where materiality has gained strength, religion has been weakened and economic attractions have pulled hearts to themselves, and we see that the poverty among people is so advanced that the problems of their bread and water, children's milk and medicine for the hospitals are the most important things in their life, still, any time and under any circumstances which relate to this family, we see that over one million ceremonies are held in their honor.

Over 150,000 clergy exist for reciting the congregational ritual prayers along with speakers of that prayer. There are more than 700,000 seyyids [descendants of the Prophet's family] who speak at the lamentation ceremonies along with eulogists and lamenters whose task it is to restore the memory of this family. How much is spent on the building of the *Husayniyyehs* [buildings for the ceremonies related to Imam Husayn], *tekiyehs* [places where the passion plays are performed], *heyats* [neighborhood clubs where young men meet to form a group which participates in religious ceremonies], *dastehs* [the generic name of the groups], that which is endowed for lamentation ceremonies and food, that which is held in the name of taxes (*khums*), the religious leaders' share, that spent in good works and feeding poor people, is above and beyond counting. It is particularly important when we consider that this country is one of the economically backward countries. Income, according to head count, is minimal.

If we pay attention, in particular, to the great differences in classes which exist in Islamic societies, we see that half of the capital of the country is in the hands of a few thousand people. We see that two thirds of whatever there is, is at the disposal of only 10% of the population. We see that, as opposed to the past, capital has been taken from the former landlords and the former merchants of the bazaar and has been put into the hands of new capitalists, new industrialists, modern bourgeois companies and middle men who sell foreign goods or produce new products themselves.

We see that the money has escaped from their hands and has changed its place from village storage areas, from the shops of the old merchants under the old roofs of the bazaar, from the hands of local handicrafts and traditional jobs and workers, from the hands of money exchangers and indigenous professional guilds, from traditional industries and classical professions to the banks, stock exchange, foreign companies, agencies, distributors, contractors and factories. This new class, a newly created group– are characterized by foreignness and modernization. They breathe at the door of the West. They are not religious. If any of them had a memory of or inclination towards religion, it has long since been ironed out. Luxury, ceremony, seasonal things, pretentiousness and foreignness prevail in their work. All of this plus their Islam, in the words of Seyyid Qutb, is an American Islam.

People who follow religion without responsibility, without expending, without effort, most often give their opinions and present their objections without acting or investing anything. Intellectuals are brought into being who expend no money. Young girls and boys have for years had 'plage' parties, dancing parties in Switzerland, Paris, England, America and Austria upon their lips. They have been most generous to these things.

They and their wives go abroad once or twice a year with their money bags overflowing with money. In the stores and Moulin Rouges, they put money into the pockets of the capitalists, clever people, and milkers of money. They are no more than domesticated cows, seen by deceiving dealers as donkeys with money, coming out of the backward countries. They place their wealth into the cleft of expensive dancers. The wealthy go slumming, and then they return to their country, until once again they gather up enough money to go there once again and be milked. They do all this very naturally and without any mistake or error, even holding their heads high. With lies, they turn people in circles. They also put people under obligation. They call this progress, modern living and a sign of civilization.

At the same time, a small merchant or villager gets ready for his pilgrimage (Hajj) to Mecca or Karbala after a lifetime of work and anguish and production. He goes on the principle that this is the only thing in his life which will be both a time of rest as well as pleasure, a journey, a 'tour', traveling abroad and coming to know other countries. He will be seeing the world and renewing his faith, his beliefs and his union with his history. He unites with his culture. He makes the pilgrimage to his beloved people. He comes to know the remains of his civilization. He sees art which relates to him. Because of the truth of his love, his desires and the longing of his spirit, his feelings and needs and finally, the duty of his religious faith, once in a lifetime, he intends to make the pilgrimage. He takes \$ 700. He has to pay \$ 400

for his plane ticket and the rest he uses for his expenses there and to buy gifts which he takes back home. That which he spends there is the money and he pays to rent a tent or a bus and buy a few days of food supplies. The total of all this does not reach the cost of one night of Mr. and Mrs. Champagne in the Lido or one of their caviar breakfasts in the George V Hotel. It is even cheaper.

When the memory of this pseudo intellectual, he who supposedly understands the subtle points of things, this most recently reborn (financially), open minded man, with a brand new wallet, recalls a little merchant or a villager, who lacks splendor and sophistication, all of the human feelings of this 'gentleman', his worthwhile knowledge, class perception, the sense he has for his country, the sympathy he feels towards society, his national pride, his economic information, his progressive ideas and the remains of his being an intellectual, spills out at one time with such venom that even Che Guevara could not stop him.

We see with the changes in this particular class, side by side with general economic poverty, that town dwellers and village dwellers have become poorer, entangled with affliction and hunger and the class of minor landowners and merchants has become weak and dispersed in face of the growth of new classes. The majority of them have remained in the same class and minority of people change classes and move to a new one.

We see only two groups, modern types and traditional types, those loyal to their beliefs and religious rights –in a sense are part of these two groups. Because of these identical and perceptible socio-economic changes, the loyal ones remain quietly in the same class with few economic changes, or else they are forced into weakness. The strength of religion which they participated in, and the great expenses which are incurred in respect to rites and the inaugurating of places for gatherings or buildings for religious purposes, all are a sign that the binding of our peoples' spirit with the Prophet and Ali's family is unbelievably deep and strong. It shows to what extent their faith and sincerity is strong and pure.

It is after considering these things that the question, 'Who is Responsible?' suddenly drops upon your head like a sledge hammer. A person who has until now followed the problem and with precise study, logically and clearly uncovered all sides of the issue, studied it .and phase by phase has seen that all is correct, takes a good look at Islam and Shi'ism.

Islam

Islam, the last historical, religious school of thought and the most perfect, Muhammad, the Qur'an, the Companions and their histories are models of life, chastity and civilization. They bring law, progress, strength and culture to society.

Shi'ism

The religion of imamate and justice, followers of Ali and his children, Shi'ism has had a history full of jihad. Its believers show perseverance. They are inspired by freedom and justice. They are an unacceptable fire for despots and for the prejudiced. They have submitted to the way. Linked to the anger of Truth, its followers are enemies of anything which conceals the Truth. They are enemies of a politics which reduces one to slavery. They are enemies of economic exploitation and spiritual despotism.

To see the issue from another point of view, our people, warm with faith, melting with love, with more than a religious belief, with truth in thought, give their love to this family. Their name raises their spirits. The mere mention of them makes blood boil in their veins. In their longing for sacrifice, pure blood flows to their. They are ready to be martyred out of their love for them. They cry in pain from their sorrow. They are full of sorrow because they were not present on that bloody day of 'Ashura. Then bloodied tears run. Sometimes, insane like, they draw their daggers and strike it upon their heads. They lament all year long. Their sorrow is real. All year they think. about those who went before them then full. Full of praise for their positions and the description of their titles, united as lovers, head to toe dressed in black, from one end to the other, drowned in tears and pain. They long with their whole being to play with their lives. Their love brings on thirst, restlessness, anguish and it finally consumes them.

From yet another point of view, our enlightened thinkers are sensitive people, awakened, aware of the fate of the world and the fate of their society. They are familiar with the spirit and movement of time. Their timely demands are in need of a boiling faith. They seek out revolutionary thought. They think about freedom, equality and awareness of people. They attempt to bring about feelings, movement, responsibility and self-awareness among their people. They see their people and the religion of Husayn, Zaynab, justice, imamate, strength, theology, jihad, torture, martyrdom, Karbala ...and they wonder...

Why are there no vestiges when each one of these could give life, awareness, enthusiasm and encouragement to those who are faithful to these ideas which overflow with life and liberty? Why do these loyal forms, whose origins lie in the majesty of humanity, not bear fruit?

Then, who is responsible? In one word: scholars. It is they who should have made Ali understandable. It is they who should have taught the thoughts of Ali.

In Islam, the scholars are not wise people who guarantee nothing. They do not have a handful or a bucketful or a truck full of knowledge. Science does not consist of hundreds of pieces of information and knowledge. In their hearts, there is a ray of light, the Light of God. It is not a question of a Divine science, illumination or Gnosticism. It is also not chemistry, physics, history, geography, jurisprudence, principles, philosophy or logic. These are all types of scientific knowledge.

A science becomes illuminated with light when the knowing of it brings about a responsibility, a guiding

knowledge, a science of ideas. In the Qur'an, this is called jurisprudence, but today it is known as 'the science of rules of the Divine Law and things related to it'. This science should not remain in or with darkness. Rather, it lightens space and breaks the night apart. It shows the way.

It is not the normal teacher of students, the selected sage. It is the teacher of people. Its knowledge is not Platonic, academic knowledge; it is the knowledge of the mandate of the Prophet. It is these learned people who will be the inheritors of the Prophets. The 'knowledge of known's' is a kind of power and the 'Knowledge of light' is guidance. The enlightened sage is an intellectual with clear vision. Intellectuals should be thinkers who sense a responsibility when expressing their thoughts in relationship to their own beliefs or the beliefs of their people.

The responsibility of the Shi'ite sage is even more important and clear. He is the vice-gerent of the Imam. With his knowledge, he accepts the responsibility of the imamate and the imamate brings with it the responsibility of prophecy.

The learned Shiite is the vice-gerent of the Imam. He takes the religious taxes on behalf of the 12th Imam. The most evident of his responsibilities is to have people come to know who the Imam is. Who were the Imams and what did they think? What did they say? What did they do? How did they live? What role did they play in history? What was their school of thought? Against what thought, what crime, what order and what regime did they live and did they resist?

And if we see that these thoughts are not made available to people, not written in their tongue, if we see that the extent of books that there are about a European film star, there are not books about all of the Shiite saints, the scholars are, then responsible.

If an educated Shiite today knows the desires and playful games of Bilitis, the ancient Greek whore, through a beautiful Persian translation of her most enchanting songs and poems, whereas a good translation of Ali's words cannot be found, if our people only know a few names of some of the ancient Shiite leaders and they know a few miracles, good deeds, phrases of praise, and virtues of each of their Imams and, from their whole lives, they only know the day of their birth and the night of their death and nothing more, then, the scholars are responsible.

What Should be Done?

Ali distributes freedom. People are in love with Ali and yet, the young intellectuals are aware of the weaknesses and the decline of Ali's followers. The main reason for this contradiction is 'not having come to know'. It is coming to know which has value. Love and faith have no value if they precede coming to know and choosing or commitment. If the Qur'an is read but is not understood, it is no different from a

blank book or white notebook. Ali gives his followers awareness, greatness, chastity and freedom when they know who he is. When a book is read in our language which does not correctly give his character, when a book with his sayings is not given to his longing people, what effect can loving him, praising and eulogizing him have?

Love and faith follow coming to know something. It is that which moves the spirit and brings up the nation. This is why the face of Fatima has remained unknown behind the eternal praise, eulogies, crying and lamentations of her followers.

In Iranian and other Islamic societies there are three visages of women. One is the visage of the traditional woman. Another is the visage of the new woman, European like, who has just begun to grow and introduce herself. The third is the visage of Fatima which has no resemblance whatsoever to that of the traditional woman. The visage of the traditional woman which has taken form in the minds of those loyal to religion in our society, is as far away from the face of Fatima as Fatima's face is from the modern woman.

The reality which we are facing in the world today, in the East, and in particular, in an Islamic and Iranian society, the contradiction which has appeared, the crises, the change, comes from the breaking down of human qualities. It comes from the creation of a very strong agitation which affects the way a society behaves and its way of thinking. Principally, the changing human form has produced a particular type of intellectually educated man and woman, modernists, who contradict the traditional man or woman. This contradiction had to come into being. There was no one potent enough to stop it. It was a compulsion which no power could have prevented.

This is not to confirm this change or to deny it. That is not within the scope of this discussion. Rather, we refer to the change in society, the change in the dress of man, his thoughts, his lifestyle and his direction in life. Women also follow this change. It is not possible that she remain in her traditional mould.

In previous generations, a son was inclined to fit exactly into his father's mould. His father had no fear or apprehension that his son may be other than him. There was no difference between them. There were such strong feelings and ties between them that no doubt or indecisiveness could be heard in their words. But today it is not like this. One of the peculiarities of our generation, whether in the East or in the West, is the distance between the two generations. From the point of view of 'calendar time', their distance is 30 years, but from the point of view of society's time, 30 centuries.

Yesterday, society was permanent. Values and social characteristics were incapable of change. In a period of 100, 200, 300 years, nothing changed. The foundation of society, the forms of production and distribution, type of consumption, social relationships, government, type of religious publicity, religious ceremonies, created things, negative and positive values, art, literature, language, and all other things were the same during a father's and a grandfather's lifetime as in the time of their children and grandchildren.

The Worthy and the Unworthy

In such fixed worlds and closed societies, where society's time stands still, men and women are of a permanent type. It is perfectly natural that a daughter be an exact copy of her mother. If there is a difference of opinion between a mother and her daughter, it only relates to extraneous things in life or it arises from daily conflicts. If it has its roots in the difference between a forbidden or corrupt personal ethics, it would have been something which all groups and all social types agree to. They all agree to and accept the same things as being corruption. It is not the case that one group considers such and such an action to be proper whereas another group considers its description alone to be corruption as is the case now.

But in the world today, a girl, without having gone astray, without having fallen into corruption, creates a distance between herself and her mother. They are strangers to each other. An age difference of 15, 20 or 30 years separates them into two distinct people, two human beings attached to two different social cycles, attached to two histories, two cultures, two languages, two visions and two lives. Their relationship is such that only their home addresses are the same.

In the external forms of society we see the same contradiction and historic distance between two generations, two types of visions. Just as we see flocks of sheep grazing on the asphalt streets of Tehran, with the shepherd milking the sheep in front of the consumer resident of the capital, at the same time, pasteurized milk is available in the stores. Or, you see a camel standing next to an automatic shift Jaguar sports car. The distance is the same as that which separated Cain and Abel from the electronic age and automobiles.

We see a mother and daughter, with this distance between them, walking shoulder to shoulder down the street, one eating a traditional Iranian ice cream and the other chewing gum.

When you add these two together, you do not get a natural, permanent sum. It is obvious that the mother is beginning the last years of her life. She is pulled and preserved by habit. The daughter, on the other hand, is just beginning the first days of her life's journey. It is clear that the days of the traditional ice cream will set in tomorrow's mother, but she will never return to the type who eats traditional ice cream.

The mother and daughter will eventually become identical. The distance in terms of social time will become one. It will be exactly the same relationship that her mother had to her grandmother. Her daughter will be a 'worthy' child, a copy similar to the original.

The change from the traditional type of 'mother' to the new type of 'daughter' is inevitable. Face to face with this reality (whether it be the truth or an erroneous reality, it is certain), beginners who think and begin to write about this phenomenon of change, just hit the tip of the issue. They have not sensed the abusive language, accusations, aspersions, anger, fighting, pressure, punishments, inflictions and deprivations. They have not sensed the chains and irons around their necks; they have never screamed

or cried out in pain; they have never fainted from loss of strength.

While these observers of change in society are just beginning to touch upon these issues, and predict them, they occur. The work has been done. They are wasting their efforts. As the change is swift, their results are worth less than zero. The opposition's front is strengthened.

Those who act as guides, who give explanations, and suppositions in the name of faith; belief, religion and charity are also mistaken in trying to save each type of form which has been inherited from the past. They try to preserve old traditions and habits, and are referred to in the Qur'an as 'tales of the ancients', 'the ancients,' 'legends of the ancients', 'legends of the ancients', 'fathers of old', 'fables of the ancients', 'stories of yore.'

These words all refer to the first traditions, first myths and first fathers. But they see old as being synonymous with tradition. As a result, they call every change, including even change in dress or hair-do, 'infidelity'. They mistakenly believe that the spiritual source and the belief in submission (Islam) can only be preserved through the worship of tradition and anything which is old. They turn away from anything new, from any change and from any re-birth.

Woman, in their view, must also remain as she is today because, simply enough, her form exists in the past and has become part of social traditions. It may be 19th century, 17th century or even pre-Islamic, but it is considered to be religious and Islamic, therefore it must be preserved. They accept this view because it has become part of their way of life or because it suits their interests. They try to remain the same and hold onto things of the past forever. They say, 'Islam wanted it to be this way. Religion has taken this form. It should remain like this until judgment Day.'

But the world changes. Everything changes. Mr. X and his son change. But a woman must retain her permanent form. In general terms, their point of view is that the Prophet sealed women into this form and she must retain the inclinations which make Haji Agha, [her husband], happy. He has molded her.

This type of thinking tends to lead us astray. If we wish to keep the forms because of our own inexperience, the inconsiderate speed of time itself will run us over. We must realize that destruction is also a reality. The insistence upon keeping these forms will bear no fruit because society will never listen. It cannot listen because these are mortal customs.

They try to explain social traditions, which have come into being through habit, in religious terms. Ancient customs cannot be retained by the force of religion for if this were so, it would mean that religion is mortal. When we equate religion and social traditions, we make Islam the guardian of declining forms of life and society. We mistake cultural and historical phenomena with inherited, superstitious beliefs. Time comes along, and as it moves in haste, it changes habits, forms of life, social relationships, indigenous, historical phenomena and ancient, cultural signs. We mistakenly believe the Islamic religion to be these social traditions. Aren't these great errors being committed today? Aren't we seeing them with our own eyes?

Three Clear Methods of Problem Solving

There are three well known methods of problem solving:

Conservatism is the method of approach used by the traditionalists and the guardians of the Traditions. It is used by a leader who guards society, preserving a phenomenon with his or her total being. Knowing all the superstitions of society, he or she still preserves them because of the more important role of guardian.

The logic of the conservative is this: If we change the customs of the past, it is as if we had separated the roots from the body of a tree. The social relationships which are preserved in that custom are connected to the body of society like a hierarchy of nerves. That society will suddenly fall into anguishing difficulties which are very dangerous.

It is exactly because of this that after a great revolution, anguish and confusion and/or dictators come into being. They are the binders and the bound of each other. Hastily digging out the roots of social, cultural and traditional phenomena in a quick, revolutionary manner, will cause society to face a sudden void. The results of this void will be made apparent after the revolution subsides.

Revolutionist is a method used by a leader who strongly and unconsciously tears out the roots of a phenomena because it is a custom based on old superstitions thereby making it reactionary and rotten.

The reasoning of the revolutionary runs like this: By retaining out-dated customs, we keep society out-dated, living in the past. We will preserve stagnation. Thus a revolutionary leader says that we should do away with all forms we inherited from the past which clamp themselves like chains around our wrists, feet, spirit, thoughts, will and vision. We should suddenly break away and face everyone. All of our relationships to the past which were the least bit despotic or which were simply habit should be done away with. New rules should replace them. Otherwise, society remains behind, fanatic, and stagnant, bound to the past.

Reformism is a method put into effect by a person who believes in gradually changing a tradition. This person lays the groundwork for a gradual change in social conditions. This is a middle way between the other two.

The reasoning of the reformer is just as weak as that of the other two methods. He takes a third way believing that changes should be quiet and gradual. This method saves society from the stagnation of customs. Changes should be very gradual so that the different factions do not oppose each other.

If change is gradual, the foundation of that society, their thoughts, will not take on a revolutionary form but rather will change over a long period of time. Programs should be phased to reach this end.

But the method of reformism and gradual evolution usually faces the difficulty of negative, strong

reactionary forms –in the hands of internal and external enemies which occur during the long time period required by this method. The goal and purpose gradually changes. These forces either stop it or destroy it.

If, for instance, we wished to change the ethics of our youth, or if we wanted to enlighten the thoughts of all people, we would be destroyed before we could reach our goal. Or, perhaps, corrupt, provocative circumstances would dominate and deceive society and would paralyze us. A leader who tries to gradually bring about change in society through a relatively long period of time, believes that he used logic in calculating his programs but that which he does not take into account is the program of a neutralizing power which is against the changes. This force does not always give the time necessary in order to leisurely implement the gradual changes. The factors which were considered minor, are seeking an opportunity to make themselves manifest. Then the conciliation begins to slowly spin the roots and the tables are turned.

The Particular Method of the Prophet Stemming from his Traditions

The Traditions of the Prophet, which are so important in Islam, consist of the words which he spoke, the laws he brought, his conduct in relationship to the deeds he performed, things he remained silent about or did not disagree with and deeds he actually performed in his lifetime without telling others that they should perform them. The Traditions of the Prophet, then, are his words and his conduct. These become the rules of Islam which are divided into two groups: First, that which existed before Islam which was confirmed by the Prophet (signed rules); second, that which had not existed previously and Islam established (created rules). Other than these two, in other words, signed and created rules, or the words and deeds of the Prophet, the principle of a third one can also be understood. It is my belief that it is the most sensitive. It is the 'method' that the Prophet uses.

The Prophet preserves the form, the container of a custom which has deep roots in society, one which people have gotten used to from generation to generation, and one which is practiced in a natural manner, but he changes the contained, the contents, spirit, direction and practical application of this custom in a revolutionary, decisive and immediate manner.

He is inspired with a particular method which he uses in social combat as a leader of society. Without producing negative results, without containing any of the weak points of the other methods, his method contains the positive characteristics of the other three. Through the customs of society which apply the brakes, he quickly attains his social goals. His method is this: He maintains the container of a social tradition but inwardly changes the contents, that which it contains, in a revolutionary manner.

He uses this method in reconciling social phenomena. He adopts a process and method which is a model for all problem solving. The method can be applied to two problems or two phenomena which in

no way resemble each other. Recognizing how important this is, we cannot fully develop it here. We can only clarify it by a few examples.

Before Islam, there was a custom of total ablution which was both a belief and a superstition. The pre-Islamic Arabs believed that when a person had sexual intercourse, he or she incarnated the jinn [spirits which inhabit the earth] and their body and soul would be made unclean. Until they found water and performed a total ablution, they could not rid themselves of the jinn.

Take as another example, for instance, the pilgrimage to Mecca. Before Islam, it was an Arab custom, full of superstitions ancestor worship. It was a glorified type of idol worship which held economic advantage for the Quraish tribe. It had gradually come to assume this form from the time of Abraham. Islam keeps the pre-Islamic custom within the context of the Abrahamic tradition, for at the same time that the pre-Islamic pilgrims had used it for their idol worship; they believed that Abraham, the Friend of God, had built it [that is, the 'house'; Kaaba, which held their idols] .

The basis of the pilgrimage had been twofold : To protect the economic interests of the Quraish merchants in Mecca, and to create an artificial need among the Arab tribes for the Quraish nobility. It was revealed to the Prophet of Islam to take the form and change it into the largest, most beautiful and deepest rite founded upon the Unity of God, the oneness of mankind.

The Prophet, with his revolutionary stand, takes the rite of the pilgrimage of the idol worshipping tribes and changes it into a custom completely contrary to, and opposite of, its original use. It is a revolutionary leap and notion. As a result, the Arab people undergo no anguish nor separation by going back to the time of Abraham, no loss of having their values thrown together, no loss of their beliefs, but rather, they sense the revival and truth or cleansing of their eternal customs. They move easily from idol worship to unity whereas centuries of history exist between them. Suddenly, and more unexpectedly than any cultural or intellectual revolution, society does not realize that it had left the past; it is not aware of the fact that the buildings and foundations of its idol worship have been torn down. This leap, this social method found within the Traditions of the Prophet is a revolution within a custom which preserves the outer form but changes the content. [That is, maintaining the container as the permanent element while changing and transforming that which is contained].

Thus the conservative, at whatever cost and in whatever form, tries, to the last bit of his strength, to keep his customs, even if , it means sacrificing himself and others. The revolutionary, on the other hand, wants to change everything into another form at one time. He wants to. annihilate everything and then suddenly jump, whether or not society is prepared to leap in their direction and move from phase to phase. But if they bear up under it all, and the only possibility is that of a revolution, they must turn to anger, dictatorship, judgment and extensive public murders not only against a person who opposes the power of the people but also against the people themselves. A reformer always gives a corrupter the opportunity to destroy. The Prophet, through the inspired method of his work, shows us that if we understand, and if we put his method into action, we will have accepted a most enlightened and correct

way.

A clear visioned intellectual, who is confronted by unused customs, ancient traditions, a dead culture and an unbelievable metamorphosis in their religion and social order, takes up the mandate of the Prophet rather than submit to the prejudices and beliefs which remain from the past and which put one to sleep. It is with this method that one can reach revolutionary goals without forcibly bearing all the conclusions and customs of a revolution and without opposing the basis .of faith and ancient social values. By doing so, one does not remove oneself from people, nor does one become strangers to them so that people then turn around and condemn one, because the Prophet received knowledge from the Divine Infinite and asked for the help of revelation and made use of it.

Realism: A Means of Serving Idealism

One of the peculiarities of Islam is that it accepts both beliefs which are identical to it as well as coercive beliefs of society. It admits to the existence of both. Here the perception of Islam is special.

The idealistic schools of thought lean upon the highest values, the absolute and most desirable ideologies. Each and every reality is categorically rejected if it does not suit them. They have no patience. They deny realities and dig out the roots of anger. Anger, violence, the seeking of pleasure and lovers of wealth are realities which exist. Moral idealism or religious idealism (i.e. Christianity) ignores them and denies their existence. They are condemned in any form.

On the other hand, schools of thought who are based on realism accept all things as the basis of reality. For instance, sodomy is accepted in England or in Christianity, due to religious idealism, not reality, divorce is prohibited because of not wanting to destroy family order and believing that marriage is an ideal, sacred link.

But reality is other than this. Some human beings cannot preserve the first, sacred marriage and remain loyal to each other. It so often happens that human beings grow apart during their lifetime. They become strangers. They live together like two pitiful people. That which has joined them is¹ not love, it is the ties of the law. They are two inflicted people. They might even become lucky with someone else. This is a reality which has existed in the past, exists in the present and will exist in the future. Civilized and uncivilized people, the religious and the nonreligious have felt it and continue to feel it. Statistics show it, but Christianity denies the reality. They bind marriage to the sacred. They force a family to stay together even when there is a real hell behind the doors and the family has become a center of murder, adultery and corruption. The door of divorce has been closed but thousands of windows of swindle and illegality have been opened.

Concubines: Foreign siqehs

Social realities are such that if we do not open doors to them, they will spring out from the windows. Forbidding divorce brings about a type of concubinage. That is, a man who cannot live with his legal wife, actually separates from her, without being able to get a divorce. The same is true for a woman. She cannot get a divorce but she lives separately. They each live for years separated from each other with another man or woman. The children which are born out of this situation are natural but illegal. They have sick beliefs and complexes. They become frightening murderers. Their spirit is anti-social.

A woman and her legal husband become strangers. They begin opposing each other. They reach the same conclusion. Their relationship of husband and wife is not just sleeping together. It cannot continue. They cannot even live as neighbors. It is natural that they separate. The man leaves the household and goes looking for the type of woman he always wanted. Love, the need for a family life, and the pull of sex, one way or the other, helps him to find a natural tie. They find a place and live together. The wife's life takes exactly the same pattern and the same fate. As a result, we see that nature and reality builds two new families, two incompatible types who are replaced by another two.

But Christian ideology does not accept this reality. Therefore, no one, including that man and woman, is responsible. They close their eyes so as not to see it. As a result, it accepts, in legal terms, a decomposed house which has no external existence. Its materials have all been used to make another house. It is the former house which they know as official and they deny these two natural families.

Here we see the distance between common law, civil law and religious law and how natural forces, realities and oppositions arise. As a result, families, which are religious or Christian, do not actually exist and families which are real and natural are considered to be corrupt and sinful. Christianity, by denying this reality, causes the family which comes into being to be illegal. The children which are born out of this union of concubinage are also illegal. From the point of view of a religious society, they are criminals and murderers. They do not have a share in the kindness of the family nor the purity of society. Society looks upon them as sinners. Complexes arise within them. They suffer an anger and an anguish which is beyond the imagination. They take their revenge on society.

All these crimes which occur in Europe and, in particular, in America, do not exist in backward and under-developed countries. The reason is that in these Western societies, even though they have civilizations in the sense that they have culture, ethics, nourished minds, freedom of thought, the individual, society and religion, there is also something born into this generation which fills up their beliefs and makes them take revenge upon society in the worst of forms.

An Englishman had built something which resembled a very small bow and arrow. _He had attached this to a box upon which he had displayed cigarettes, selling them along the streets and at movie houses. He shot a tiny poison tipped arrow into a group of people which either blinded or killed them. The police could not find the killer. They were looking for a motive connecting the murderer and the

murdered. But the murderer had no particular reason for murdering those people. He murdered simply because they were accepted by society and he was not.

Such a murder can be explained according to the principles of society. It is the effect of complexes which the church refuses to accept and closes its eyes to. It has had a hand in bringing it about. Fortunately, we have not yet seen such complexes because there is divorce in our society, there are no illegal families and because there is divorce there is no family which is a non-entity because families are not forced to live with each other through common law. They do not bind them together through the force of law.

A child wanted to go out of a room, but a samavar, a teapot and various dishes were in the way. He closed his eyes and tried to pass through. He thought all the obstacles were gone. Idealism is like a child who does not see reality. It does not want to see reality. It closes its eyes to that which it does not want to see. Because it does not see them, it thinks they do not exist.

The opposite of idealism is realism. Its followers see everything, no matter how ugly or unpleasant, simply because it has an external existence. They accept a thing, attach their hearts to it and find faith. They oppose and reject, however, all beauty, truth and correctness, simply because these do not agree with existing realities. They reject them because these are ideal and through this rejection, they become unbelievers.

One of my students, who was among the pseudo-enlightened of this country, drew only one conclusion from our conversations. As he was a supporter of dialectic materialism and I was religious, a believer in Islam, he rejected whatever I said because of his pre-conceived notions. Even if I said something which agreed with Marxism (and which he too should have agreed with) as I didn't explain to him whose idea it was, he rejected it.

One day I was speaking about the murders committed by the Omayyad's and the disagreements which existed between the classes. They had a political dictatorship which dominated religion in order to explain their situation. They wanted people to believe that whatever happened was God's will. This, they said, was particularly true about their own government. I spoke about the people who opposed them and resisted the situation. I saw how my student suddenly became unhappy. I was opposing the Omayyad's and praising Ali, Fatima, Abu Dharr, Hojr and Husayn as leaders of a movement for justice and human freedom, and against prejudices, oppression and ignorance. What could this first class enlightened thinker do? He yelled out, 'The despot is history!' That is, according to the Marxist philosophy of history, society must move through historic phases and it had to reach this stage in order for it to be a historical reality. Ali, Husayn and Abu Dharr were ideologists who opposed the despotism of history. I said, 'The Mercy of God be upon this enlightened one.'

I see that I was right in re-iterating the fact that when the level of thought and vision of a society is transformed, the religious, non-religious, enlightened, reactionary and ignorant scholar are all the same.

When a religious view prevails, when it comes upon an unknown and uncomprehended fact, it calls it fate and destiny, meaning the Divine despot. It believes that whatever occurs is the Will of God.

When a society becomes Marxist, it believes in the despotism of history. It believes that whatever happens is beyond human will. Whatever exists, is accepted because it is a reality which results from the despotism of history the despot. of society. I said, 'No. look my friend, the sword is the despot here, not history.'

We see that realists believe that whatever exists should be as. it is! The members of the Parliament in England defend the laws of homosexuality because it is an objective reality which exists in society. Therefore, it must be made legal.

To oppose this realism is to worship idealized fantasies which form the basis of politicians and pseudo intellectuals. You do not hear them argue that Israel is a reality (Yes! It is). But the settlement of the Palestinian people in lands occupied by Israel shows the manifestation of someone who worshipped the ideal even though it is? Wrong. It is a reality which must be accepted. Although it moves against the grain of humanity, although it is murder, it exists. Politicians and intellectuals accept it and officially recognize it.

A magazine entitled 'This Week' has recently been published for young people. All the articles, translations, news items and photographs are the total writings of two or three well known writers using pen names. These writers visit whose houses and then, damn them. They write for our young people giving them a point by point description of events which take place. One of the top writers, who is knowledgeable, is a politician who officially represents Islamic culture! He advises women who are overweight and unhappy because of it, in order to develop a better form, become better looking and prevent the growth of further layers of fat, they should find an illicit lover for awhile. This is all a reality. Most probably the committee of writers had themselves first scientifically experienced this and had practically gained from it.

The weakening of the weak by the strong is also a reality. Oppression and suppression of certain classes is also a reality. Reality seekers are completely objective viewers. They see the external form which is a scientific and sensible reality. Then they judge. They face no difficulties with imagination, ideology and ideas which are not translated into real forms.

We see that an idealist, a thinker, a reformer is called towards mental desires, ideals and sacred values, goodness and the highest of needs and he denies or rejects the realities which deviate from his beliefs and act as existing barriers. It is impossible to negate them. He turns his back on them, or else, through inexperience, rejects them. He pulls, himself away from realities. He thinks in terms of imagery. He occupies a sacred place but does not realize that he is in an idealistic environment. He drowns himself in objective and sensible phenomena and the existing situation.

A realist, on the other hand, kills flights of thought, mounted spirits, visions, efforts, longing desires and

the seeking of perfection. A realist keeps everything (as it is). He builds walls around the framework of existing values and within the existing situation. He paralyzes creative thought, rebellion and the deep changes of life. The changes in the coercion of history and social conditions are desensitized along with changing ways of thought, the type of needs and desires and the present, external purposes of mankind. They surrender to realities and nourish that which exists.

Neither Idealism nor Realism: Both

Islam is a pure tree which belongs neither to the East nor the West and has its roots in the heavens and its branches reaching towards the earth. Contrary to idealism, Islam recognizes the existing realities in life, in the body, and in the spirit of an individual, as well as in those found in community relationships, those which reach the depths of a society and can be seen in the motion of history.

Islam, as with the realists, admits to their existence, but as opposed to realism, it does not accept the status quo but changes them. It changes their essence in a revolutionary way. It carries realities along with its ideals. It uses realities as a means to reach its idealistic goals, its real desires, which are non-existent by them. Unlike realists, Islam does not submit to realities, but rather, it causes the realities to submit to it. Islam does not turn away from realities as idealists do. It seeks them out. It tames them. Through this means, Islam uses that which hinders the idealists as a composite for its own ideals.

Take concubinage, for instance, which in Europe is considered to be an illegal, abhorred and an unclean marriage. But it exists. It exists throughout Europe and America and in very religious societies and groups as well. But Islam accepts divorce, a new marriage contract and temporary marriage in certain very exceptional cases. Islam accepts divorce in certain social circumstances. If it did not accept divorce, divorce would still exist, but it would be outside its control. By accepting an unavoidable, natural reality, it makes it into a legal form. As a result, one can conquer the sense of guilt one has in the eyes of God and society. Thus, their contract is based upon ethical principles and religion is preserved. These people can nourish their environment. Society does not look upon them as sinners or at their children as illegal and impure.

Islam succeeded the day it admitted the existence of these social and human realities. Because of this, it can control its results. It can give realities a legal form. It can correct their form. It can give them an ethical and religiously accepted form. By confirming and admitting the existence of a reality, Islam gains strength. It can then control, guide and dominate the reality within a framework.

If we deny realities, they will dominate us. Without knowing it, we will be pulled wherever they want us to go. As can be seen, realism is drowned in existing realities, whether good or bad. On the other hand, realism can be seen running away from those very same realities. Idealists sacrifice more as they are imprisoned in the chains of useless customs. Realists move along with realities and accept them, whereas idealists, who do not recognize them, do not see them and deny them through their ignorance

and their attachment to imaginary ideals. Idealists then face an attack; they fall on their knees because they are defenseless, inexperienced and weak. They will be destroyed.

We don't see the form that girls who are raised in very strict religious homes take. We don't see her when she covers her face so that, God forbid, the fish in the courtyard pool do not see her. What happens when she enters the ocean of society? She vigorously swims but she is so afraid that she loses control of herself and drowns. In order to make up for what she lacks now, she pays her fine a thousand times over.

The same is true for young men who grow up in a pious society. The nouveau riche has just moved from the former world of their idealistic pseudo religious environment. There they were prohibited from learning physics or chemistry, or studying, at the university. The women are forbidden to have a high school or college education. The men do not shave their beards; they sit in coaches instead of in buses or in taxis. They wear no neck_tie; they do not let their hair grow long; they do not change the form of their clothes or their hair_style. They neither buy radios nor do they spread the word of the Qur'an through a microphone! Suddenly, these young people face the new world of realities, full of twists and turns.

You see what confusion it has caused. He sees the pretense. He has learned certain airs through having had them translated in films into Persian. He learns about showing off luxury and being silly. He sees the exaggeration of it all. It is so exaggerated that even foreigners laugh about it. Why? Because they exist side by side with reality whereas we deny them before we even come to know them. This is why we have been captured.

This new civilization has attacked all boundaries and watch_towers of the world. They have been made to fall down. The new generations have been caught by the speed of the wind of the Renaissance, the intellectual movements, the great French revolution and the industrialized life styles as they blow continuously. These changed the weather of the world. The changing of the atmosphere of our, country is also a reality. It is a most certain reality. It is clear that sooner or later the lightning will strike. V1hen it does, machines, printing presses, universities, democracy, radios, television, movies, newspapers, books, schools, women's education, new techniques, new sciences, and many other new things will come and will change them.

The leaders of the people, those responsible for their ethics, those who have been given the responsibility of guiding their lives and thoughts, those who stand face to face with unavoidable realities, have closed their eyes. They have given their hearts to mental ideologies and to their ancient thoughts. They have tried to preserve their horse drawn carriages side by side with taxis.

And they still light lamps, having electricity. They are aware. They even correctly predict this truth. They predict the phenomenon of the rush to the inferior world. They know it will bring about the decline of much of the beliefs, faith, piety, health and independence. They know that corruption will find a home

deep within people's brains. But face to face with this coercion and this rush towards a new phenomenon, knowing the order and relationship which it imposes when it reaches the furthestmost points and the most backward tribes of society, even those in the depths of the desert, they only say one thing and one thing only: Forbidden! Radios? Don't buy one. Movies? Don't see them. Television? Don't watch it. Loudspeaker? Don't listen. University? Don't go. The new science? Don't study it. Newspapers? Don't read them. Vote? Don't give it. Office work? Don't do it and ... women? Shhh ... Don't mention that word!

Face to face with the flood of industry which covers the world and the changes which have taken place in the world order, seeing a civilization which sells refrigerators to the Eskimos, they stand to prevent it from coming about by completely defending the past. Their total army and defense consist of two things only, a word along with a negative command: 'Forbidden!' and 'NO!'.

What is the result? What we see is what happens. Events and realities break the barriers and tear down the watch-towers. Realities tear down the bricks of the walls and destroy the defenseless defenders of the past who are hidden behind them with their eyes closed or who have turned their faces away as a sign of their disapproval.

The force of these realities ruins everything at once. They attack the city's inhabited areas, the bazaars, mosques and even our homes like wild bulls, wolves and chained dogs. They plunder everything. But they do not leave. They come, they kill, they burn and they take, but they do not leave as the army of Ghengis Khan had done. Why?

Because no one even sees them. Our border guards, our watchmen, don't like them. They are so exasperated that they don't even bother to look at them. They don't want to go and separate the good from the bad and correct them. They don't want to adapt them to the climate and the people of our country. They don't want to choose among them. They don't want to shame, control and dominate them. They stand in the middle of the road facing a driverless car. They are run over and crushed.

They is why veiled women who want to give birth to their children, scream, 'Why men physicians? Why should women not be treated by women physicians?' She wants her child to go to school and to the university. Her cries increase – is this the faculty of literature or a fashion show? Is this an Islamic university? Is this an Islamic society? Does this school smell just a bit of Islam? Does it contain a bit of ethics and meaning? Is this the radio of a religious country or just a noise box? What kind of a translation is this from one culture to another – this television, this publication, this gathering, these laws which act as balancing scales, these banks? What film is this? What theater? What art? What craft? Really, what kind of a civilization is this? But then again, as Hafez [the great Iranian poet] has said,

As our destiny has been made in our absence if just a little bit is not according to our wishes, don't worry

And, in our case, we have to say:

if all of it is not according to our wishes don't worry!

When these realities come and find a place for themselves, when they begin to work, you are absent. You have run away. When you, a pious man, a religious, ethical Moslem, sensitive to people's feelings, responsible for the spirits and thoughts of society, preserver of the Islamic culture, sulk and retire into a corner, you allow a Khan, [Reza Shah] to bring and to put a new civilization into effect and employ a new industry and science for your society.

It takes great effort to effectively interfere in events which unfold. Yet it is only through this effort that you can guide the determined motion of society. People who believe we should preserve that which is incapable of being preserved and that which is dying, and who are in a position to advise those who inspire, those who appease and those who give condolences, do not recognize the dangers. They create believers from among those who accept the unacceptable. They delude the majority of society. They keep them in a state of bending forward, silent, weak and submissive.

Those who seek a flowing and active society and want a better human life, acknowledge realities. They know pain. They take their strength from these realities in order to heal their wounds. This does not include those who, as demigods, defend that which is incapable of being defended, nor those who take the public into their own hands, nor those who follow the styles of the day, nor those who praise according to what is fashionable, nor those who try to attach themselves to something.

Those who acknowledge realities are people who know time moves. They know that society has a skin which it sheds. They feel that the strong forces of the world have turned to us to make us change. Neither are they sufficiently without pain to sit down and watch, nor are they without shame to be able to take whatever job is handed to them. They are not so stupid as to react in such a way that when they see a flood has come to cover their town, they should try to protect only their wife and children, keep them safe and pull their own carpet from the water, because they know it is a wrong and useless act. They know that today is not like the past where families were living in a closed society. Now, even if you hide your daughter in the back room of your house, national and international television will follow her, find her and show her the attractions and shows of the outside world.

Which Mould Do They Fill?

Traditional or Absurd

In reality, in our society, those who ask, 'Who am I? 'Who should I be?' or 'What is my identity?' are of two types. One type is a person who is attached to out-dated, existing traditions that are called religion and ethics, which that person wants to impose upon others. He can't. Even though he knows he can't, he

still sticks with them, he still retains them. He tries to impose them upon the young people.

There is another type who is afraid to act even under the pseudo name of intellectual, modern or freedom seeker because he thinks, 'If I interfere or if I negate or agree and control the `ifs', I will be condemned as being old-fashioned, eastern, backward and religious. So against the social changes, changes in the types of young men and women, he plays the role of a `dead person'. In other words, his child acts while the mother and father create possibilities for him. They are called intellectual parents. But their silence and surrender does not stem from their intellectual abilities. It does not come from their beliefs but rather from their impotency and weakness. He says to himself, 'if I interfere, I will give up my outer, external strength and my inner emptiness will show.' Prestige, Papa!

These are two types, two types of people who can be molded. One is attached to the traditions of the Chahar Bagh in Isfahan – huge, ugly, crooked and decayed. The second is a product of European brick kilns – straight; subtle, without endurance, hollow and absurd.

These are two types and two ways, both are incorrect and lost. Why? One stands against the roaring flood of realities which is about to ruin everything. He tries to turn back the waters with his hands. He tries to stop the flow. He swears, cries out, laments, sobs, and cries at the flood which builds up and flows out and takes everything in its way.

The other one stretches himself out next to the flood waters, like a dead person, like a useless observer. This dear man who has no personality of his own, is quiet, works from morning until night, commits murder, rips people off, is a pickpocket, performs a thousand dirty deeds, praises, tricks people and then fills his pockets in order to have them emptied by foreign companies and to have himself poured into their pockets.

Women – We Cannot Know

There are only some European women whom we have the right to recognize. It is they whom we always have to refer to. They are the women introduced through films, magazines, television and sexy movies by writers who have given them sex. They are introduced to us as a universal type of European woman.

We have no right to get to know the European girl who at the age of 16 went to the deserts of Nubi, Africa, the deserts of Algeria and Australia. She spent all of her life in wild places. She lived with the threat of sickness, death and wild tribes. Throughout her youth and old age she studied the waves emitted from the antennae of ants and the antennae which receive them. When she grew old, her daughter carried on her work. The second generation of this European woman returned to France at the age of 50. At the university she said, 'I discovered the language of the ants and I learned some of their signs of communication:'

We have no right to come to know Madame Guashan who spent her whole life studying and finding the

roots of philosophical ideas and the wisdom of Avicenna, ibn Rushd, Mulla Sadra and Haji Mulla Hadi Sabzevari in Greek philosophy and many of the works of Aristotle and then compared them. She showed what our philosophers received from them. She corrected that which they had badly translated and incorrectly understood for the 1000 years of Islamic civilization.

We have no right to know the Italian Mme. De la Vida. One of her works was to edit and complete the 'Science of the Soul' of Avicenna from the ancient Greek manuscript of Aristotle on the soul.

We have no right to know Mme. Curie who discovered quantum and radioactivity or Resass Du La Chappelle who knew more about the sanctity of Ali than all the Islamic scientists and even all the Shiites who claim today to be aware of Ali and the Alavis. She was a young, beautiful, free Swedish girl, born far from Islamic culture. She was distant from Shiite behavior and beliefs. From the beginning of her youth, she devoted her life to knowing that spirit which had remained unknown in the structure of Islam. She followed a man who had been covered over by the hatred of his enemies, and caught in traps laid by hypocrites and embellished by poetic praises and meaningless friends. She discovered the most correct manuscripts about Ali. She came to know the most subtle waves of his spirit, the depth of his feelings and his highest leaps in ideas. For the first time, she felt his anger, pain, loneliness, brokenness, fear and needs. Not only did she show Ali in the Battles of Ohud, Badr and Hunayn, but she found Ali praying in the mihrab of the mosque in Kufa. She discovered his nights and his complaining around the wells of Medina. She gathered together the *Nahjel balagah* which the Arab Moslems have access to through the literary edition of Muhammad Abduh, the great Sunni Mofti, whereas Shiites have the lectures of Javad Fazel which is related to Ali or the Faiz translation (which is correct but has to be read with the help of the Arabic text!).

This girl – a disbeliever destined for hell – who gathered all of the writings of Ali in this and that book, notebook or recorded in a manuscript, hidden here and there. She read all of them and translated them and interpreted them. The most beautiful and deepest writings ever written about someone flowed from her pen. For 42 years she has continued to study, think, work and research Ali.

We have no right to know Angela; the American girl in prison who is not only the hope of two countries, but of all the free people of the world, of all the wounded, all those condemned through humanity's racial discrimination – the oppressed.

We should not know that foreign women are not just toys of the Don Juans who take money, unattractive things and jewels – female slaves serving men as long as they want them, as long as they are interested. We should not believe that they are only worthy of the attention of their pleasures, desires and lusts. After that period, they are like machines that have become out-dated. Rather, the foreign women have progressed to the point of becoming the embodiment of an ideology of a country and place, of salvation (escape), pride, and the honor of a generation. But we have no right to know them.

We only have the right to know Mme. Twiggy! And as the final level of the ideal manifestation of Western

civilization, the Queen of `71, and along with her, the highest form of European woman, Jacqueline Onassis, who uses her money as a means of exchange for everything, B.B. and the Queen of Monaco and all of the 7 female guards around James Bond. They are the sacrifices of the departments of the production of Europe. They are the toys and wind-up dolls of the wealthy and the slaves of the new civilization for the houses of the new merchants.

We Iranians only have the right to know them to be examples of women of European civilization. I have never seen photographs from Cambridge, the Sorbonne and Harvard University showing and telling about female .university students who go to the library and work on 14th and 15th century manuscripts and artifacts from 2500–3000 years ago in China, or who bend over Qur'anic manuscripts based upon Latin, Greek, Cuneiform and Sanskrit texts without moving and without allowing their eyes to rove. They don't take their heads out of their books until the librarian takes their books away or asks them to leave.

You men and women, seekers of knowledge, scholars, researchers, have you_ ever heard of the famous contemporary German scholar, Frau Hunekeh? Have you heard that she has recently written a very comprehensive study of Islam and its influence upon European civilization which has been translated into Arabic and is entitled *The Arab's Sun Spreads over the West*.

These are not today's women and they should not be known. Why? Because one group is old fashioned. They are tradition seekers. The other is superstitious and hidden and at the same time known and apparent. If they join hands, they will awaken us. They will destroy everything we have. So people are obliged to take the form of tamed consumers and quiet slaves.

These two old fashioned, traditional and newly wealthy, for all practical purposes, work together so that a new type comes into being, one under the name of ethics and religion and the other under the name of freedom and progress. The old-fashioned worshippers of tradition hit women with prejudicial fanaticism and push her, leaving her without bread and water. They show her anger. They have no compassion. They treat her so badly that the woman, half crazy with her eyes and ears closed, throws herself into the skirts of those with cylindrical hats and goat like beards, who welcome her, take off their hats respectfully and with correct manners, bend their heads forward politely and with a smile upon their faces, treat her gently.

This very European woman whom we have come to know is a woman. of today. She delivered herself but she is the progeny of the Middle Ages. She is reacting to the inhuman treatment and fanaticism of the priests of the Middle Ages, who, in the name of Christianity and religion, misguided women and cursed and enslaved them. They even showed her to be hated by God. They were the activators of corruption. She was the main cause of Adam's fall from Paradise to the earth!

In the Middle Ages, they asked the priest: 'If there is a woman in a house, should a man, who is not related, enter?' They said, 'Never. Because if the man is not related and he enters the house where there is a woman, even if he does not see the woman, still he has sinned.' In other words, if an unrelated

man goes to the second floor of the house and a woman is in the basement, sin occurs. It seems that the sins of women spread through the air.

St. Tomas Dakin said, 'If God should see the love for a woman upon a man's face, even if the woman is his wife, he becomes angry because no love, other than the love of God, should sit upon his heart. Christ lived without a wife and a man can be a Christian, never having touched a woman. This is why Christian brothers and spiritual fathers and even Christian sisters never marry, because marriage is a tie which arouses God's anger. We should only join with God through Jesus Christ because two loves do not fit into one heart. Only those who remain unmarried can carry the Holy Ghost.'

In Christianity, the first sin was the sin of woman. Every man, as the child of Adam, who, turns towards a woman, even if that woman be his wife, as Eve was the wife of Adam, repeats the first, primordial sin. The sin and disobedience of Adam is renewed in the memory of God!

Thus one must do something so that God will forget Adam and his sin! This is why a woman in the thoughts of the people of the Middle Ages is so hated, weakened and held back from the ownership of anything. It even extended to the point that when a woman, owning property, went to her husband's house, she lost the rights to her own property. Her ownership was of itself transferred to her husband. A woman had no legal status. The effects of this can still be found in European civilization, which is completely unacceptable to us.

Even today, if a woman marries, she changes her name. This is not just for use in her home or unofficially. Her education certificates, her identification, her passport, everything is replaced from carrying her father's name to her husband's name. This means that a woman herself is nothing. She has no essential existence. A name is significant. A creature who lacks significance stands through others. In her parent's home, she uses her father's name. She lives with her first owner. When she goes to her husband's home, the name of another man, her new owner, distinguishes her. She does not possess sufficient value or credit to have a name. This tradition has also influenced Iran because it is a European tradition. Their traditions are better than ours. Even if it is a tradition from the slave age, even if it is nonsense, a detested and ugly action, the very fact that it has a foreign mark upon it, is sufficient for our modernists, characterized by their impotent imitation.

In imitating, whether a modernist or a traditionalist, reflection in choosing. There is no questioning or judgment about good or bad, no distinction between the useful and the useless. The basis of their imitation is the principle that 'whatever defect the King accepts, is art.' They confirm him until it reaches the point where if he says, 'Day is night', they add, 'Yes. I see the moon and the stars.'

In the official European marriage forms, the two people to be married are asked, 'Name?' Secondly, girl's family name. In answering the first question, the family name which will be taken after marriage, that is, the family name of the husband to be is recorded. In answer to the second question, her unmarried family name, the name of her father, is recorded.

In other words, a woman belongs to the owner of the house. Even if a house had originally belonged to her, she could not continue to own it because she is a woman. In her father's house, it was his name and in her husband's house, it is his name which is used. This is why she officially changes her name through marriage.

Our modernists have recently become aware of this foreign tradition. She also changes her first name after marriage – she does not change her family name, but rather her first name! This is ridiculous. This is just an example which our pseudo foreigners take from the foreign 'better race'. Whatever that race does is copied without even knowing its reason, purpose or value, because our modernists have no common sense.

This idiot ridiculously, unconsciously acts and thinks like a foreigner because he or she cannot distinguish. This is why we say pseudo foreigners have been born into our modern society who do not resemble foreigners and pseudo Europeans have come into existence for which no example in Europe exists.

According to the present divorce law in France, when a woman separates from her husband, she has absolutely no right to her children. Whereas in Islam, from the very beginning, the purest form of Islam, not the present composite form of Islam, she is completely independent in respect to woman's rights. She can even seek payment from her husband for nursing her child. She can carry on her own businesses without any interference from her husband. She can work. As to production, she can independently and directly put her capital into effect. She has the most economic independence of any member of society.

All of the anti-human and pseudo religious pressures committed against women in the name of religion have caused a reaction among European women. This reaction by women is directed against the Middle Ages. The memory and thought of it has remained with her. In Italy and Spain where religion is still strong, women are denied many of their human rights in spite of the signs of freedom and emphasis upon human rights and other such grand jokes.

We are talking about human freedom and social rights, not sexual freedom and sexual rights. We see with what speed the latter becomes prevalent. In return for the second world's (the previous third world) oil, diamonds, rubber gum, copper, coffee and uranium which inexpensively enters Europe, Europe exports freedom, ethics, techniques, culture, art, literature and, in particular, sex, to this hungry, plundered world – freely and with generosity. All means of communication and advertisement, social, technical, artistic and educational possibilities of an underdeveloped country come into the service of propaganda, promotion and distribution. These things are all other than freedoms and the rights of man!

Sexual freedoms are deceiving. It is part of a new exploitation, a type of limitless deception, which the impure system of Western capitalism in today's world, causes both the East and West innocently and of itself to reach out towards it until it gets to the point that the influence of. Western people and the

influenced Eastern countries find a secure and safe environment for themselves and find continuity.

The young generation, in particular, those who contain both the elements of rebellion and audacity and those who lack patience as well as those who are not stupefied by religious stipulations and have released the hereditary chains of traditions which crimp their thoughts because they find they do not relate to their sensitivities. At any moment it is possible that, based upon rebellion, they take up a notion contrary to their interests and as a result put their heads into an inexpensive foreign lovers cesspool and become so drowned and giddy in the artificial freedom as presented by capitalists that they no longer know what the world is about. They so completely saturate themselves with it that they no longer sense their poverty and slavery. This is why we see to what extent the internal conditions of despotism in Asia, Africa and Latin America result. in an insane like emphasis, seriousness and insistence upon the rights and freedom of sex by the Western capitalists. It is emphasized and strengthened so that the groundwork is laid for its daily increase.

We can, with a little bit of caution and discernment, come to know what is behind these attractive forms of the thunder struck, sexuality which is none other than the denial of the modern world. We have to come to know these great idols and the three faces of the contemporary religious trinity: exploitation, colonialization and despotism. They make Freud a prophet of lies. From Freudism they build a scientific and human religion. From sexuality, an ethical conscience, a real institution and finally, from lust, a blessed temple is built. They build this place of worship and create a powerful servanthood. The first sacrifice recorded in the threshold of this temple is woman.

Who is the Contemporary Woman? Serving Oneself vs. Serving Others

In the 15th and 16th centuries, following the Renaissance, with the passing away of traditions and ancient religion, the thoughts of Descartes and the logic of analytical science replace natural sensitivities and religious feelings.

According to Durkheim, the concept of individualism, in other words, individual independence in one's relationship to one's society (family, tribe or country) or the serving of oneself replaces the spirit and unity of society and the serving of others (the socialism of Durkheim). Utility replaces values. Realism replaces idealism. Instincts replace spiritual efforts. Welfare and the problems of life replace the seeking of perfection, consciousness of God and self sufficiency. Intelligent logic is consciously chosen on credit to substitute for the sacred, spiritual and cultural roots which, through an unacceptable process of analysis are related to a kind of eternal pleasure.

Finally, known and suitable phenomena, capable of analysis and synthesis, which are reasonable, can be considered to be relative and materialistic, in totality, form the world as they accept change. They form the people, life, culture, all of the dimensions of the earth, elements of society and the unlimited

attractions of the new spirit. They replace the essence of inspiration and the composite truths of values which are above one's individual will. They do away with anything which is only understood by the super intellectual, that is, everything which is beyond the intellectual continuity of logical science such as the eternal, the hidden and the Platonic.

The roots of these things exist in the depths of being. Since the beginning of humanity, they have poked their heads through. They are enigmatic attractions from another –world. They are from the essence of fate. They are absolute. Their source is divine destiny. Finally, nature replaces metaphysics. Science replaces inspiration. Pleasure replaces chastity. Happiness replaces perfection. Tranquility replaces piety. As interpreted by Francis Bacon, 'Power has replaced Truth.'

This spiritual and intellectual change in the deep evolution of human values, the change in the main direction of culture, knowledge and feelings, the new means of earning a livelihood in families, new views of love and the relationship between men and women, the place of women in society and their relationship to men, has left revolutionary effects upon the roots of the fabric of life, literature, art and sensitivities.

All things are analyzed according to the science and logical vision of Descartes. This includes the sacred and ethical principles which people have always looked at with the view that they were values above human knowledge, that is, divine virtues. These are now analyzed as material things. Among the values are women and love which had previously existed together in a halo of sanctity. They were hidden in the imagination, spirit, inspiration and common sense, where these forms remained untouched. They place them upon a blackboard and analyze them.

One of the people responsible for this is Claude Bernard who saw human beings as corpses without a spirit. Freud considers the spirit to be a sick pig, and in the view of the bourgeoisie, life is money. The result of their research is what we see now.

Opposed to these were the Christian priests. Next to their laboratories were churches. They had nothing to offer other than 'excommunication'. They were club wielders whom one feared. Compared to these people who at least reasoned and gave – examples, they simply cried out, 'Religion is dying!' They issued unreasonable cannon laws. They constantly threw the fire of hell into the faces of their parishioners but to no avail.

A woman, as far as her life was concerned, was part of a family. Even though she had no independent human personality, at least she could easily be dissolved within the family, which was one spirit. Little by little she became economically independent. She began working outside of the home. With industrialization in full motion and full of new twists, with the daily progress and improvement in social occupations, women were pulled out as well and went to work.

From society's point of view, economic independence has also made her socially independent. Thereafter she finds individual existence beside her husband and children. Today, before marriage and setting

up a household, she has individual independence. Because she has developed intellectually and logically, this has of itself altered her relationship with others a man, her lover, her father and with her family. It is no longer based on sensitive feelings or instinctive attractions or deep, unconscious, spiritual efforts but rather upon the policy of intellectual accounting and detailed calculation. She has been freed from many social, family and religious chains through her accountant's vision of the situation. She is now capable of seeing reality, being able to analyze and intellectualize, seeking the self, finding her own interests and individual profits and spending for herself. She authentically seeks pleasure, encounters things, and looks for tranquility, intelligence and happiness. At the same time, however, many of her deep feelings have been taken away from her. Her hereditary feelings, which are other than the intellectual, have been removed. Her humanness has suffered (and has left her lonely). But it has made her independent.

Durkheim has shown that in the past, the social spirit was strong. Whenever economics and individuality grew, from the economic point of view, individuals cut their family roots, their sensitivities, their traditional ideas and their spirit. They became independent. This independence gave them multiple possibilities. The very fact that an 18 year old girl can very easily get her own apartment and live alone without any supervision is one of them.

A woman is allowed many freedoms in her home because of economic reasons. Whenever she becomes angry over life, she can flee from her situation as she has individual rights. Because she has economic independence and because she exemplifies an intelligent behavior, having the patience to bear the sorrow of another does not fit with a healthy intelligence, therefore, whenever she must make a sacrifice, or give in abundance, she closes her eyes.

For peace of mind, pleasure, freedom, and for anything which affects her own well-being, she opens her eyes. This is because things like loyalty, sacrifice, generosity, gratitude, pledges, contracts and love are all spiritual and ethical things. They are not capable of intellectual and logical reasoning.

'Sacrifice my life so that others may live,' or 'bear sorrow so that others may have peace,' are transactions which do not pay off no matter how you account for them. 'I have no need of him!'

Then who can answer her question, 'Why should I sacrifice myself for he who needs me? Why should I remain loyal to him? Why should I remain with this ugly, weak man because 'of a promise, an agreement, an agreement that was made when he was handsome, strong, and he was the only creature around me at that time? I bore him patiently. Why should I now close my eyes to the handsome, strong man who is available and who understands my spirit and, my goals?'

Sartre presents an example. A woman is the wife of a man who has no attractive qualities. In comparison to him, there is an attractive man who loves her. The intelligent way is clear. Both men need her. One needs her as a wife, the other as a lover. The woman does not need the first man but rather the second.

By remaining loyal to her husband, two needs are sacrificed and one is satisfied.. In fleeing from him and letting, him go, two needs are satisfied for one. The duty of this woman is clear. Her intelligence makes the decisive decision, a clear mathematical formula. The reason behind why a woman would sacrifice two needs for one is not simply an intellectual, logical Cartesian or Freudian one. An intelligent woman thinks and acts logically. Economic reasoning and social rights present her with the possibility of doing it. She does it.

Children come into the world. A child restricts the freedom of her mother and father. Intelligence cannot accept the fact that the peace of mind and freedom of two people be sacrificed for one person. They either do not bring children into the world or they leave them with a nurse or in an institution. Among all of these impractical roots, illogical feelings, ethical and traditional binds, there is a conscience, a spirit which a woman holds onto. She solves it by immersing herself into the fabric and spiritual depths of a family.

There are a hundred unclear, irrational and impractical rationalizations which encourage her to choose forgiveness, suffering, sacrifice for her husband, children, home, family, relatives, principles and the sensitive values of life which have all been disconnected. Because of economic and social independence, a logic which may underlie feelings and seeing reality in her search for truth, she had developed an individual spirit and independence instead of gaining a social spirit where the individual is dissolved.

Loneliness

Loneliness is the greatest tragedy of the century. Durkheim has analyzed the situation in his book entitled, 'Suicide. Suicide in the East is an exception. It is not a common accident. In Europe it is not looked upon as an accident but as a social phenomenon. It is not a happening or an accident. It is a reality. Its curve grows higher and higher everyday in developed societies. The rate of suicide in Spain, which is an underdeveloped country, is less than in other European countries. In Northern Europe it is more and in North America it has the highest rate. This same curve exists in a country between the villages and the urban centers, within an urban development between the developed areas and the more underdeveloped areas and within a society between the non-religious, modern group and the old-fashioned religious group. Why? Because people are lonely.

Religion ties people together. It causes a common spirit which is born in its followers to be shared. It nourishes a sympathy between each individual and God. In the past, each individual was linked through hundreds of connections with others – family, friends and tribes. Social and economic self sufficiency makes them each needless of the other.

It used to be society which gathered individuals together. Now instead of gathering individuals, the family, neighbors, mothers, fathers, children, friends and relatives, defend the individual and his or her material needs. Intellectual growth and logic attack the spiritual and traditional religious connections.

Intellectual growth, the logic of mathematics, the spirit of materialism, innate changes and encounters cause the spiritual connections to become unstable and other than intellectual.

The individual became independent. Individual reasoning of necessity becomes self-seeking. It becomes needless of others and then it stands alone. Because others have become as this and no longer needing an individual, they uproot themselves from them, each person then seeks out his or her own interests and benefits. Individuals are alone on their islands. Then the thought of suicide attacks them (because suicide is the neighbor of loneliness).

Women choose their men and men, their women. But the very fact that men and women are both independent and powerful and without need, causes them to move towards each other only because of sex. Other factors such as feelings, love, kindness, social and traditional roots, inclinations towards friendship and sympathy, friendly companionships are not taken into consideration. Today, these sorts of invitations have died. Then what remains? A frail intellectual calculation without light, a logical necessity or a force.

Sexual freedom in men and women's thoughts, which officially begins at puberty but for all practical purposes begins whenever one wants, brings a phenomenon into being. That is, in order to satisfy a sexual urge the only requirement is the sexual urge. And, if it is weak, its weakness can be eliminated with money. Only money is necessary. At different levels or with different amounts of money, the sexual urge can be satisfied. One can at any time and under any government be a Don Juan or an Onassis. The First Lady of America can also be bought for a price. The difference between her and those who stand on the street is one of rate. Since boys and girls both enjoy sexual freedom, neither one wants to restrict themselves for the whole of their lives. It is not to their interest to restrict the power of their sexual urges.

And here, none of the answers of logic or wisdom justify an individual choosing one person for one's whole life thereby restricting all of the freedoms of choice as to pleasure, beauty and attractive things in life.

Forming a Family

At the present time, men and women freely satisfy their sexual urges in universities, restaurants, outings, and various gatherings of this kind. They continue until a woman comes to herself and sees that it is empty around her.

No one any longer seeks her out and if they do it is to review, to revise the memory of the past. When a man has passed the freedom of his sexual cycle, when he has picked a flower from every garden and from each flower, its perfume, and it has passed, there is nothing any longer for him which is interesting or new. His sexual urges have subsided. It has been replaced by attachment to his position and his money. He seeks fame and worships position. His inclinations are now towards getting a house and forming a family. These feelings appear in his being.

A woman, face to face with the reality that she is no longer busy, and that no one seeks her out, and, a man, exhausted from his freedoms and forbidden endless sexual experiences which have finally turned his heart, confront each other. They reach out towards each other at the end of a long and tiring road. They want to form a family.

A family is formed but that which drew these two together, that which caused them to join hands, is the fear on the part of the woman of bankruptcy and no longer being attended to. The man is_ tired and no longer interested in anything. A family has been formed but in place of love and the 'intensity of an ideal, instead of creating feelings, pulsations, happiness and imagination together, exhaustion and fed-up-ness sets in so that nothing is new. They know what is there. Nothing!

There is nothing which their hearts beat for. They know why they have found each other. They know what needs they have from each other. Both, completely conscious, calculating, aware, seek each other out. Each knows what the other meant by the words, 'be my divine sacrifice'. Each has achieved their means. Both sacrifice for the other. Both die for the other, but in the opposite way from which we normally understand it.

This is why on the day of their wedding; the main hall of City Hall is filled because they are not allowed inside the churches. Someone from City Hall, with a medal on his coat, looking like an employee of City Hall, attends to them, not a clergyman who is a symbol of the spirit, faith, reverence and sainthood. Each couple is called forward exactly like molded sugar cones. Their names are read from a list. They answer, 'Yes.' Often several children standing behind the bride and groom also answer yes. It shows their existences have influenced the 'yes' of their mothers and fathers. They pay their money. They sign the register. The ceremony is over. Each returns to their mould, their home. The interesting part is here. From among the 200-300 brides only 20-30 wear a bridal gown. Most of them say, 'What, at my age, in my condition, it would be degrading to wear a bridal gown. It is not right.' Then the wife goes to work and the man as well. They have a rendezvous with their friends to meet at noon in a restaurant and eat lunch together. This, of course, only happens when the wedding to some extent has been full of happiness and excitement. Otherwise they forget what had happened and what event had occurred. Most often, outside City Hall after the civil ceremony, the bride and groom, who have been living together for a year or years and each one has spent a year or even years living with someone else, give each other a cold look as if to say, 'So what? Where should we go? Fun? We've gone out a thousand times together. Embrace each other? We've tasted each other a thousand times and we've fled from the taste. Home? We came from home. What appeals to them? Do they excite each other's imagination and feelings? Not at all. Then it's best if each continues their work each day like always.

Families are formed in this way. Both the man and the woman, with good scheming, found each other and they formed an economic company, or else, they were married because of the pressure of the law. Perhaps a child was born causing the father and mother of the child to become a bride and groom. They show no understanding, feelings and desires towards each other. They do not sense any secrets in each

other, any paradox in their union. Nothing begins. Nothing changes. No imaginary points, no heart beats. Not even a smile upon their lips. This is why the foundation of a family becomes frail. Once the foundations have weakened, the children in that family no longer see understanding, warmth and attractions. Because the mother and father cannot sacrifice all of their freedoms for their children, they put their child in a school or pension and they only give it money so that they can continue their free life.

Afterwards, having formed a logical and deceitful partnership according to the laws and having created a family, they then separate from each other and the spirit and those possibilities continue for the man who has experienced thousands of warm and young embraces. How can this woman who is tired and fallen in spirit and whose masculine dominated actions cause disgust in the man, satisfy his needs? And keep him? And vice versa? A woman who can make a thousand comparisons, takes the worn out man into her arms. Through her comparisons, his number is up. In such a situation, within a household which lacks understanding, feelings, novelties, and is as unattractive as always, with the loss of embraces, he turns to cafes, fraternities, new experiences, official and unofficial centers. Once again, contrary to the original invitation, the factor which keeps these two within the same household is an illogical one.

Women in the Consumer System: Sex instead of Love

Societies which only authenticate things in the economic terms of production, consumption, consumer goods and products only understand economics. Women are no longer creatures who excite neither the imagination nor speakers of pure feelings. Neither are they the beloveds of the great lovers nor do they have sacred roots. They are no longer spoken of in terms of mother, companion, and center of inspiration and mirror of life nor are they faithful. Rather, as an economic product, women are bought and sold according to the positive negative qualities of their sexual attractions.

Capitalism, as a result of having developed leisure time, has shaped a woman to serve two purposes. In the first place, she fills the time between two jobs which is part of the fate of society. The bourgeoisie exploit her and create a dry and absurd future for her without any purpose whatsoever. Should she not ask, 'Why am I working?' 'Why am I living?' 'Whom am I suffering for?'

Secondly, women are used as an instrument for entertainment. As the only creature who has both sex and sexuality, has been put to work so that workers, office employees and intellectuals can think about ways of spending their capital during their leisure time instead of thinking about the ideas of classlessness, for instance. Women have been put to work to fill every empty moment of the life of society. Art quickly joins the market so that they can meet the orders of the capitalists and the bourgeoisie. The main purpose of art has always been beauty, spirit, feelings and love which have now been changed into sex. The market of Freudism, the worship of the most vile and wretched sex has been given as an intellectual philosophy. Realism is presented today in the form of an intellectually aware person. Imagination, poetry and feelings of idealism have been emptied and sex is introduced as the virtue behind contemporary art. This is why we find instant paintings, poetry, films, theater, stories,

novels and plays surrounding us in the framework of sexuality.

Capitalism encourages people to consume more in order to make people more dependent upon it. It is also to increase the amount consumed and the products produced. Women are presented only as creatures who are sexy and other than this, nothing. In other words, she is used as a one dimensional creature. She is placed in advertisements and used as propaganda for creating new values; new feelings and drawing attention to new consumer products. They bring about the necessity of artificial feelings in people. In order to kill the feelings which endanger the profits of capitalism, women are thrown in. (In order to kill the great and spiritual feelings which destroy capitalism, she participates to prevent capitalism's death.

Sexuality replaces love. Woman, the imprisoned creatures of the Middle Ages, has taken the form of free slaves in the new age. In history, it is in great civilizations with progressive religions that women have held a high place through the kind of love she can give, in people's feelings and –in the arts even though she does not have absolute unity or a direct relationship with art. But, she is looked upon as the point of inspiration, feelings and spiritual characteristics. Now she has taken the form of an instrument employed for serving social and economic purposes. She is used to change the form of society. She is used to destroy the highest values of the traditional societies. She is used to change ethics. She is used to change a traditional, spiritual, ethical or religious society for the sake of an empty, absurd, consuming society. She is used to transform art which had been the theophany of the divine spirit of humanity. She is changed into an instrument for sexuality in order to change the type of humanity.

But in the East

Now it approaches the East. It is our turn. Here its work is very easy. Since the Middle Ages, especially in the West, in Sweden, Norway and even France and Germany, the sexual feelings of boys develops late so that at 17 or 18, a boy feels no attraction towards the opposite sex, whereas girls are at the peak of their sexuality and seek out the boys. That is why men get the feeling of wanting to – escape and women take on the offensive. It is this condition which causes disgust in men and brings about a deviated sexual life which, until the end of their life, hangs around their necks and even has an effect upon their home.

It is because of this that sociologists and psychologists of northern European societies have many plans and designs – about awakening the sexual urges of young European men with artificial stimulation and natural sex urges by means of women.

In the East, this is not a problem. Young eastern boys, before they reach the age of puberty, reach sexual puberty and it is this very early sexual awakening which causes eastern sociologists and psychologists to face many other problems. But where .is the owner of this generation who thought about them? There is a war between two groups. And because of other things, conversations lead to type of clothes, special behavior, habits and tastes. Human problems, whether they are new or old, do

not concern either side. The war is between being old-fashioned and modern. Winning is to the advantage of neither of them. One, lying, is called civilized and the other, lying, is called pious, religious. Neither one of them relate in the least to either civilization or religion. One, the ideological type, calls out, Fatima, Zaynab and the other, 'European woman'. Both are insulting to each other. Either they are lying to each other or their own ideologies are innocent and even separate from themselves.

Europeans want to change eastern societies so that they can plunder our property, ride upon our thoughts and our feelings. They want to take the food from our mouths as well as to destroy our common sense values. Without destroying these things, they cannot take the food from our mouths; they cannot take our property.

Thus we must first empty ourselves and leave our moulds. We must forget all of our human values and all of our traditions which were the very things which kept us upon our own feet. We must give these up and break them within ourselves. Once, empty headed with an impotent spirit, crippled and without content, we must become exactly like garbage cans which are filled with dirty and useless things and then are emptied.

With the brain and the spirit of the East, they are doing this. They empty their contents. When they have no faith in anything, they_ have no intelligence or awareness so that they have no hero, they think their past is completely without value. When they believe their religion to be empty and full of myths, they feel spiritual meanings to be old fashioned, reactionary and that way of life to be ugly and detestable. They either do not know themselves, their children and their spirituality or else they know it badly. So what form do they change? They come out empty and thirsty and in need of the orders of the exploiters. Whatever the exploiters want to pour into their interior, in whatever order they choose, they get to work plundering.

It is because of this that they assign permanent slogans to plundering the East, emptying the minds of Moslems, Buddhists, Hindus, Iranians , Turks, Arabs, Blacks and Whites. All must take one form. They should only have one dimension. They must be consumers of Western economic products and have thoughts, but not think for themselves.

Insistence upon old values, human values, tradition and religion which are full of meaning, close the way to the West and guard the East. Insistence upon traditional values stands like a watch-tower with a strong spirit against the West. They defend Islam and independence. Foreignness does not penetrate. Moslems are overflowing with honor, spiritual meaning, values and pride. Their history, people, culture, faith and religious characteristics give them independence, greatness and something to hold their heads up high for.

They see the Westerners as nouveau riche and newly civilized. They criticize them, humiliate them and confront them. But the West falls upon the soul of the Easterners like termites. Little by little they empty out the contents. They even destroy all of the forces of resistance which remain. In place of the brave

guardians of the watch-towers, full of spirit and pride, they build a people empty of common sense, perseverance and pride. The Easterners even forward to meet the enemy. They take whatever the West gives and do whatever they want them to do. They become exactly as Westerners had willed they would be.

What Role Did Women In the Attack?

Women in Islamic countries held a power whereby they could have changed the traditions, old systems, social relationships, ethics, spiritual values and, most important of all, consumption (in the same way that they held a power to preserve them). Why? Because of the sensitive spirit which they have in particular in the East. They tend to accept the luxuries of civilized life and new products more quickly and more easily. This is especially true when they are confronted by bright, new, eye catching things of beauty especially when opposed to these, they find nothing but ugliness.

During the time of the exploitation of Africa, European imposters would move among the black tribes offering glass beads and fake jewelry, which is usually even brighter than the natural stone; and in all of the ceremonies, the better off among the tribes, the kings, the large farmers and the feudal lords could all be pointed out. This was particularly true of the local ceremonies and weddings because their actions were based one hundred percent upon psychological laws. Those who like the fake things the most, were the most primitive.

We see that today, those who worship luxurious ornaments are the Arab Sheikhs, the heads of the Black Africans, the Movie Stars and the newly wealthy people. So a few of these fake lights and glass beads were given to the heads of African tribes and in return they received a herd of sheep or a great pasture land or the rights to mine diamonds or permission to plant coffee. It is obvious from this how important the role of the newly modernized African woman is.

It is also apparent how sheltered, Eastern women suffer from social rules presented to them in the name of religion and tradition like the present day Islam. They are presently denied learning, literacy, many of the human rights, social possibilities and freedom to develop. They are not able to explore and nourish the spirit and their thoughts. Even the rights and possibilities which Islam itself has given to women, have been taken away from them in the name of Islam. They have placed her in the same category as a washing machine. Her human values have been lowered to 'mother of the child'. She no longer even has a name but is called by the name of her child even if her child happens to be a boy. She is called Hassan's mother. This is exactly like paralyze her and then saying that because she is paralyzed, she is rived of everything. The sorrow lies here.

Oppressors and the Oppressed

Hazrat Ali said two parties are required in order to bring about oppression. One is the oppressor and the other is the one who accepts the oppression. It is the co-operation of these two which brings about oppression. Oppression cannot be one sided. An oppressor cannot perform oppression in the air. Oppression is like a piece of iron which is formed by the striking of the hammer of the oppressor upon the anvil of the oppressed.

Not only is oppression a result of corruption, deviation and misery, but it requires two sides working together to come, into being. In the defeat of a society, it is not just the victor who breaks it; society must also be broken. For instance, in the 7th century A.H., it was not Chengis Khan who defeated us. It was we ourselves who were corrupted from within. From the 5th to the 6th century, we were preparing ourselves to be defeated. It was because of this that Chengis defeated us. He only kicked the corrupted states once and we fell down and were defeated. The termites who had built their homes inside our tree and had begun eating away the body from the inside, left it empty, dry and without roots. These termites caused the tree to fall to the earth and not the strong wind which blew upon the tree. Strong winds always blow in the forest. Why is it that just this tree or that one falls down?

The creation of superstitions and the spreading of ignorant backward beliefs of family traditions, the inherited faulty systems of order along with servitude, the tradition of 'father power' in the community, the lack of psychology, all weave themselves together like a spider's web. And it is this very web which impoverishes the woman within itself. She becomes known as 'someone who is behind the curtain'. All of this occurs in the name of Islam, in the name of religion, in the name of tradition and worst of all, in the name of 'similarity to Fatima'.

It is explained to her in terms of chastity and the necessity to nourish her children. I don't know how a person who is herself incomplete and useless, who is missing a part of her brain and who is excluded from literacy, books, education, discipline, thought, culture, civilization and social manners could possibly be worthy of being the nourished of tomorrow's generation.

Most probably they mean fattening their bodies when they say nourishing their children. What can this weak creature of the house, born to sit behind a curtain without thought or culture, who has not been educated, do for the development of her child? How can she develop her child's sense of completeness? Can she awaken the depths of the spirit within the person? How can she learn to accept the complicated ideas and feelings of her child?

What can she do other than nurse her child and change her baby's diapers? In disciplining her child she can only swear at it or use lewd language or cry or scream or curse her fate. If none of these have any effect, she strikes the fear of an older brother or the father within the child. If this doesn't work, she calls upon the jinn and the angel of death or threatens the basement or the well.

And if this bad child with a roguish father, should die young, if he should be burned in the fire of brawls, there is nothing this hidden creature can do when news of the death of her child is brought to her. She herself had created additional hidden creatures who are more terrible than the devil. She had called forth the dead, dark monsters.

Yes! These are the ways and means of educating and disciplining a child in a system where the only duty of a woman is to nourish her children. It is perfectly natural to think that if she spent her time making use of her cultural and social abilities, if she were to become part of civilization, she would not be able to perform her special mandate which is to bring up children. If she were to develop and nourish her thoughts and her spirit and become aware of the system she is part of, some would obviously conclude that her mandate would suffer.

Thus we see the fate of women in our traditional, conservative society which has had false undertones of religion added to it. She grows up in her father's home without breathing any free air. She goes to her husband's home (her second lord and master) in accordance with an agreement which is made between a buyer and a seller. She is transferred to her husband's house where the marriage license or ownership papers show both her role and her price. She becomes a respectable servant. A married man means someone who has a servant who works in his house. She cooks food, nurses babies, watches the children and sees to the cleaning and ordering of the house. She manages the inside of the house.

She is a household laborer and a nurse but because she works without any wages, she has no rights. Because she does the work of a servant in the name of common law, ritual or civil law, and as she could not be a servant, she is called a lady. Because her lord is her husband, she is called wife. As she acted as a nurse to the children, she is also called mother.

At any rate; she is working for herself. She is an expert at her work even though the level of work she does is equivalent to the work of a servant or a nurse. It is no more than this because she has not been trained to do more than this. She is uneducated.

We must point out here that our objection is to the well established fathers and wealthy husbands who condemn their daughters or wives and who do so cautiously because they are women. They keep her from an education and from self completion in the name of religion and inclination towards faith. There are many women in Islam who reached the level of being authorized theologians, established centers of learning and wrote important texts on science and ethics.

But girls who do not have the economic means to pursue education and who work hard in their father's or husband's house, are most worthy of praise. Such a girl is the woman of the tribe or the farm who helps her husband, who shares in production, either by taking care of the animals or by helping in the fields, who brings in an income as well as doing the household work. She weeds, gathers greens, spades the earth, gathers fruit, grapes and cotton. She gives water to the animals and milks them. She then makes butter, yogurt or cheese for her family's consumption or for selling at the market. She beats

cotton and wool; she spins thread, she weaves cloth; she sews clothes. At the same time, she nurses her child, she cooks food, and she cleans the house. Often she produces handicrafts within the home as well. She is a wife, a nurse, a mother, a worker, and an artist. She grows as freely as the trees of the gardens. She gives her love with the purity of a turtledove. Like the deer of the plains, she gives loving, motherly birth. She remains faithful in this free house though no force is applied. She gives freely of her love to her family. Yes! She has the freedom to give and she has something to give, as well. Her freedom has not been taken from her so that she can no longer move. It is not as if she would want to run away if a force were taken from her. Finally, she pushes her fingers into the earth of the fields to cultivate it. She plays with her child in her home. In the bedroom of her husband, she removes his tiredness. She creates the most beautiful and colorful handicrafts for the bazaar. She is the woman we praise.

The funniest woman, on the other hand, who must be called 'absurd', is the lady of the house. She is a frightening creature. The absurd woman is neither traditional nor European. She is not like the European woman who is a member of a household of two partners where the husband and wife are equal, where both work outside of the home and where both do the household duties inside the house. When the European is a girl, she is free exactly like a boy. She is free to grow amidst everything society has to offer. She is experienced from her encounters. She has seen everything. She has come to know all types. She has seen corruption and the correct way, the right way and the wrong way, the bad way and the good way, treacheries and kindnesses and finally, all of the colors, designs and architectures of life and society. She has seen all the things in her own environment. She has sensed them. She has received an education like any boy. Like a boy she has specialized. She has achieved social independence. She has her own economic income. She makes her own choice of husband or partner in life.

The absurd woman is the woman who sits at home and is good for nothing. As she can afford it, she has a servant, a cook, a nurse and it is they who actually do the work. She is a woman who stays at home to take care of it but others actually do the work for her. As she is not a village woman, she does not work and co-operate with her husband in the fields. As she is not literate, she does not read books, nor does she write books. Because she has no artistic talents, she is not productive. Because she has a wet nurse, she does not nurse her children. Because she has a man servant, she does not do the shopping for the house. Because she has nurses, she does not care for her children. Because she has a cook, she does not cook. Because she has an F.F. system, she does not even open the door of her house!

What does this living creature do? Nothing. What role does she play in the world? None! Can it be that a woman does not fit into either an eastern or a western mould, modern or old fashioned? Neither a woman of the office nor of the factory? Neither a woman of a school nor of a hospital? Neither a woman of art nor one of science, nor of the pen nor the book? Neither a woman looking after the home nor a woman looking after the children? Not even the most common-place woman of women's magazines. Yes, she is a Saturday night woman!

Really, what is her work? Who is this person? She is the lady of the house, Daddy's lady of the old days. What is her profession? Consuming and only consuming. How does she pass her time? Her time? As a matter of fact, she is very busy. She is busy night and day. She is a thousand times busier than the village woman: For instance, what does she do? She gossips, she develops jealousies, objections, affectations, ornamentation, rivalries, pride, false friendship; she complains, grumbles, ogles, has a mincing air, full of coquetry and falsity. This lady of the house is always busy. In her type of society, and in her social relationships, she fills her frighteningly empty life.

The public woman's bath was a weekly seminar where all of the chaste women, who had nothing to do, who suffered no pain and who were with welfare, went. They gathered together and each one told the biggest and most important event of her weekly life, either honestly or dishonestly, through insufficient explanation. They sold each other on their pride; they told their stories one after the other; their imaginations took flight; their sweet ignorance implemented their lack of intelligence. Surprisingly, all of them were also aware of these groundless pretensions which only compensated for their spiritual complexes.

Each one had such a scenario. Each one listened to the lies and exaggerations of the other –one with relish, amazement, deep understanding and faked feelings. Each would believe the other until it was her turn when she became indebted to them for listening to her. Thus the others gave her a free chance and a carte blanche so that she could speak of all of her bruised beliefs, namelessness, lack of excitement, uselessness and ineffectiveness. Her existence, her inner emptiness and hollow life to be was spread out to show off her ability, her current price, her fantasies and her revenges.

Now the public women's bath has been closed to women of this class. Modern living has prevented these women from such social halls of 40 columns and 40 windows, where one full day a week would be spent. To replace them, they have opened women's clubs under various names. Absurd women leave their homes and enter these cold women's clubs which even lack the steam and water of the previous establishment.

If our women today are crazy and constantly changing color and look like foreign dolls (not foreign women), if we look at the other side of the border, we see the innocent economics of exploitation, whereas on this side of the border, we see ourselves, working hand in hand with them. We caused our women to run away. Then they very simply hunt her out. We call her the weak one', 'broken legged', 'servant of her husband', 'mother of the child', and even 'lacking manners' and 'goat'.

We separate her from humanity. When assuming she could learn, we thought that if she had a beautiful handwriting, she would write to her lover. (With this type of thinking it would have been better if we had blinded her so she would never see a 'forbidden' person). In this way, Mr. Jealous; who feels the weaknesses of his personality, would not have to worry about the disloyalty of his wife. He would be safe to the end of his life.

The virtue and chastity of women is preserved in this way, with a wall and chains, not as a human being who thinks and who nourishes common sense and comes to know things. We present her as a wild animal, incapable of being disciplined. She will never be tamed. The only thing to do is to keep her in a cage. Whenever you leave the cage— doors open, she will slip away. Her chastity is like dew. When it sees the sun, it is gone. Women are placed in a prison which neither leads to a school nor a library nor to society. Like an unclean creature, like the untouchables of India, she is not counted as a human being by society. People who are called human beings are men, social animals. Women are kept apart from society.

It was the Prophet Muhammad who said, 'Education is necessary for Moslems, both men and women.' But it is always men who have had the right to be educated, and women, other than those wealthy women who are educated with private tutors, are denied education. They cannot take advantage of this important tradition.

Parties centering on religion or old religious traditions are no longer open to today's young woman. Ceremonies for gaining favor and seasonal lamentation are not interesting to her, nor are the special animal sacrifices, nor the cooking of a special stew on the third day after someone departs on a journey, nor wedding activities prepared without the groom, nor hunting parties for a groom.

The young women sense the loneliness and nothing to—do—ness of their mother which is covered over by religion and tradition. This, they know, gives their mothers a feeling of positive action. It gives them a sense of responsibility. They are busy with comings and goings, attractions, work, sensitivities, designs and false plans. But to the young women these channels have all been closed.

The opportunities which their mothers had to show their beauty, the latest mode, ornamentations, jewelry and the method of fixing themselves are now gone. Younger women no longer force themselves into the falsity of these sessions and parties. If they go, they take on an unattractive, cool, strange appearance and it is obvious that they are looking for a way out.

The daughter of this woman, who belongs to another generation and another season, lives in an intermediate world having two meanings, The world of the grandmother is for her a complex of stupidity and structured rites full of ugly men and restrictions. They want to keep their gathering, their circle of friends, and lamentation ceremonies like they were in the olden times. While for her, books, translations, novels and art products are important. She has more or less sensed the cultural spirit of the world. She has whiffed the scents of learning, knowledge and progress in school.

The sermons which are given for women at their ceremonies, which were mostly ceremonies of praise or lamentation, are usually given by illiterate lamenters. The exhausting continuation of this is unbearable. She wants to fly away. But to where? There are hundreds of invitations for parties. There are dancing parties, surprises, bars, night clubs and dirty cafeterias which look upon her as a free and easy hunt. They pull her to themselves.

But she wants to retain her human characteristics with faith, ethics and loyalty, but she sees that what her mother, father, uncle and other members of her family, offer her in the name of religion, ethics, character, chastity and strength is a collection of: 'No, don't go, don't do that, don't sing, don't see, don't say, don't know, don't write, don't want, don't understand!'

We see that the mother lives in a type of comfortable, empty wasteland. She has no direction, no responsibility, no philosophy of life and no meaning to her existence. She has money and no problems and no reason for living. Day and night she turns her house around but there is nothing to fill her life. Out of boredom, she leaves the house to go shopping and then, under a veil, she tries to compensate for her losses with amusement, exaggeration in jewelry, make up, the multiple changes in decorations that it can bring about and expensive purchases of strange things so that she can induce wonder and amazement in others.

But her daughter is not moved by these wonders. She breathes a different air. She is like a doll found in the second grade school books. She is caught between two bearded children who understand nothing. Each one pulls her towards themselves until the doll is torn to shreds. She becomes crushed and steam-rolled.

Now, her heart is in colorful clouds, romantic thoughts, the attractions of freedom and love, the whisperings of her budding sex, the crises of youth, blossoming, intellectual endeavors and attractive images of the new world which exist outside her wall. Sometimes she looks through a peep hole or turns to the windows like a thief. She is drowned there but her body is under the influence of the commands of her mother and the advice of her father. She is like a fly caught in the spider's web of no! no! She remains imprisoned. She feels that the only crime she can be convicted of is being a young girl. She is an illegal, dangerous entity who must remain hidden in a corner of the house until an authorized thief comes and takes her as his mate to his haram. And there, the only rambling sight of her existence will be the space between the kitchen and the bed. It is only the man's stomach and that which is under his stomach which can give her existence meaning and her human mandate! The man doesn't even allow her to attend religious meetings or entertain religious feelings. Even religion is separated in this system of thinking.

Speaking, chanting, the lamentation ceremony and table offerings for gaining favor, is the religion of women, whereas centers and sources for schools, libraries, lessons, discussions and lectures constitute the religion of the man.

The Cries of Exploitation

What has prepared the groundwork for exploitation which cries out, 'Free yourself!'

From what?

It is no longer important to know from what. You should be freed. Your breath is cut-off. You have nothing. Free yourself! Be free of all things.

The one who is burdened under the heaviest of loads and is drifting off, only thinks about awakening, getting free and rising above those things which cause one to drift and which bring about pressure. She does not think, 'How should I arise?'

They said, "Women will be freed but not with books or knowledge or the formation of a culture and clear sighted vision or raising the standard of living, common sense and the level of feeling and the level of vision of the world but rather with a pair of scissors. Yes. Putting scissors to the chador! " This is how they think that women will all at once become enlightened!

The complexes of Moslem and Eastern women have become the greatest documents of psychologists and sociologists in the service of exploitation and world economics as they describe women in the following way:

'A woman is a creature who shops!'

The description of a society and its barriers which Aristotle gives of humanity when he says: 'A human being is a rational animal, is transformed when it relates to women. It becomes, 'A human being is an animal who shops.' She knows nothing other than this. She has no feelings and essentially, plays no role. She has no spirituality, no beliefs. She is valueless.

In one of these magazines devoted to Eastern women, it was written that in Tehran from 1956 to 1966, the amount of cosmetics and beauty centers increased 500 times.

500 times is a very great quantity. It is a miracle. It has never happened before in the whole history of humanity. The consumption of economic goods usually increases 8%, 9%, 10%, 20% but not 500%! This is a symbolic consumption. That is, if 10 years ago the consumption of cosmetics in Tehran was 100,000 tomans per year, today it is 50,000,000 tomans.

In a society, a new consumption is followed by other consumptions. For instance, as soon as the traditional coat, the *qaba* changes, the coat and trousers replaces it. The old type of shoes, given are replaced by leather shoes. Traditional styles of hats are replaced by new ones. In homes, carpets change to modern furniture and old houses are replaced by new ones.

Thus, when Europe sends a new product to our society, it paves the way for consumption of further new products. When consumption changes, it is a sign that a person and a consumer changes, because there is a very sensitive relationship between a consumer and a product.

In order to change consumption, the type must change as well as the taste, tradition and history. Society must be destroyed. This is why the capitalists put a fire in the royal palace for the sake of a handkerchief.

Women in Islamic societies must not only be changed from being consumers of goods exported from Europe and America 'but they must also become active participants within their households. They must learn to relate according to today and tomorrow's generations. They must change the form of society. They must have an effect upon the ethics, values, literature and art. They must have a deep revolutionary effect upon everything. They should be put to work upon this way.

Time, culture, social possibilities, new economics, changes in social relationships, new thoughts, all of these conditions in an Islamic society by and of themselves change the types and traditions. Women become obliged to change internal and external conditions because the past conditions for women today are no longer practical nor sufficient.

Now that things must be changed, now that the new thinkers and the newly awakened ones of our society are inexperienced and unaware, isn't it logical that capitalists should get busy and prepare their moulds so that as soon as a woman puts aside her traditional mould, their mould can be forced upon her? They make her into a form they want and then place her instead of themselves in a position to corrupt society.

What Should We Do?

In the midst of this disruptive thought which has been imposed upon us and will continue to impose itself upon us, what can we do? Who is it that can take up the mandate?

The one who can do something, and, in saving us, play an active role, is not the traditional woman who is asleep in her quiet, tame, ancient mould nor is it the new woman who is a modern doll that has assumed the mould of the enemy and in the process has become full and saturated. Rather, one who can choose the new human characteristics, who can break the fastenings of old traditions which were presented in the name of religion, but in fact, were national and tribal traditions ruling over the spirit, thoughts and behavior of society, is a person who is not satisfied with old advice. Slogans which are given by doubtful sources do not enthuse her. Behind the prepackaged slogans of freedom [of the monarchy], she sees ugly, frightening faces which act against the spiritual, which oppose humanness. She sees that they are in contradiction to the spiritual, the rational, the human. They are against women and the human reverence of women.

It is these people who know where those things which are forced upon us come from. They know where they get their orders from. What creatures they have sent to the market place! Creatures without sensitivities, without knowledge, without pain, without understanding, without responsibility and even without human feelings. Fresh, clean dolls... 'worthy ones'. It is obvious what their worthiness is in and for what work. Their means of support and its derivation are also obvious. This is thrown at our women and they know why.

It is because of them that 'Who am I? Who should I be?' is pertinent, since they neither want to remain

as this, nor become that. They cannot surrender themselves to whatever was and is, without their own will and choice playing a role.

They want a model.

Who?

Fatima.

The Social Customs of Hejaz

The Social Customs of the Hejaz

Fatima is the fourth and youngest daughter of the Prophet of Islam. She is the youngest daughter of a household to which no sons survived. She is a girl born into a society where both the father and the family place special value upon a son.

The social order of the Arabs had passed beyond the Age of the Matriarch centuries before Islam. During the Age of ignorance, prior to the mission of the Prophet, the Arabs had established the Age of the Patriarch. Their gods had become masculine whereas their idols and their angels were feminine (that is, daughters of the great god, *al-lah*). The tribes were governed by 'white beards' and the family was ruled by the grandfathers. Essentially, their religion was a kind of ancestor worship. They adhered to whatever beliefs and practices their fathers had had.

It was against the religion of ancestral fathers that the great prophets, mentioned in the Qur'an, revolt. When confronted with the revolt against ancestor worship and myths which sought out their first fathers, the tribes stood for the preservation of the masculine traditions. It was a kind of inherited, imitative worship based upon the principle of father worship.

The Prophets bring a revolutionary message. They try to awaken a thought based on the principle of worshipping God. Beyond this, the difficult life of the tribes of the dry desert is filled with hostility between one tribe and another, for the basic principles of life are 'defend and attack' and 'keep your promises'. In this society, the son plays a special role which is based upon the 'uses and needs' of the society's social and military principles.

According to a universal principle of sociology, where profit is substituted for value, being a son is by and of itself of the highest essence. It means embodying virtues, meaningful social and ethical values and human nobility. For this very reason, being a girl or having a daughter is humbling. Her frailness is substituted by 'being weak'. Her 'being weak' pushes her towards slavery and slavery causes her human

values to lessen.

She becomes a creature who is the slave of a man, the disgrace of her father, the toy of a man's sexual urges and the 'goal' or slave of the home of her husband. Finally, this creature always shakes her man's sense of honor because she is the highest form of shame and disgrace. For the betterment of society and the relief of one's mind, how much better to kill her while still a baby so that the honor of her fathers, brothers and ancestors, all men for that matter, is not stained. As Ferdowsi tells us in the *Shahnameh*:

It is better to bury women and dragons in the earth.

The world will be better off if cleansed of their existence.

An Arab poet tells us, 'if a father has a daughter he wants to remain, whenever he thinks of her future, he should think about three different son-in-law's: one, the house which will hide her; two, the husband who will keep her and three, the grave which will cover her! And the last one, the grave, is the best.'

The idiom which refers to the grave as being the best son-in-law, has existed in all languages of the wealthiest and most honorable men. All of the indigenous and honorable fathers and brothers who are bound to and place emphasis upon their family, father and male ancestors, all of those who understand the ideals of name and honor are ready for and live in anticipation of dying so that they' can seek the hand of their sister or daughter in marriage. The bride and the frightening groom are united either by their own hands or the best possible son-in-law is chosen for the bride. A poet reminds his daughter of the most beloved of son-in-law's, 'The most beloved son-in-law is the grave.'

This is that very same poem that says women and dragons are both better to be covered by the earth because it is a means of exchange. 'Covering the girls with earth is a way of preserving honor.' This is, why the Qur'an, in the strongest terms, warns of the dangers of this frightening 'highest honor' when it says: '*He hides himself from the people of the evil for the tidings given him. Should he keep her with disgrace or bury her alive in the dust? Behold, evil is what they decide.*' (16:59)

The sensitive point which a contemporary Islamic writer has found in the Qur'an is that the tragedy essentially has economic roots because of society's fear of poverty which was prevalent in the Arab Age of Ignorance.

The principal belief, which most of the sociologists today accept and confirm, is the nobility in having a son and the disgrace and baseness in having a daughter. This ethical and spiritually based belief, this feeling and sensitivity, stems from the discussion of spiritual values about honor, integrity, dignity, respect and the virtue of man and woman or soil and daughter. Girls have been buried alive because of the fear that they may bring dishonor in the future by marrying an unsuitable husband or they fear falling into the hands of an enemy during a war and then becoming slaves in a strange land. All of these are secondary phenomena or, as they say, they are the apparent facts which result from transformed realities which have taken on a new form. But the basic reason is an economic one.

As we previously indicated, in the tribal system, people are faced with the hardships of life and production (particularly in the deserts of Arabia) and the constant difficult relationships among the tribes. Such a life requires a strong and powerful support. Automatically, a son becomes an important factor in the economic and social situation as well as in the defense of his family or tribe. He is a necessary social element of a family or tribe. A son brings bread but a daughter eats it. It is natural that the sexual differences cause class differences. Men fall into the class of ruling and owning and women fall into that of the ruled and the owned.

The relationship between a man and a woman is like that between a landowner and a peasant. A man and a woman, as economic entities, have a different human and spiritual value placed upon them. As an economic landlord brings about a blood-line, an inherited nobility for his family, as well as ethical and essential values, virtues and great generosity; the opposite is true of a peasant or a woman.

Poverty sends all the male gains or can gain to the four winds. This is why she could become the cause of the family losing self respect. The possibility always exists that she will disgrace the family by marrying someone who is not at the same level as this family. In my opinion, this fear, which is an ethical phenomenon, is related to a clear economic factor, that is, to preserve the ownership of land and to assure the continuation of centralized wealth for –the next generation of the family.

In patriarchal societies, when the father dies, the oldest son inherits everything, not only the land, but also the wives of his father, including his own mother! It was for this very reason that the daughters did not inherit so that the wealth of the father would not be divided up and be distributed to other families through the daughters. This is the reason why in our old wealthy families there is still a very strong emphasis placed upon the daughter marrying within the family. They pledge an uncle's daughter to an uncles' son `in heaven' so that the uncle's daughter does not take her inheritance out of the family which would be the case if she were to marry a stranger in City Hall.

This is why ancient historians and modern scholars who write the history of religion, have different explanations for the burying alive of female children in the Age of Ignorance. Beginning with the fear of shame, disgrace, scorn, prejudice and fear of marriage with an unsuitable person, or, scorn, as some of the scholars say, in primitive religions, girls were sacrificed for the gods. But the Qur'an most strictly and clearly says that the fear was the fear of poverty. In other words, it was an economic factor. The other explanations are just words.

In my opinion, this clear interpretation and description is not only to express scientifically, the reason for these murders, but also to emphatically disgrace and degrade people who talk about the ethical, chaste and noble responsibility a tribe had in burying new born females alive. Their crude, cruel action resulted from their baseness, vileness, fear of poverty and love of wealth It was a direct result of their fear and weakness, their drawing of the curtains of deception to hide their deed by trying to explain it with the noble words of honor, integrity, chastity, respect.

The Qur'an emphasizes, *'Do not kill them from fear of poverty for We will provide for you and your children.* (6:1 51). It expresses the main reason for the tragedy. It awakens people. Secondly, it negates the false, ethical and human explanations. It directly and straightforwardly says that this practice is neither ethical nor noble but rather, one hundred percent economical. It stems from greed and wealth, from weakness and fear.

Before this, the public was not aware of their real feelings. Other than the deprived class, the majority of the people believed it to be a reaction of the public conscience: They believed it showed a brave spirit and that it protected the family honor. The Arab tribal society gave all the human values to a son, whereas a daughter was considered to lack all virtues and human authenticity.

A boy is not only capable of earning his livelihood, but he is also a help to his father, a protector of his family, the family and tribal hero as well as the pride of his ancestry, the bearer of the values of his heritage, the continuer of the existence of society, the spirit of his family, the owner of a name, the protector of institutions and the flame which lights the family lamp upon the death of his father.

A daughter is an element within the family, a living piece of furniture. After she marries, her personality dissolves in a stranger's house. She becomes the furniture in another house where she cannot even retain her family name. Her children belong to a stranger. They carry his name and are inheritors of a heritage, both of which are strange.

A boy has the material power of economic capital, he aides society and assists in the patriarchal system. He decorates life; he has prestige, fame, value and spiritual credit. He supports the authenticity of the family. He is the giver of security and subsistence and the future authority of that family. But a girl: nothing. She is the total private parts of the house, the bearer of a family. She is so weak that she must always be protected.

Like a bird whose foot is tied to a stone that prevents it from flying freely, she, like the stone, prevents a warrior from freely attacking the tents and castles of the enemies. And when defending his tribe, the warrior is always anxious that she not be taken as a slave. His slightest negligence may put her into the hands of the enemy. Then the entire tribe would suffer the shame of her enslavement.

During times of peace, the family must be careful that she doesn't cause them shame. After all of these troubles, efforts, sufferings, expenses, anxieties, a stranger comes and takes her away. She is like a field that another cultivates and bears off the crops. This is why the best solution is naturally none other than that at the moment she is placed in her mother's arms, she should be given over to her death or at an early age, she should be given away in wedlock and call the cold grave, 'son-in-law'.

A man who has no sons is called 'cut-off'. He has no progeny and no continuation; he is barren. Yet the word *kawthar* in the Qur'an means fullness, advantages, blessings as well as meaning having progeny and many children. God in answer to the disbelievers who called His beloved Prophet 'cut-off' gave him the good news that he will have many progeny.

In such an environment, the moment is ripe for fate to render aside the veil which conceals it. It is the time to participate and direct the state of things. Life had become a quiet, spoiled lagoon. It is time for a serious, creative revolution. It is the moment for a strong wind to blow. Suddenly an amazing plan is put into action, sweet but difficult. Two people are selected to carry out this plan, a father and a daughter. Muhammad (the father) must carry the heavy load and Fatima (the daughter) must reflect within herself the newly created revolutionary values.

The Birth of Fatima

The largest Arab tribe is the Quraish. The Kaaba is in their hands which, naturally gives them tribal nobility. They are divided into two families, the Bani Omayyad and the Bani Hashimi. The Bani Omayyad are the wealthiest but the Bani Hashimi are the most honorable for they are in charge of looking after the affairs of the Kaaba.

Abdul Muttalib is from this family but at this time, he is dead and his son, Abu Talib, the leader of the Bani Hashim, does not have the power that his father had. He has gone bankrupt in his trading. He is living in poverty and has distributed his children to be cared for among his family.

A very strong rivalry has broken out between the two tribes. The Omayyad's are trying to gain control of all of the property and honors of the Quraish. They wanted to, at the same time, break the spiritual hold of the Hashimis. Among the Hashimi tribe, the family of Muhammad has received new credit. The grandson of Abdul Muttalib has just married Khadijah, a wealthy, well respected widow of Mecca. This gives him a stronger social position.

The personal standing and personality which Muhammad shows, the trust and credibility which he has among people and, in particular, among all the Hashimis and the leaders of the Quraish, makes everyone aware of the fact that he reflects the honor of Abd Manaf and is the protector of the nobility of the Hashimis. In particular, they sense he will be the activator of the honor and nobility which Abdul Muttalib had had.

Hamzeh is a youth; an athlete. Abu Lahab is a man without credit. Abbas is wealthy, but without character. Abu Talib is honorable, but without money. It is only Muhammad, who along with his wife, have character. He has youth as well. They have a respectable amount of wealth and are part of the family tree of the Bani Hashimi. Great developments should be strewn from this family. Their shadow will fall over Mecca.

Everyone is awaiting the sons to be born of this family, sons to bring strength, credit and nobility to the family of Abdul Muttalib.

The first child born is a girl, Zaynab.

But the family is anticipating a son.

The second child is a daughter, Roqiyyeh.

The anticipation grows stronger and the need also increases.

The third, a girl, Umm Khulthum.

Two boys, Qasem and Abdullah are born. They hold great promise. But they do not blossom. They die in infancy. Now there are three children in this house, and all three are girls.

The mother has aged. She is over 60 years old. The father, although he loves his three daughters, shares his tribe's feelings and their anticipation.

Can Khadijah, who is almost at the end of her life, bring forth another child? Hope has become very dim.

Yes! Happiness and hope once again fill the house. The excitement reaches a peak. This is the last chance for the family of Abdul Muttalib, the last hope.

But once again, a daughter.

They name her Fatima.

The happiness and hope of the Hashimi tribe falls to the Omayyad's. The happiness of the enemies! Whispering bad names and screams of 'Muhammad is cut-off', the man who is the last link in his family chain has four daughters. Nothing more.'

How sad. What a beautiful and strange game fate is playing. Life passes on and Muhammad drowns in the storm of his mandate and his being appointed as the Prophet of God. He conquers Mecca and frees all the Quraish prisoners. All of the tribes are under his leadership and his shadow is thrown throughout the whole of the Arabian Peninsula. His sword crushes the faces of the Emperors of the world. His song rings through the heavens and the earth. In one hand, strength, and in the other, prophecy, the full honors which would never even enter the heads of the Omayyad's, the Hashimi tribe or all of the Arabs and non Arabs.

And now, Muhammad is the Prophet. In the city, filled with the most significant waves of happiness, he has the power and greatness which a human being could never conceive? A tree, which does not grow from Abd Manaf nor HasNimi nor Abdul Muttalib, but rather, grows from a light under a mountain, 'Hira'. It extends from one end of the desert to the other, from horizon to horizon of the earth. Till the end of time, it encompasses and will continue to encompass all of the future until the end of history.

And this man has four daughters.

But no, three of them died before he did. And now, he has only one child, a daughter, the youngest, Fatima.

Islam Revolutionized the Position of Women

The Qur'anic Word, Kawthar

Muhammad is heir to all of them, the family's honor, and inheritor of a new kind of wealth which is neither based upon blood nor earth nor money but the phenomenon of revelation. Born of faith, jihad, revolution, thought and humanity, he is a beautiful weave. Of the values, he receives the highest spirit. Muhammad is joined to the history of mankind, not to that of Abdul Muttalib, Abd Manaf, the Quraish nor the Arabs. He is the inheritor of Abraham, Noah, Moses and Jesus and Fatima is his only heir.

We gave you kawthar, oh Muhammad For your Creator, establish the prayer and sacrifice a camel. It is he, that very hated enemy of yours who is cut-off.

He, your enemy with ten sons is cut-off. He is useless, cut-off without the highest form of inheritors. 'We gave you Kawthar, – Fatima.' It is in this way that Revolution appears in the depths of the conscience of time.

Now, a daughter becomes the owner of the values of her father, the inheritor of all the honors of her family. She is the continuation of the chain of great ancestors, the continuation which began with .Adam and passes through all of the leaders of freedom and consciousness in the history of mankind. It reaches Abraham and joins Moses and Jesus to itself. It reaches Muhammad. The final link in this chain of Divine justice, the rightful chain of truth is Fatima, the last daughter of a family who had anticipated a son: Muhammad had known what the hands of fate had in store for him. And, Fatima, also, had known who she was. Yes! This school of thought created such a revolution. A woman, in this religion, is freed like this. Isn't this the religion of Abraham and they, his heirs?

The Honor Bestowed Upon a Female Slave

Nobody has the right to be buried in a mosque. The greatest mosque in the world is the Masjid al haram in Mecca. The Kaaba. This house belongs to God. It is devoted to God. It is the direction to which all of the ritual prayers are oriented. The house is ordered by Him and Abraham builds it. It is a house which the Prophet of Islam is honored with the mandate of freeing. He frees this 'House of Freedom', circumambulates it and goes down in prostration towards it. All of the great prophets of history are servants of this house. But no prophet has the right to be buried here. Abraham built it but he is not buried there and Muhammad frees it but he is not buried there. In the whole history of humanity, there is only one and one person only who has been given this privilege. God of Islam honored one person with this honor to be buried in His particular house, to be buried in the Kaaba. Who?

A woman. A slave. Hagar [the second wife of Abraham and mother of Ismail]. God orders Abraham to

build the greatest house of worship of humanity and, alongside it, the grave of this woman. Humanity must forever gather around the tomb of Hagar and circumambulate there.

The God of Abraham, chooses a woman from among this great human society as his unknown soldier, a mother, and she, a slave. In other words, God chose a creature who, in all systems of humanity, lacks nobility and honor.

The Honor Bestowed Upon the Prophet's Daughter

Yes, in this school of thought such a revolution took place. In this religion, a woman is freed in this manner. This is how Islam appreciates the position of womanhood. And once more the God of Abraham has chosen Fatima. Fatima, a girl, replaces a son as the inheritor of the glory of her family, maintaining the honorable values of their ancestors and continuing the family tree and credibility.

In a society that feels the birth of a daughter to be a disgrace which only burying her alive can purify, where the best son-in-law a father could hope for her to have is called 'the grave': Muhammad knows what fate has done to him and Fatima knows who she is.

This is why history looks in amazement at the way Muhammad behaved towards his young daughter, Fatima, the way he spoke with her and the way he praised her.

We Will come to see that the house of Fatima is next to the house of Muhammad. Fatima and her husband, Ali, are the only people who live next to the Prophet's mosque. They are of the same house as he is and there is only a courtyard of two meters separating the two houses. Two windows; facing each other, open the house of Muhammad to the house of Fatima. Every morning the Prophet opens his window and greets his young daughter.

We will see that whenever the Prophet goes on a journey, he knocks at the door of Fatima's house and he says good-bye to her. Fatima is the last person who bids farewell to him. Whenever he returns from a journey, Fatima is the first person he seeks out. He knocks on the door of her house and he asks how she is.

In some of the historic documents, it is recorded that the Prophet would kiss the face and hands of Fatima. This sort of behavior is more than just the relationship of a kind father and his daughter. A father kisses the hands of his daughter, and that, his youngest daughter! Such behavior in such an environment strikes a revolutionary blow to the families and inhumane relationships of that environment. 'The Prophet of Islam kisses the hands of Fatima.' Such a relationship opens the eyes of important people, politicians and the majority of the Moslem people gathered around the Prophet in amazement towards the greatness of Fatima.

This sort of behavior on the part of the Prophet of Islam teaches humanity and mankind to come and to release themselves from the habits and the fantasies of history and traditions. It teaches man to come

down from the Pharaoh like throne, to put aside his pride and rough oppression and to bow his head when confronted by a woman. It teaches a woman to reach towards the glory and beauty of humanity and to put aside her old and new feelings of inferiority, humility and baseness.

This is why the words of the Prophet not only show the kindness of a father but also bring out her responsibilities and strict duties. He shows his appreciation for her and speaks about her in the following terms: 'The best women in the world were four: Mary, Assiyeh [the wife of Pharaoh who brought up Moses], Khadijah and Fatima.' 'God is satisfied with her contentment and becomes angry from her anger.' 'The contentment of Fatima is my contentment, her anger is my anger. Whosoever loves my daughter Fatima loves me. Whosoever makes Fatima content makes me content. Whosoever makes Fatima unhappy makes me unhappy.' 'Fatima is a part of my body. Whosoever hurts her, has hurt me, and whosoever hurts me has hurt God.'

Why all this repetition? Why does the Prophet insist upon praising his young daughter? Why does he insist upon praising her in front of other people? Why does he want all of the people to be aware of his special feelings towards her? And finally, why does he so emphasize the contentment and anger of Fatima? Why does he so often repeat the word 'hurt' in relationship to Fatima.

The answer to this is very sensitive and important. It is clear. History has answered it all: The secret of these wondrous actions will be unveiled in the near future, in the few short months after the death of her father.

The Mother of her Father

History not only always speaks of the 'great ones', it only attends to them. Children are always forgotten. Fatima is the youngest child in the family. Her childhood passes in a storm. Her birth date is debated. Tabari, ibn Ishaq and Sirah ibn Hashim mention five years before the Prophet's mission. Morravej al Zahib Masoudi mentions the opposite, five years after the Prophet's mission. Yaqubi takes the middle, but not exactly, by recording, 'after the revelation'. Thus, there is a difference of opinion among the recorders of the Traditions. The Sunnis, then say, five years before the mandate of the Prophet and the Shiites say five years after his mission.

We leave this discussion to the scholars so they can enlighten us as to the exact date of her birth. We are concerned with Fatima herself and the reality of Fatima. Whether she is born before or after the mission of the Prophet does not concern us here. That which is clear is that Fatima remained in Mecca alone. Her two brothers die when they are infants and Zaynab, her oldest sister, who acts as the mother of this beloved child, goes to the home of Abi al Aas. Fatima bitterly accepts her absence. Then it is Roqiyyeh and Umm Khulthum's turn. They marry the sons of Abu Lahab, and Fatima remains even more alone. This is if we accept her birth as having been before the mission of the Prophet. If we accept the second, then, essentially, from 'the time she opened her eyes, she was alone. At any rate, the beginning of her life coincides with the heavy mandate of the Prophet. It is filled with great struggles, difficulties and

punishments whose shadows fall upon the house of the Prophet.

While her father bears the mandate of consciousness for mankind upon his shoulders and suffers the enmity of the enemies of the people, her mother nurses her beloved husband. With the initial experiences of childhood, Fatima tastes the suffering, sadness and anger of life. Because she is very young, she can move about freely. She makes use of this freedom to accompany her father. She knows her father has no life of his own to be able to take hold of his child's hand and walk freely and easily down the streets and into the bazaar. He always goes alone. In the wave of the town's enemies and enmity, he swims with dangers on all sides. The –small girl, who knows her father's fate, never lets him go alone.

Many times she sees her father standing amidst a crowd of people. He speaks to them softly and they, in turn, harshly send him away. Their only answers are to make fun of him and show him enmity. He feels lonely and friendless again: But quietly and patiently, he gathers, another group together. He begins his speech all over again. At the end, tired and having brought forth no result, like fathers of other children who return home from their jobs, he also returns home seeking a bit of rest and then returns once more to his work.

History reminds us that once when he had gone into the Masjid al haram, and is called bad names and is beaten, Fatima, a small child, is standing alone a short distance from the scene. She watches and then returns home with her father.

The day when he has prostrated himself in the mosque and his enemies throw the intestines of a sheep at him, suddenly, little Fatima, reaches towards her father, picks it up and throws it away. Then with her small, loving hands, cleans her father's head and face, comforts him and returns him to their home .

People who see this thin, weak girl, alone, beside her champion father, see how she comforts him. She supports him through his troubles and sufferings. With her pure, child–like behavior, she sympathizes with him. It is because of this that she comes to be called ummi *abiha*, the mother of her father.

The Confinement

The black and difficult years of hunger begin in the valley of Abu Talib. The Hashimi and Abdul Muttalib families are imprisoned with the exception of Abu Lahab who has joined the enemies. Men; women and children are placed in this hot, dry valley. A notice is written by Abu Jahl in the name of all the wealthy people of the Quraish and it is placed on the Kaaba wall:

`No one, should have any contact with the Hashimi tribe and Abdul Muttalib. All relationships with them

are cut-off. Do not buy anything from them. Do not sell anything to them. Do not marry any of them.'

They are forced to live in this stony prison until loneliness, poverty, hunger and the difficulties of life make them surrender to either the idols or death! They all have to bear the torture, both those who have accepted the new religion and those who have not as yet turned to the new religion.

Those who have not yet embraced Islam, but have a sense of freedom,, even though there is a difference of thought with Muhammad and face to face with Oneness, they put up a united front towards the enemies. They defend him and even though they do not know Islam and therefore do not have faith in it, they know Muhammad. They have faith in his purity. They know he is not interested in personal gain. They sense his faith. They hear what he has to say about the worship of the Truth. They know he sincerely wishes to free the people.

They are worth far more than the intellectuals who are filled with fear, men who are conservatives like Ali ibn Omayyad, who, having discovered progressive ideology; supposedly oppose reactionaries and the bearded men who hold onto the foulness of aristocratic society as well as the classical Arab regime with its class distinctions. But, at the same time, knowing all of this, in order to protect the wealth of their fathers, the luxuries of their family, their social position and physical health and in order to avoid any headaches, they remain on the side of Abu Jahl and Abu Lahab. They watch the torture of Balal, Ammar, Yasser and Somayyeh. They do not move their lips in objection.

Throughout these difficult years, they leave their compatriots and their friends in this small compound, alone. They busy themselves with their lives in the city, bazaar, their homes and families. They pass their time with the pagan leaders. They even join hands. They leave behind a tradition. They open a way. Years later, followers of this way and their religion contain more people than the followers of the religion of the Prophet himself.

The real Shiites are Ali, Abu Dharr, Fatima, Husayn, Zaynab and all of the Emigrants and Companions. But those like Ali ibn Omayyad are the first Moslems to continue the practice of dissimulation (pious fraud) even though the Prophet had forbidden it. They remain, loyal to this beneficial principle and do not relinquish it until their death.

It is when the fire of a new faith alights upon their spirits and a movement full of danger begins in society, based upon experiment, choice and obligatory tests where one speaks to the self clearly and without deceit that the wonders of humanity appear. The glories are accompanied by feelings of inferiority, contempt, strengths as well as weaknesses. All these are hidden within the spirit and all of them reveal themselves.

Now in this frightening compound, there are people who are not Moslems, and yet bear the difficulties with patience, silence and three years of hunger and loneliness. They share the shadow of danger. They also take part in God's great revolution of humanity. In this most sensitive moment of the beginning of the history of Islam, they share the pain, understanding the position of Muhammad, Ali and their

Companions.

But the black cloud of ignorance covers the comfortable and happy city which is filled with conservatism, contradiction, painlessness and shamelessness. Some Moslems can be seen among them whose skirts are contaminated and their hands are frail. They are busy gaining security and comfort. Are they the viewers or the players in this tragedy? The question arises because in their imagination they believe they have religion. They love religious people. They feel themselves to be enlightened.

The families of the Hashimi and Abdul Muttalib tribes cut themselves off for three years from their city, their people, their freedom and even their means of livelihood and live in this confinement. Is it possible to leave the valley in the middle of the night and, hidden from the eyes of the spies of the Quraish, get some food for the hungry who are waiting in jail? Could it be that a liberal family member or friend might out of kindness bring them some bread. Hunger sometimes reaches the point that they take on the image of 'black death'. But as they had prepared themselves for a 'red death', they are patient.

Sa'ad ibn Ali Vaqas, who is confined with the others, writes, 'Hunger has brought on such dizziness that, if at night I kick at a soft and wet material, without even realizing it, I put it in my mouth and suck it. Two years later, I still do not know what it was.'

One can see, under these conditions, what passes for the family of the Prophet, even if history said nothing. All of this family bears the difficulties of hunger, loneliness and poverty for the sake of the Prophet. The Prophet personally assumes responsibility for them. When a child cries from the pain of hunger, whenever a sick person cries from lack of medicine and lack of food, whenever an aged person, man or woman, reaches their limits of bearing difficulties and pressures suffered from three years of hunger, physical torture and the tortures of this valley, they hide all they bear within themselves. The light and blood drained from their faces, they deny any problems when confronting Muhammad.

At the same time, in spite of all of the difficulties, they remain loyal and generous in faith and love. All of this shows the expressions of the spirit, of faith and human life which greatly affected the sensitive heart of the Prophet.

Know for sure that whenever food arrives in the darkness of the night and it is given into the hands of the Prophet to be spread among the people, the share of his wife and daughter is the least of all, in order that they not fear for their lives.

The family of Muhammad in this compound consists of Khadijah and his small daughter, Fatima, her sisters, Umm Khulthum and Roqiyyeh, daughter-in-law's of Abu Lahab. After the mission of the Prophet, he orders his sons to divorce them in order to hurt and show contempt for the Prophet. But Osman, who is a young, wealthy, handsome man, marries Roqiyyeh and from the point of view of society, the act of Abu Lahab is answered. Roqiyyeh then immigrates to Ethiopia with Osman. Umm Khulthum, whose life had fallen apart and who had given up her happiness because of her faith in her father, now found herself in the compound, preferring hunger and remaining with her generous and

heroic father in the way of faith and freedom to living in comfort and ease with her malicious and conservative husband, Otaybeh.

The days pass with difficulty in this compound. At night, the black tent of darkness falls upon the residents of this mountainous area separated from life. Weeks, months and years pass with hardship, they pass slowly over their tired bodies and spirits but all continue to step in sympathy with each other and with the Prophet.

The family of the Prophet has a special position in the midst of this group. The head of the family holds the heavy weight of their bitter fate upon his shoulders. Umm Khulthum, her happiness destroyed, has moved from the home of her husband to that of her father. His other daughter, Fatima, is still a young girl either two or three years old or twelve or thirteen. At the same time that she has a weak constitution, she has a sensitive spirit, full of feelings. His wife, Khadijah, very aged, perhaps seventy years old, having lived through the ten years of the Prophet's mission and three years in the compound, having suffered hunger, having witnessed the constant torture of her husband and daughters, and bearing the death of her two sons, has not given up patience, but the flow of strength to her body has been stopped. At every instant death appears to her.

In this state, the hunger in Muhammad's house cries out so loud that the aged, sick Khadijah, who has lived her life in wealth and has now given everything in the way of Muhammad, puts a bit of leather in water and holds it between her teeth.

Fatima, the young, sensitive girl is worried about her mother and her mother is worried about her last, frail daughter whose love for their mother and father is a common expression among the people.

A day among the last days of their imprisonment, Khadijah, who senses the approach of her death, is bedridden. Fatima and Umm Khulthum are sitting beside her. Her father has gone outside to distribute the rations.

Khadijah, aged, weak, sensing the difficulties she has lived through, says with a sense of regret, 'If only my approaching death could wait until these dark days pass and I could die with hope and happiness.'

Umm Khulthum, crying, says, 'it is nothing, mother, do not worry.'

'Yes, for me, by God, it is nothing. I am not worried about myself, my daughter. No woman among the Quraish has tasted the blessings that I have tasted. There is no woman in the world who has received the generosity which I have received. It is enough for me that my fate in this life, in this world, has been to be the beloved wife of God's choice. As to my fate in the other world, it is enough that I have been among the first who believed in Muhammad and that I am called 'the mother of his followers.'

Then whispering to herself, she continues, 'Oh God, I cannot count the blessings and kindnesses that you have given me. My heart has not grown narrow because I am moving towards you, but I do wish to be worthy of the benefits you gave me.'

The shadow of death falls upon the house. Silence and deep sorrow fill Khadijah, Umm Khulthum and Fatima. Suddenly, the Prophet appears illuminated with hope, faith, strength and victory. It is as if three years of loneliness, hunger and heavy spiritual asceticism have had no effect upon the body and spirit of the Prophet other than to increase his courage, will power and faith.

Freedom, Tragedy, Spiritual Strength

Khadijah Dies

The dark years of confinement end. Khadijah lives to see the salvation of the Moslems, her beloved husband and her noble and loyal daughters. The Prophet experiences his first great victory over the Quraish. But the destiny which had been sent to change our history allows for no peace or pleasure to reflect from his face, for two great tragedies fall upon him simultaneously.

Abu Talib and Khadijah both die within a few days of each other and within a few days of their freedom. Abu Talib had raised the orphan Muhammad and had made up for the kindness of his missing father and mother and his grandfather, Abdul Muttalib. He looked after the young man, Muhammad, and cared for him. He found work for him in the service of Khadijah. Finally, it was he who acted as the father at the marriage of Khadijah and Muhammad. He had supported the prophecy of Muhammad. With all of his influence, character, personality and social credit, he had protected him. He even bore the three years in confinement, the difficulties and hunger and remained with him. It was because of him that Muhammad was saved from death and the horrible torture which his companions suffered. Now, he has lost Abu Talib, his only protector against the anger, danger and hatred of the city.

And Khadijah was the woman who gave up the privacy of their life to his destiny. Muhammad (twenty-five years old), orphan and shepherd, having suffered the difficulties and poverty, now beside the wealthy Khadijah (forty or forty-five years old), comes to know her through love, with the faith of a fellow sufferer and thinker. He seeks refuge in her from the difficulties of poverty and life. He receives the kindness of a friend beside her, and the love of a mother which he had not had. He benefits from her advice and the great protection which she gave him.

Later, when he is appointed as God's Prophet, she is with him, step by step. She is beside him, beside his heart, beside his spirit. During the whole time of the thunderstorm of difficulties, fears, dangers, loneliness, years of hatred and enmity, battles, fights and treacheries; she is with him from the first moment of the revelation until the moments of her death. She is with him during all of the moments of his life. She gives all of her life, love, faith, sacrifice and wealth at the moment when he needs it the most.

Now Muhammad has lost his protector, his compassionate, fellow sufferer, the first person who believed

him, the greatest giver of sympathy and finally, the mother of his Fatima and Fatima has lost her mother.

Difficulties and tortures increase. Abu Talib has gone. The Prophet is left defenseless in respect to the hatred. The hatred and enmity become violent when they witness the patience, perseverance and faith of Muhammad and his Companions. Their roots become firmer and more merciless. The Prophet is very much alone. Abu Talib is no longer in the city and Khadijah is no longer at home.

Fatima now more than ever senses the heavy burden of the unfortunate hatreds and grudges, because she is called 'the mother of her father'. At the time that her sisters go to their husband's homes, she is still tied to her mother's skirts.

'Mother, I never want to replace this home with another one. Mother, I will never leave you.'

Khadijah smiling, answers, 'They all say that and we say, 'My daughter, the time will come'.'

Fatima, imploringly continues, 'No. I will never leave my father. No one will separate me from him.'

Her mother remains silent.

Fatima senses she has such a mandate. Her message is not a child's desires. Her faith in her mandate gains strength when she hears her father begin his invitation in the following way.

'Oh, Quraish, take yourselves back. In relationship to your God, I cannot implore anything for you: Oh children of Abd Manaf, in relationship to your god, I cannot implore anything for you. Abbas, ibn Abdul Muttalib, in relationship to your god, I...oh, Safiyeh, daughter of Abdul Muttalib...Oh, Fatima, take whatever you want of my wealth but in relationship to thy God, I cannot implore anything for you.'

Fatima, full of understanding, spiritual desire and perseverance, answers, 'Yes. Yes, dearest of fathers, the most respected of Prophets.'

How surprising that the Prophet calls upon her in the presence of the leaders of the Quraish, as well as with the leaders of the Hashimi tribe and the Abd Manafs. Her? A young girl? She alone, and only she from among her family?

The child-like feelings and loving kindness of the young girl, who hundreds of times re-iterated that she would never marry and that she would never leave her father, is growing into a serious covenant and takes on the color of a responsibility and a commandment.

The first years of her life coincide with the first years of the mission and the difficulties and tortures of the beginning of the mandate. Fatima, from among all of the children of Muhammad, is the worthiest to have been able to bear the suffering of the difficulties, to bear the heavy weight of the responsibilities of the mandate which is upon her father's shoulders. She is aware of her fate and so are her mother and father.

On one of the last days of her life, Khadijah, worried, turns to her and says, 'After me what things will you see, my daughter. My life will end today or tomorrow. Zaynab and Roqiyyeh, your two sisters, are at peace beside their kind husbands. My mind is not worried about Umm Khu'thum because her age and experience are enough to keep her. But, you, Fatima, are drowned in difficulties. You have to suffer multiple sorrows and tribulations which increase daily.'

Fatima, who shared in bearing the burdens which had been placed upon her father's shoulders, answers, 'Rest assured, mother. Don't worry about me. The idol worshipping Quraish will have a rebellion among themselves. They will torture and punish Moslems and they will show no mercy. They will pre-judge. The souls and hearts of Moslems should rejoice in accepting this despotic torture.'

Fatima is the most worthy for having suffered this torture. She is special because the blessing of being the daughter of the Prophet is offered to her and because of the kindness and respect which has been devoted to her.

A New History Begins

After the death of Abu Talib, enmity and hatred reaches its peak. A group of the Companions and followers of the Prophet go to Ethiopia while another group suffer loneliness and poverty under the increasing torture of the Quraish. Muhammad, who had reached fifty years of age, whose life had been spent in difficulties without any security, is living alone with Fatima, his young daughter.

But ...no. The hand of fate brings a son to this house and no one knew what role he would play.

Yes. Ali does not stay in his father's house and grow up there. From childhood he lives beside Fatima. He is raised in the home of Fatima's father. The fate of this young boy is strangely connected to the fate of this father and this girl.

History is taking its course. In the mysterious quiet which is full of ambiguity, the stormy design of thought is nourished so that tomorrow, the stone idols are broken, that create barriers for the seekers of monopoly and that create discrimination. The first of the deceitful priests of the royal court die in the fire temples of the Persians. The great, frightening palaces of Madaen are pulled down. The lustful, blood-thirsty Emperor of Rome is pushed into the sea.

But the greatest of all to fall, to be erased in the hearts and minds, is the rusted traditions and the chains of habit, the pus of superstitions and rotted myths, prejudices, feelings and discriminatory beliefs that are against humanity.

They are disconnected and washed. The previous values and honors are turned upside down and

changed. In an environment polluted with bruised fairy tales of racism and pride, aristocracy and power, epics of judgment and plunder, the worship of the earth, blood and idols always cause the earth to revolt against the gods because all these things, large or small, prevent freedom, equality, justice, spiritual struggle and self-awareness for the unknown masses who lack glory and tribe. Instead of seeking history in rotted bones and fallen gravestones and rulers of the sword who hold the gold, seek history in the blood, life and motions of the people!

Seek the line which begins with the heirs of the last Chosen Prophet! Each one is to have a finer cloak of martyrdom than the' previous one. Each one either spent their life in the battlefield or teaching people or in the prison of the oppressors. This important mandate in history begins with Fatima and in carrying out this work, history needs an Ali.

This is why the kind hand of poverty causes the child of Abu Talib, even though he had a father, to go to the house of his uncle's son so that his spirit does not become polluted by his own family's ignorance when the revelation arrives. He is present from the time of the first revelation. He is there from the moment that the mission begins. He lives through the fire of difficulties, problems and thoughts so that he can play the difficult role he has to play in the migration, so that he can participate in the battles of Badr, Ohud, Khaybar, Fath and Hunayn and thereby guarantee the victory of the Islamic Revolution, so that he can grow up close to Fatima and finally, so that with Fatima, he can establish the 'exemplary family' and in the continuation of the work of Abraham, begin a new history.

Migration

Thirteen years of difficulty, resistance, confinement and, torture in Mecca end. Fatima, from early childhood, patiently stood alongside her father, in the_ city, in their home and in their imprisonment. With her weak constitution, she withstood the angry blows of envy and the difficulties of resistance in the savage environment of ignorance. With her little hands, she caressed her hero father like a mother.

The migration begins. Moslems go to Medina. The Prophet and Abu Bakr secretly leave Mecca. Fatima and her sister, Umm Khulthum also leave Mecca. Suddenly, one of the evil men of the Quraish who had a history of having caused the Prophet difficulties catches up with them and violently throws them down.

Fatima who essentially had a weak constitution and who had suffered from the effects of three years in prison is greatly affected by this event. She suffers pain the entire way to Medina. This uncalled for act of Huirath ibn Naqiz had such an effect upon Moslems and, in particular, the Prophet and Ali that even eight years later when conquering Mecca, they had not forgotten what he had done. His name is mentioned among those who should not be spared. They said that even if he is hanging on the cloth of the Kaaba, he should be killed. It was no accident that Ali carried out this order.

In Medina

Now they are in Medina. The Prophet has built his mosque and next to it, the house which he built from mud and the leaves of palm trees. Then he announces the ceremony of 'the covenant of brotherhood'. 'Every two should become brothers in the way of God.' Jaffar ibn Abu Talib became the brother of Ma'az ibn Jabal, Abu Bakr, the brother of Khareje bin Zahir, Omar ibn Khattab, the brother of Ottabai ibn Malek and Osman, the brother of Uss bin Sabet and ... 'I am his brother.'

Muhammad is the brother of Ali.

Once again, from among all the figures, Ali is placed beside Muhammad. Ali takes another step closer to Muhammad. Fatima bint Assad, the mother of Ali, nursed Muhammad. Abu Talib, the father of Ali, protected Muhammad. Muhammad grew up in the house of Ali. Ali grew up in the house of Muhammad beside Fatima, the daughter of Muhammad. Ali was nourished in the lap of Khadijah, the mother of Fatima. The son of the uncle of Muhammad, child of Muhammad has now become the brother of Muhammad.

The Sealing of the Link

There remains one more step until Ali can reach the final stage which is foreseen for him in the fate of Muhammad and the honor of Islam.

Fatima has kept her promise. In the home of her father, she lives quietly and alone. She rejects Omar and Abu Bakr's offers of marriage. All of the Companions know that Fatima has a very special fate and they know that the Prophet will never give her hand in marriage without consulting her.

Fatima grows up with Ali. She sees him as a dear, older brother and as a beloved butterfly around her father. Fate throws these two together for very special reasons. Neither one of them are tied to the age of ignorance. They both grow up from the beginning with the mission. They develop under the light of the revelation.

What feelings does Fatima have towards Ali? What appears from the great, brave, courageous feelings of Ali towards Fatima? It is possible that we could conceive of them but the words to express it are missing. How can we draw the complicated feelings which arise from faith, love, spiritual strength, worship and the kindness of a brother and a sister who share the same belief and the familiarity of two spirits. They share the difficulties and troubles of fate together. Being fellow travelers, step by step, moment by moment for their whole lifetime, they encounter kindness and inspiration mixed with faith.

Why is Ali silent? He is twenty-five years old. Fatima has reached puberty. She is either nine years old or nineteen.

In my opinion, the obstacles before Ali are clear. Fatima has endowed herself to her father. She knows

herself to be the mother of her father and the person who runs his house. How could Ali take her from this house where the daughter is so attached to her father, to the extent that they cannot be separated? Ask Muhammad for her hand in marriage? Ali shares the same feelings as Fatima does.

Suddenly the picture changes. Aiesha comes into the house of the Prophet. The Prophet, for the first and last time in his life, takes a young, alive, desiring girl as his wife.

Fatima, little by little, senses that her father's young bride will replace Khadijah and hers; if not in his heart but undoubtedly in his house. Ali also senses that the moment which destiny has prepared for them has arrived.

But he has nothing.

A boy who has grown up in Muhammad's house, who has spent his youth and struggling in the way of his beliefs. He did not have an opportunity to gather or save things. The only capital he has in the world is the sacrifices he has made upon the way of Muhammad, through his faith in Muhammad. Capital? Not even a house or a piece of furniture. Nothing.

At the same time we see that he approaches the Prophet. He is seated next to him. He has put his head down and speaks with his beautiful shyness.

'What do you want son of Abu Talib?'

With an answer full of shame and inner peace, 'I want to take the name of Fatima, daughter of the Prophet.'

The Prophet answers, 'Wonderful! Congratulations!'

The next day in the mosque the Prophet asks him, 'Do you have anything?'

'Nothing, oh Prophet.'

'Where is the shield I gave you in the battle of Badr?'

'It is with me.'

'Give that.'

Ali quickly went, got the shield and returned and handed it to the Prophet.

The Prophet ordered that it be sold in the bazaar and with its small price, he should begin his life. Osman bought the shield for forty-seven dirhams. The Prophet called his Companions together and he himself performed the wedding ceremony.

'Fatima, daughter of the Prophet, according to the ruling traditions, is given to Ali.'

They prayed for their sound progeny and then they brought out the dish of dates. And this was the wedding ceremony. The list of Fatima's property? A hand mill, a wooden bowl and a cotton rug.

At the beginning of the second year of the migration, Ali found a house beside the Mosque of Ghoba and he took Fatima there to his home. Hamzeh, one of the first martyrs, the great hero of the religious crusades and uncle of the Prophet and Ali, sacrificed two camels and invited the people of Medina to his home for the wedding celebration.

The Prophet instructed Umm Salameh to accompany the bride to Ali's house. Then Balal called the people to the evening prayer. After the prayer, the Prophet went to Ali's house. He asked for a bowlful of water and while he recited some verses from the Qur'an, he asked the bride and groom to drink from that water. He then made his ablution with it and sprinkled it upon both of their heads. He wished to leave when Fatima began crying. It was the first time that she was to be separated from her father.

The Prophet comforted her with these words, 'I am leaving you with a person of the strongest faith, a man who is the most knowledgeable among those with knowledge, the most ethical among those with ethics and the highest of spirits among the spiritual.'

Struggles Continue to Renew the Spirit

This departure from Muhammad begins the second part of her life. Destiny brings new difficulties and sorrows to this most beloved and precious beings of humanity. Fatima, who has grown up in poverty and with the hardships of the home of her father, now has come to the home of Ali, a home where its only decoration and furniture is love and poverty.

The difficulties of life in Ali's house begin. But the greatest difficulty of all is that Fatima had the same responsibilities she previously had, but they are now in connection with Ali. A youth whom she had, until yesterday, looked upon as a brother and today; as a husband. Fatima knows that the life of Ali will remain as this. She knows that he only thinks about jihad, God and people. He will return home with only empty hands. Fatima finds herself more responsible here than when she was in her father's home. She has the responsibility of being the wife of a man who is more serious than lucky and who is greater than life.

Fatima grinds the wheat herself. She bakes the bread. She works in the house and is seen hundreds of times bringing water from outside her home. Ali, who knows the generosity and majesty of Fatima, and more than loves her for multiple reasons, knows the difficulties that she has grown up with which have made her weak and is thereby sorrowed by all of the work and labor which she must perform.

One day in a tone of sympathy, he says, 'Fatima Zahra, you have placed yourself in so many difficulties that my heart breaks for you. God has made many workers of Moslems. Ask the Prophet to give one of them to you.'

Fatima seeks out her father.

'What is it my daughter?'

'I came to see how you are.'

She returns home and tells Ali she is too ashamed to ask anything of her father. Ali, who is struck with wonder, calls Fatima and they return together to the Prophet and he himself asks the question.

The Prophet answers without hesitation, 'No! By God I will not give you even a prisoner of war. The stomachs of the Companions are hungry and if I find nothing to give them, I have to exchange them and then feed the hungry Companions.'

Ali and Fatima thank him and, with empty hands, return home. It is recorded. The husband and wife return home to an empty house. Both remain silent thinking about what they had asked of the Prophet. The Prophet thought all day about the answer he had given his beloveds. Suddenly the door opens and the Prophet appears. It is not only the darkness of the night but also its coldness which causes Ali and Fatima to shiver. He sees that they had placed a thin cloth upon themselves. It is so short that when they pull it up over their heads, their feet are exposed and when they cover their feet, their heads are exposed.

Softly he commands them, 'Do not move from your places.'

Then he adds, 'Don't you want to know about something which is better than what you had asked of me?'

'Of course, oh Prophet of God.'

'It is something which Gabriel has brought for me which I now share with you. After every ritual prayer, say *Allaho Akbar* (God is Greatest) ten times. Say *Alhamdulillah* (Praise belongs to God) ten times and *subhana'llah* ten times. When you have quietly crawled into bed, say *allahu Akbar* thirty-five times, *Alhamdulillah* thirty-three times and *subhana -'l-llah* thirty three times.'

Once again, Fatima takes this as a lesson. Once again, with a gentle blow, she learns something which reaches the depths of her being: She is Fatima.

This is a lesson which she knows. Although she has learned it from childhood, such lessons should follow continuously. They require successive teachings and learning. This is not a lesson of knowledge but rather a lesson in becoming. 'Becoming Fatima' is not easy. She is a holy trust. It requires that she ascend many steps and fly many flights into higher worlds while being step by step and wing to wing with Ali. She must share with Ali in his sorrows and in his difficulties. She has the greatest responsibility in the history of freedom, jihad and humanity. She is the link in a chain which extends from Abraham to Muhammad, from Husayn to the 12th Imam, survivors to the end of history.

Fatima has the responsibility of being the link between prophecy and imamate. These are the values of Fatima herself. For her to 'be Fatima' obliges the Prophet to be strict with this special and exceptional companion. She should not have a single moment of peace in life for that might keep her from constant 'becoming'. Sorrow and loneliness are the water and earth of this girl who must grow under the light of revelation and bear the burdens of freedom and justice. She is the beginning of the 'pure roots', where each branch which grows is appointed to take the 'fire of God' like Prometheus from heaven and give it to the people on earth. They must, like Atlas; carry the heavy globe of the earth upon their shoulders and 'bear it'.

This is why Fatima must always be learning, a learning which, like light and air and food; never ends for a tree, but rather, is lasting.

A Word instead of a servant! Only this wonderful bride and groom can understand that one can live by a word. They were happy, drank it and ate it and were filled by it.

These words, like the rain, must continue to fall and only these two thirsty creatures who have grown from among the highest form of humanity, are obliged to drink it and grow with it. The sudden sound of Muhammad in that dark night and the meaningful silence held the call of this rain water.

It is not without reason that Ali, a man engaged in religious struggle, full of effort and work, the man who prays not out of habit, and who is not just busy with moving his tongue and chin, twenty five years after this night, says, 'May God be my witness that from the night. that I received this lesson from the Prophet, I have not forgotten it for a single night.'

In amazement, they ask, 'Even the night of Siffin?'

And Ali says again, emphasizing even more, 'Even the night of Siffin.'

Fatima also lives with this lesson until she dies. These prayers are registered in her name. It is these heavenly words which come to help her in her home instead of a servant. They are the wedding present he himself gives his daughter.

The Prophet is very strict with his beloved daughter, Fatima. He has learned this method from God. There is no Prophet in the whole of the Qur'an who is so punished and so criticized as Muhammad. Why? Because none of the other Prophets were so beloved in the eyes of God and none of them were so responsible to the people.

One day like any other day, the Prophet enters Fatima's home. His eye falls upon a patterned curtain. He frowns, says nothing and leaves. Fatima senses it. She knows what her sin is. She also knows what repentance is.

She immediately takes the curtain from the wall and sends it to her father so that he can sell it and give the money to the needy of Medina. Why so rough and strict?

Why so rough and strict? Zaynab, her sister, lives in luxury and splendor in Abul Aas's house. Her other sisters, Roqiyyeh and Umm Khulthum live in a wealthy and comfortable house. Fatima never heard that her sisters were reproached for their wealth and splendor. From the way of expression and the type of discipline of the Prophet upon her, it is clear that Fatima is something else, another kind of daughter, so the Prophet addresses her:

'Fatima, work now, because tomorrow I can do nothing for you.' You can see the distance between this Islam and the Islam which says, 'One tear for Husayn will put out the fires of hell,' or 'Even if one's sins are greater than the foam of the oceans, the grains of sand and the stars in the sky, they will be forgiven,' or 'Friendship with Ali will turn all of one's sins into benefits on the Day of judgment.'

This means essentially that anyone who does not sin in this world or who sins little, is a fool, because they will have nothing which cannot be changed into benefits in the next world. More terrifying than this are the words which God is supposed to have said, 'The friends of Ali are in heaven even if they disobey me. The enemies of Ali are in hell, even if they obey me!'

Intercession

Two institutions do not exist – that of God and that of Ali, two record books and two beliefs. The system is very strict. The Prophet cannot even support Fatima when she stands for God's judgment in the other world, in the presence of the Creator. He cannot protect her from deviation. Fatima must become Fatima herself. Being the daughter of the Prophet does not mean anything there. It may be useful here in order for her to become Fatima and if she does not become Fatima, she has lost.

Intercession means this, not cheating at an exam or owing the right people or being at the mercy of one's family or walking a tightrope or relating to family relationships in accounting for the truth and justice of God or changing the numbers in the record book according to human nature in this world and bringing in relatives from over the wall or through hidden doors to paradise. According to the Qur'an, the Prophet and Imams can only intercede with God's permission which is only given to those who are capable.

Fatima knows this. The Prophet has taught her. He has also taught others. It is this intercession which takes the books and responsibilities which religion brings into account. It is quite different from the intercession referred to in the Age of Ignorance, where they appealed to their idols to intercede for them. They committed murder and thousands of dirty deeds, then offered a cow or a camel to Laat, Eeza or their other large and small idols and through cries of regret or pleas of sympathy, sought intercession from it.

I not only accept the intercession of the Prophet but also that of the Imams, Fatima and even the intercession of the Companions and great martyrs. What are we saying? I also believe that visiting the grave of Imam Husayn removes sins and it is such that it influences the spirit and thoughts of a human being who thinks about these great examples of human beings and their faith brings about a

revolutionary change in them.

It transforms people. It kills weaknesses, fears, tremors, idol worshipping, worshipping of one's character and the worshipping of one's own character. From this spring comes the inspiration for human wisdom, beliefs and virtues. It inspires institutions to the spirit of jihad, permanence, sincerity and the blossoming of spiritual meanings. It brings about a new set of values. It strengthens human values. It does away with sicknesses of the will and habits and kills sinful and bad attitudes which are in the depths of one's conscience. It builds a great person and it is natural and logical that the past errors belong to the past and no longer exist and will never again be.

Horr, the great hero or Karbala, through the intercession of Husayn, came out of the hell of slavery and was saved from being a sinner and murderer and with just a few steps he reached the highest peak of liberty, truth and humanity.

And Fatima, through the intercession of Muhammad became Fatima. In Islam, intercession is the means of reaching 'the most worthy of salvations' not a means of 'saving the unworthy'. It is the individual who must receive the intercession of an intercessor and through this means change his or her fate, in other words, change their character and behavior so that they become worthy of changing their destiny. Yes, an individual takes that from an intercessor. But an intercessor does not give that to an individual. No polluted and valueless man can pass the exam of the Day of Judgment unless he has learned in this world how to pass through to that world by using the techniques of life, struggle, work and service.

An intercessor is one of these teachers, not a supporter of the illegal. Imam Husayn acts as an intercessor for people who love him, have faith in him and who remember him and his story, recall his having been a martyred warrior and nourish him through the recollection. He guides those who are wandering in the ways of ignorance.

'Fatima, work today because tomorrow I can do nothing for you.' Fatima was like Muhammad. No exceptions are made for her in God's system of justice and the laws of Islam. She is also responsible in her position. She must answer for every step that she takes. One day a Quraishi woman, who had become a Moslem, stole something. The Prophet hears of this. 'Her fingers must be cut-off,' he said. Many people's hearts bled for her. The large families of the Quraish, who were the wealthiest of the Arab tribes, counted this as an insult, the stain of which would remain with their tribe. They went forward to seek intercession.

They asked Fatima to intercede with God for this woman. She did not accept. They went to Usamah ibn Zeid. Usamah was the son of Zeid who was the step-son of the Prophet. The Prophet loved Zeid and his son, Usamah, very much. His special kindness towards the young Usamah is famous in history. Usamah, with all of his personal capital, kindness, and special closeness which he had to the Prophet, his reputation for loyalty and sacrifice and that of his father who had been Khadijah's servant and the dear one of the Prophet, had come from, the Quraish to ask that the sin of this poor woman be

over-looked. He asked the Prophet to forgive her.

The Prophet answered in no uncertain terms, 'Do not speak to me, Usamah. Whenever the law is in my hands, there is no way of escape. Even if she were the daughter of the Prophet, Fatima, her fingers would be cut-off.'

Why did he choose the closest among all of his beloveds, the daughter of Muhammad? And why the name Fatima? The answer to this question is clear. When he spoke of his calling, he chose his youngest daughter, Fatima from among all of his close family. It was only to her that he spoke of Islam.

With his clear announcement, Fatima was to become one of the four highest images of women in the history of humanity: Mary, Assiyeh, Khadijah and finally, Fatima. Why the last? Because she is the last complete link in the chain of evolution, among all of the creatures, for the whole duration of time and for all of the cycles of history, the last, and among the saints, the last, Fatima, an ideal image of the Day of Judgment.

The value of Mary ties with Jesus Christ whom she delivered and nourished. The value of Assiyeh, the wife of Pharaoh, lies with Moses, whom she nourished and befriended. The value of Khadijah lies with Muhammad whom she befriended and with Fatima whom she gave birth to and nourished.

And the value of Fatima? What can I say? To whom does her value belong? To Khadijah? To Muhammad? To Ali? To Husayn? To Zaynab?

To herself!!

Why Fatima?

Ali and Fatima are now in their home outside of the city. They live away from the daily bustle of the city, near the village of Ghoba, eight kilometers to the south of Medina, next to the Ghoba Mosque. It is here that the Prophet upon his migration, before entering the city, spent one week and Ali, who left Mecca three days after him, caught up with the Prophet at Ghoba. It was after that that the Prophet went for the first time to Medina and established Islam freely in this city. He put in the foundation for his new mosque and history began.

They later move from here back to Medina next door to the house of the Prophet and the mosque of the Prophet. The similarities between these two beginnings at the Ghoba mosque and the Medina mosque and the comparison between these two realities is most exciting to whomever is acquainted with Shiite Islam and who knows the story of the Prophet's mosque and 'the house of the Prophet'. If they do not know it logically, they will emotionally sense it.

The Spirit of Muhammad

While Fatima and Ali are far from the Prophet in Ghoba, it is most difficult for the Prophet. These two, the spirit of Muhammad's house are living far from him, outside the city, in a home full of difficulties and poverty but with a great deal of love and faith.

Ali, from the beginning of his childhood, has lived with poverty, loneliness, difficulties, hatred, religious struggle and asceticism. He has borne his hard and bitter life in Mecca patiently. His youth and early childhood had been nothing other than being immersed in beliefs and religious struggle. He is a very serious spirit, having no thoughts about a house, life, pleasure, wealth and comfort. He has a thirst which is only satisfied by bitterness. He is built from worship, asceticism, thought and work.

Fatima is also an extract of sorrow, piety and poverty. She bears the tortures that her father, her mother, her sisters and her brother, Ali have borne for years in Mecca. They leave a deep impression upon her body and upon her spirit. A weak body with deep feelings, she has a most sensitive heart. Now in the house of Ali, she pressures herself once again to live with difficulties, work, poverty and asceticism. Neither is Ali a person who brings happiness and entertainment to their house, nor is Fatima a person who can bring routine desires and excitement to their new home so as to pull Ali from heaven to earth and tap his internal strength, depth and seriousness.

It is only the Prophet and the Prophet alone who can cause a wave to fall and bring about the happiness of his beloveds through kindness, good feelings and words, each one of which contains an ocean of meaning, sweetness and power for the spirit, hope and love.

The Prophet is himself aware of this. He knows the needs of his beloveds who live because they love. He knows, 'Whosoever loves Hirii has no life and to whosoever loves Him, this is life itself.' He brings his Fatima and his Ali close to him. Their house is made next door to his. It is made just like his of branches and palm leaves. Its door opens to the mosque, wall to wall two windows facing each other, one from the house of Ali and the other from Muhammad's house.

These two windows which face each other, actually speak of two hearts which open onto each other: the heart of a father and the heart of a daughter. Each morning they open onto each other greetings. 'How are you?' and laughter. Each evening, a promise to meet his daughter the next day. It is this window about which it is said, 'The Prophet, everyday, without exception, unless he was on a journey, sought out Fatima and greeted her.'

Why from among all of the Companions, from among all of his close family, from among all of his daughters, should only Fatima be in the mosque and wall to wall with his home? The house of Muhammad is the house of Fatima. The family in which Ali is the father, Fatima, the mother, Hassan and Husayn, the sons and finally, Zaynab and Umm Khulthum, the daughters, is the family of the Prophet. The family of the Prophet is this unique family, this unique home that is so emphasized in the Qur'an and

the Traditions, and which has been cleansed of all impurities and is chaste, guards them, for all generations and ages to come.

Whosoever knows this family does not need reasoning and lengthy discussions, because even if there were no words expressed, intelligence itself will admit its uniqueness.

Now in Medina, wall to wall with the house of Aiesha, this house built in the mosque, the fruit of this great and incomparable seedling grows. Hassan, Husayn, Zaynab, Umm Khulthum. A new history has begun. With the dawn of these stars, new horizons have been found: for Muhammad, the meaning of life, for Islam, the proof of belief and for humanity, the witness of all things!

The Continuation of Muhammad

The third year of the migration, one year and a few months after the marriage, Hassan is born. Medina celebrates the end of its waiting for its messenger. The Prophet, who for the first time during these sixteen long and drawn out years of difficulties, full of torture, hatred, ugliness, treachery, where news of the torture of his friends and death of his beloveds reach him, now tastes the new and sweet news of the birth of Hassan which soothes his tired spirit.

Full of happiness, he enters Fatima's house; he holds the first fruit of the union of Ali and Fatima in his arms. He recites the 'call to prayer' into the baby's ear and finally distributes silver to the poor people of Mecca to the amount of hair on the baby's head.

A year passes. Husayn is born.

Now the Prophet has two sons.

Fate desired that his two sons, Qasem and Abdullah should not remain because the sons of the Prophet should be *through Fatima*. As the Prophet said, 'The generation of each Prophet was from his own body but mine is from Ali.'

And Ali as well. He should not remain apart from the generations which begin with Muhammad. Isn't it true in meaning that Ali is the continuation of Muhammad in spirit, his inheritor? It is Muhammad's progeny who should have continued. These two spirits join to produce the successive generations. In the mission of Muhammad, Ali is present and in the succession of Ali, Muhammad is present. Now the presence of both of them can be seen in the pure faces of these two children and Muhammad sees three faces in these two: Ali, Fatima and his own.

Fate decrees that these two should take the place of his sons. These two are the fruits of the union of Ali and Fatima. Fatima, the mother of her father, all of the Companions know and repeat 'his smallest and most beloved daughter'. And Ali? His guardian, his brother and from Fatima, his most beloved sons.

The roots which join Ali and Muhammad to each other are incapable of being counted. Both stemmed from Abdul Muttalib. The mother of Ali looked after Muhammad from the time he was eight years old. And his father, Abu Talib, was as Muhammad's father. Muhammad grew up in Ali's house from the age of eight to twenty five and Ali grew up in Muhammad's house from early childhood until the age of twenty five. Khadijah was as Ali's mother and the Prophet was as his father!

What similar and closer union could there have been! Their relationships are all comparable. Two human beings are symmetrical to each other. Two "one another's".

Ali is the first person who accepts Islam from the Prophet. He extends the first hand to the Prophet when he is hidden and alone. They join together and from then on stand alongside all of the dangers and in the midst of all of the difficulties, until his death.

Before the mission, Ali is a small boy of six or seven years old. He takes him alone to Mt. Hira. He participates in the depth of asceticism and wonderful prayers and accompanies him day and night.

A man can be seen standing alone in the moonlight, in the silence of the whisperings and words of the night of Ramadan, close to the time of the mission, upon the top of Mt. Hira. He is either sitting down or slowly pacing back and forth. Sometimes, underneath the rain of inspiration, his head falls under the weight of the whispered feelings. Sometimes he raises his head to the heavens and in the depths of the ignorance of that, he cries until he finds the way. He is waiting. He sees something which is still unknown to him. During all of these times, a small child; like his shadow, is with him, sometimes on his shoulder and sometimes beside him.

Ali is a child of nine or ten years old. One night, in the home of the Prophet, he enters his mother and father's room: Khadijah and Muhammad! He sees them kneeling on the ground, sitting for awhile and then rising and saying something under their lips. Both together; neither one notices him. He remains in wonder. Finally he asks, 'What are you doing?'

The Prophet answers, 'We are performing our prayers. I have been sent as the messenger to spread the word of submission (Islam) and to call people to the worship of the One God and my own mission. Ali, I call you as well to it.'

And Ali, still a child, of no more than a few years of age, living in the house of Muhammad, drowned in his kindness and his greatness, he is Ali! He does not say yes without thinking. Faith must filter through his wisdom and then find its way to his heart. At the same time, his tongue has the tone of his age and years, as he says, 'Allow me to talk to my father, Abu Talib, and then make my decision.'

Immediately afterwards, he runs up the stairs to his room to sleep. But this invitation is not an ordinary invitation which Ali, even though only eight or ten years old, could take quietly. He stays awake thinking until dawn.

No one knows what effect the words that night had on the thoughts of this boy but in the morning, they hear his footsteps, light, but decisive and quiet. They stop behind the door of the Prophet and in a sweet voice but with the beauty and perseverance of Ali, he says, 'Last night, I thought to myself, 'God, in creating me, had not consulted Abu Talib, first. So why should I now ask his opinion about worshipping Him? 'Tell me about Islam.'

The Prophet speaks to him and he says, 'I accept.' From then on he finds himself upon this way and in the midst of this union. He spends every second of his life towards this end. He becomes a wonderful symbol of one who worships God, is loyal to Muhammad and a friend to humanity and devoted to the spirit. He joins with the heart and thoughts of Muhammad in a thousand ways, both hidden and manifest. Everyone knows this. Muhammad knows it more than others. He senses the thousands of rays of light which fall from his spirit upon Ali. This is why one day, when his spirit is filled with the light which shone upon him from the Prophet, he becomes excited, his heart deeply desires to hear the Prophet's feelings, towards him, so he asks, Among these two, which is the most beloved of the Prophet, his daughter, Fatima Zahra, or her husband, Ali?'

The Prophet was at the other end of a difficult question. At the same time that he was required to answer 'an impossible question', while smiling kindly and softly, he found the answer which he felt would be right for that which all concerned had in their hearts. With atone full of the victory of pleasure, he answered, and 'Fatima is more beloved to me than you and you are dearer to me than she.'

He never tries to show himself to differ from others. Rather, it was the opposite. He would say, 'I am a human being like you. The only difference is the revelation which I receive.' He always declared that he did not know the hidden world and other than that which is told him, he knows nothing. He was always trying not to stand out or seem peculiar and as far as possible, not to call attention to himself.

One day an old woman approached him to ask him something. All the things that she had heard about him and the greatness she knew he had, had so affected her that when she found herself in his presence, she trembled and stuttered. The Prophet, who sensed that she had been struck by his person and his presence, moves simply and quietly forward. With kindness, he places his hand upon her shoulder and in a kind and intimate tone, he says, 'Mother. What is it? I am the son of that Quraish woman who milked sheep.'

The depth of his sensitivity, sympathy and the softness of his heart were most amazing. Sometimes, inside the house, he would so humble himself that the hands of little Aiesha easily reached him. He kissed the hands of Fatima. His analogies which came from kindness were something special: 'Ammar is as the space between my two eyes,' 'Ali is from me and I am from Ali,' 'Fatima is a part of my body.'

And now Hassan and Husayn are born. What things did the Prophet not do with these two beloved children! He loved them, the mirror and vital fruit of the 'most beloved of his dearest ones' and 'the dearest of his beloveds'. He had always showed special kindness towards Fatima and gave her spiritual

strength to an extent which cannot even be found among men today. And now, from his only remaining daughter, two sons have been found whom he must have loved very dearly. He was so fond of them that everyone expressed amazement.

One day, he enters Fatima's house as he did everyday and from the time the children were born, every moment, every hour. He enters. He sees that both Ali and Fatima are asleep and Hassan is hungry and crying. He can find nothing to eat. The Prophet cannot bring himself to wake his dearest and his most beloved. Quietly and barefooted, he takes himself to the sheep in the house, milks it and gives the milk to the child until he becomes quiet.

One day, when he is hurriedly passing Fatima's house, suddenly the cries of Husayn reach his ears. He returns and enters the house and with his whole body shaking, he yells at Fatima, 'Don't you understand that his crying causes me pain!'

Usamah ibn Zeid, whom we have mentioned before says, 'I had business with the Prophet. I knocked at his door. He came out. As I was talking to him, I realized he had something hidden under his clothes and he was holding onto it with difficulty, but I did not know what it was. When I had finished saying what I had come to say, I asked, 'What is that which you are holding, Prophet of God?'

'The Prophet, while his face filled with delight and pleasure, pulled apart his cloak and I saw Hassan and Husayn. At the same time that he wanted to explain his unusual behavior to me, he could not take his eyes off of them; in a tone full of joy and happiness, as if speaking to himself, he said, 'these are my two sons and the sons of my daughter!'

Then as his voice – full of wonder in a melody which cannot be expressed– continued, 'Oh, God, I love these two. Love these two and love those who love them.'

In the words of a contemporary Arab, 'If they were to have asked Muhammad which of his daughters should continue his line and which son in law, he would have chosen the same two which God chose.'

The children of Zahra and Ali sense, in the form of Muhammad, a grandfather, a father, a friend, a relative of the family, a guardian, a companion and a playmate. They were closer to him, more intimate and freer than with their own mother and father. One day, during one of the congregational prayers, the Prophet went down in prostration. The prostration continued for such a long time that the people who were praying behind him began to wonder what had happened.[In the congregational prayer, the congregation performs the prayer behind an Imam or leader and they all move and perform the prayer in unison.] The Prophet had always been swift in his ritual prayer. According to his command, he always took the weakest people into consideration.

They thought something had happened or else that a revelation had reached him. After the ritual prayer, they asked him. He said, 'Husayn had climbed on my back when I had gone down in prostration. As he had the habit of doing this in my home, I could not bring myself to rush him, so I waited until he himself

came down. This is why the prostration took so long.'

At the same time, the Prophet insists that all people, especially the Companions, know that and see with their own eyes, how he loves these two children, Hassan and Husayn and their mother and their father with more love than anyone's heart can hold.

If not, why does he treat Fatima with so much respect among all this gathering? Why does he kiss her hand and her face in the mosque so much and with such insistence? When he speaks from the pulpit, he constantly tries to show his spirit and feelings to this family, to everyone. After his prayers, he adds the words, 'God love them as well,' referring to Hassan, Husayn, Fatima and Ali. 'Their satisfaction is my satisfaction and my satisfaction is God's satisfaction. God, whoever bothers them, has bothered me and whoever bothers me, bothers Thee.'

These words? Why all these expressions of feelings and showing of love and showing of affection, especially to this family? The near future will answer all of these 'whys'. The fate of this family, the fate of each and every member of this family, gives the answers to these 'whys'. They all begin with the Prophet. The first sacrifice is Fatima, then Ali, then Hassan, then Husayn, and, finally, Zaynab.

In the 5th year of Ali and Fatima's marriage, one year after Husayn, a girl is born to this family. She had to be born and she had to closely follow Husayn: Zaynab. And in the following year, another girl, Umm Khulthum. Zaynab and Umm Khulthum. They have the same names as the daughters of the Prophet.

Yes. Fatima is becoming 'everyone' to the Prophet and his 'only one'. His Zaynab dies, Roqiyyeh and Umm Khulthum also die. In the 8th year of the migration, God 'gave him a son, Abraham, but he also died. Now there is Muhammad and his only, remaining child, Fatima; Fatima, and her children. This is the family of the Prophet. The love of the Prophet for Hassan and Husayn increases. These two children have become his whole life and he spends all of his free time with them.

The Compassion of Muhammad

The Prophet is a man who showed great strength of decision and speech, whose sword was feared by all the Caesars, Kings and powerful rulers of that time. His enemies trembled from his anger. At the same time, he is a most sensitive person with a heart which beats with the smallest wave of kindness and a spirit which is excited by the slightest touch of truth, sincerity and kindness.

At the terrible battle of Hunayn, where the enemies had united in order to put him under their swords and destroy him and drag him to defeat and death, 6000 people were taken prisoners and 40,000 camels and sheep and other plunder was seized. A man came out from among the defeated enemy and said, 'Oh, Muhammad, among these prisoners are your wet nurse and your aunts and uncles. He then added, 'If we were in the presence of your nurse, we would expect kindness from her and you are greater than any of us.'

They brought a woman forward, 'I am the sister of your Prophet.' The Prophet said, 'What sign do you have?'

She showed her shoulder and said, 'these are the marks of your teeth which you made when I carried you on my back and you became very angry and it me.'

The memories so flooded his mind as he remembered the kindnesses of his nurse and her daughters and the time of his childhood in the desert amidst this tribe, he was so affected and put into a state of wonder that tears gathered in his eyes and he said, 'I give away my share and the shares of all of the children of Abdul Muttalib. Be present in the mosque tomorrow. After the ritual prayer, announce your request to the gathering. I will give my family's answer to you and perhaps other tribes will follow me. The next day he did as he said he would and he freed all of them. A few, who objected to giving back everything, were satisfied when they were promised something later.

In the home and among the family, he is like this. To the outside world, he is a warrior, a politician, a commander, full of strength and power. And inside the home, a kind father, a humble husband, simple and intimate. Even though his wives were sometimes rude to him, he never once struck them. They caused him to suffer because they could not bear living with poverty in his home.

He would leave them and go out and sleep in a storage room. He would put up a ladder and sleep on the second floor of the room or he would sweep the floor and sleep on the earth. He lived like this for one month.

Finally, his wives, who both loved him and had faith in him, would surrender and would become still from the shame of their behavior. He announced they should either choose divorce and this world or he and poverty. All except one preferred the second proposal and remained with him.

Whenever he leaves his home and wherever he goes, whether walking in the streets or bazaar of Medina, he takes one of these two children upon his shoulder.

In the mosque, he goes to the pulpit to speak to the people who are standing listening to him. Below, his grandchildren are in the house next to the mosque. They leave the house wearing red shirts, begin walking and fall down. Suddenly the Prophet's eyes fall upon them. He cannot take his eyes off of them. He sees that they walk with difficulty. They fall and get up again. He can no longer bear it. He stops in the middle of his words, anxiously comes down from the pulpit, picks them up and as he had done when they were babies, holds them in his arms, and again returns to the pulpit. He sees the people are amazed. They are surprised by the extent of the spiritual excitement of this powerful man. They sense that he wishes to ask their pardon. Because of his children, he has interrupted his words.

While he kindly held the children, he returned to the pulpit and said, 'God spoke rightly when He said, 'your children and your wealth are your trials and tribulations.' My eyes fell upon these two children and I saw that each step they took, they fell down. I could not bear it so I broke off my words and went and got

them.'

They say his compassion towards Husayn was different. The power and depth of his sensitivities exceeded all limits. He took hold of his shoulders. He played with him and sang for him. He stretched himself out. He put his feet upon his chest and took his hand. Full of love and tenderness, he kissed him and from the bottom of his heart, he said, 'God love him. I love him.'

One day he had an invitation to go some place. He left the house with a few of his Companions. In the bazaar his eyes suddenly fell upon Husayn who was playing with his playmates. The Prophet stood before the children. He extended his hands to take his grandchild. The child ran from one corner to the other. The Prophet, trying to catch him and laughing, caught hold of him. He put one hand on the back of the child and with his other, he took hold of his chin, kissed him and said, 'Husayn is from me and I am from Husayn. God love whoever loves Husayn.' His Companions wondrously looked on. One turned to another and said, 'The Prophet treats his grandchild in such a manner. By God, I have a son and I have never kissed him.'

The Prophet, for all of his coldness and anger, turned to him and said: 'Whosoever shows no kindness, receives no kindness.'

Days and nights came and went and Fatima tasted the sweet moments of happiness and the bitter memories past. The poverty she had suffered faded.

The Battle of Khaybar came and the Jews gave the grazing area of Fadak to the Prophet. He gave it to Fatima. Fatima, who now had four children, finds life less difficult to cope with.

The Conquest of Mecca

Mecca is conquered. Fatima accompanies her victorious father and her husband who had held the flag in his hand. They enter Mecca. She witnesses the greatest victory of Islam. She revisits the city where she had been born. She remembers the good and bad times she had had in Mecca. The Mosque of the Kaaba and what had happened, the house of her father, her life with her sisters who were no longer alive, 'birthplace of Fatima,' the valley of Abu Talib, the grave of her mother, Khadijah

She returns full of the happiness of victory and satisfaction, drowned in honors and goodness. Her father is little by little being freed from the enmity of his enemies. His shadow falls upon the whole of the peninsula. Her husband is a blow to reckon with at the battles of Badr, Uhud, Khandaq, Khaybar and the conquest of Mecca. One blow of his at these battles or even at Hunayn and Yemen are worth more than the prayers of men and jinn and their intimacy until the Day of Judgment.

And her children; the only fruits of a life of sorrow and difficulties, a union with love and faith and the only continuation of the seed of her father and she herself, the heart of the family, center of the home and pure family of the Prophet. Yes. It is as if Fatima is compensating for all of the sorrow, bitterness and

virtues. That which fills her more than anything else, is that her children so fill the heart and soul of her father and she can then compensate for the sufferings of her beloved father, for whom no son remains and all of whose daughters, except her, die in their youth; who have no further children from his marriages, more than thirteen years after the death of Khadijah, other than Abraham from an Egyptian slave who dies while still a nursing infant.

Now, with her beloved children, Hassan and Husayn, Zaynab and Umm Khulthum, she is compensated. The sweet taste of seeing them, the rawness which all of his life had been nothing but bitterness, had a chance to become familiar with the happiness and pleasure which life can offer, particularly since his age had reached over sixty and his feelings and needs for these children were more than ever.

Life has been kind. A sweet smile appears upon Fatima's face. A halo of goodness, honor and generosity fall around her house. Fatima, enjoying the unexplainable kindness of her father, the greatness of her honorable husband and the pleasure which her children bring her, lives in a throne full of good fortune which is close to all of her desires and aspirations.

But all of this peacefulness is just the quiet before the storm. The storm comes. It is black, frightening and like a wind, takes all of her peace and destroys her home.

The Prophet is bed ridden.

The Death of the Prophet

He can no longer rise.

All images suddenly change in her eyes. The pure and good Medina now flows with hatred and fear. Politics pushed faith and piety from the city of Muhammad. The promises of brothers are broken apart and tribal oaths are again being renewed. The Prophet is no longer a leader. Ali is sent for. Aiesha and Hafseh call their fathers.

Yesterday the voice of Omar was heard saying the ritual prayer and today she hears the voice of Abu Bakr. The army stands without words. Against the words and even insults of her father, they will not move. From all corners come objections about the choice of Usamah as the leader of the army, although her father had himself chosen him and had given him the banner of leadership.

Today is Thursday and what a Thursday.. 'A rain of tears fall from the eyes of my father, He orders, 'Bring a tablet and a pen so that I can write something so that when I am gone, you will not be led astray.' They cause uproar. They do not allow it. They say he is just mumbling. They say the book of God exists; there is no need of writing anything.'

'And now, the father no longer speaks. Now the house of Aiesha, which is wall to wall with my house, is silent. His head is in Ali's lap. His eyes are beginning to close. He is speaking to me more with his eyes.'

'I can no longer bear all of these difficulties. He is my father: I am his mother. If he leaves me in this city with all the uproar of these people...!

'He does not take his eyes off of me. He is more worried about me. He read in my face that I am suffering. His heart bleeds for me. Fatima, his daughter, his youngest daughter, his most beloved daughter.

'He indicates things to me with his eyes. I lean my face over and place it on his. He whispers to me that his sickness is death. 'I will die'.

'I pick up my head. Misery and terror so overcome me that I lose all my strength. The misery of remaining alive after my father almost tears my heart apart.

'Why does he just give me this message? I who am the weakest among all the rest?

'But his look is fixed upon me. His heart burns for his youngest daughter who, like a baby, is addicted to him. He again indicates that I should draw near. It is as if he wants to, continue what he had been saying: 'But, you; my daughter will be the first person from among my family who will come after me and who will join me.' Then he adds, 'Are you not satisfied, Fatima, that you will be the leading woman of these people?'

'What a significant condolence. What good news could lessen the pain of this misery except this? The news of the death of my father! God bless you, father. How well you know how to give condolences to Fatima. I understand why among all these people, I alone must hear of the news of his death. Now I have found the strength of crying and mourning: 'The man is dying. Clouds gather humidity from his white face, the protector of orphans and the refuge of widows.'

Suddenly the Prophet opens his eyes and says, 'Fatima, this poem is in praise of Abu Talib. Don't recite a poem in my praise. Recite the Qur'an. Recite!'

'Muhammad is no more than a Prophet. Other prophets have been sent before him. If he dies or is killed, you will go backwards and you will return to the reactionary, despotism of ancient time.'

Then he says, 'God curse those who set up the graves of their Prophets as places of worship.' While whispering to himself, he says, 'is there a place in hell for oppressive dictators?' He continues, 'We have given that home in the next world to those who do not oppress and .create corruption. Whosoever does not want these, should not seek them, should not do them.'

'The politicians do not allow him to write anything, but ask him to just say what it is he wants to write. 'What do you want to write?' Annoyed, he looks at them and says, 'what I intend to do is better than what you call me for.' In answer to those who are asking him what he wants to write, he says, 'I counsel you to three things: first, push the polytheists out of the Arabian peninsula; second, accept the agents of the tribes in the way that I accepted them; third,...!'

'Suddenly they all look at Ali. He is silenced by his sorrow. The father is silent. The duration of his silence continues. Looking into a corner, tears well in his eyes and he continues thinking. They leave.

'I screamed in pain. My grief is from your grief, father. In a tone of peace, in answer to me, he says, 'There will never be any sorrow for your father again.'

'My father's lips were sealed, the lips which recited the revelation, lips which had kissed his daughter and her children. He regarded us for awhile and then his eyes closed. Blood flowed from his throat. His head was upon Ali's chest. Ali held a frightening and heavy silence. As you say, he died before my father. Aiesha lamented upon my father's head as did his other wives.

'Yes. Yes.

The moments passed in the silence of death. Suddenly his hands, which were in a position of prayer upon Usamah's head, fell to his sides and his lips moved, to my highest Friend.' All things ended.

'Father, oh father! You accepted God's invitation. You went to Gabriel.'

'Outside there was uproar. The city was crying with hesitation and fear. I heard the cries of Omar, who said, 'The Prophet has not died. He rose to heaven like Jesus Christ. He will return. Whosoever says the Prophet has died is a hypocrite. I will cut off his head.'

'Several hours passed. It became quiet. I saw that Abu Bakr and Omar entered the room. Abu Bakr pulled back the covering over my father's face. He cried and left. Omar also left.

'Ali began the work of ablution and putting on the white cloth of the dead. My husband, Ali, Abul Hassan (father of Hassan, one of Ali's titles), washed the pure body of my father while he continued crying. He poured water upon him and fire upon my soul. People had lost their Prophet. People remained without refuge, the Companions without a leader but Ali and I lost everybody and everything. Suddenly, I sensed that in this city, in the world, we were exposed.

'All at once everything turned around. Faces changed. Terror fell from the door and wall. Politics replaced truth. The hands which had shaken in binding brothers together to their oaths moved distances apart and relatives moved closer. The Elders and aristocracy took on a new life beside the cold body of my father, the Prophet of God and Messenger to the people.

'For Ali and me the event is so terrible that we could think of nothing but the death of the Prophet. The city was full of plans, plots and conflicts and for us, existence all at one time, emptied itself. While there was the shadow of fear upon the face of Abbas, our oldest uncle, he came and in a tone full of meaning and frightened, addressed Ali. 'Put your hands forward so that I can give my allegiance so that they can say the uncle of the Prophet of God gave his allegiance to the son of the uncle of the Prophet of God. The members of your family will also give their allegiance to you. When this is finished, no one will be able to oppose it.

'What? Is there someone who wants this position?'

'Tomorrow you shall know:'

'Ali sensed the danger. But this sense of danger passed through him like lightening and left. He was inwardly overflowing with sorrow. Muhammad was his relative, his father, his guardian, his teacher, his brother, his friend. The Prophet was his total capital, faith, feelings and the existence of Ali. He could not bring himself to think about the events taking place outside of this home. He sensed his spirit under his cold hands. He sensed a trembling. He did the ablution. He was busy with the Prophet and, 1, with his children, my children.'

Hassan was 7, Husayn 6, Zaynab 5 and Umm Khulthum was 3. Destiny had planned a life of enmity for the young children after his death. Outside the city at Saqifah, the Emigrants (ansar) of the Prophet gathered together to choose the representative for the Prophet from among themselves. They felt that the Quraish of Mecca had their own plans. Abu Bakr, Omar and Abu Obedeh have arrived and they convince them that the Prophet had said, 'Leaders are from among the Quraish.' They reasoned that the replacement for the Prophet must be from among his family. As a result, Abu Bakr was chosen at Saqifah.

And Fatima tasted life in the skirts of her mother and beside her father at a time when there were no longer any effects of the wealth of her mother, the peacefulness of the life of her father, and the happiness of her youth with her sisters. Her mother became old and broken. Her mother's age had passed beyond 65 years. Happiness, wealth and the good fortune of life were replaced by weakness, poverty, difficulties, an environment of hatred, the treachery of her family and strangers.

And her mother, Khadijah, before being the mother of Fatima and wife of Muhammad, was the first associate and the greatest companion of a man who had to bear the heavy load and the troubles of the mission, the one upon whom the mission of heaven had fallen, the mission of removing the blackness of ignorance, the mission of returning the fire of God to mankind, freeing people from the chains of bondage; changing the economic system of slavery from the prison of the thought of idol worship, is now the mother of Fatima, but completely occupied with Muhammad who inwardly has received a wonderful storm of thoughts and feelings about that which is above life and happiness. Around her, a fire full of hatred and the troubles of the worship of materiality and enmity spread. The mother of Fatima is busy with the difficulties and the Revolution of Muhammad. Muhammad lives amidst his troubles and his Revolution the message of God and his people.

There is no heart which would sense what Fatima was now feeling. The love of Fatima for the Prophet was much more than the love of a daughter for her father, the daughter who was also the mother of her father, a sympathizer with him in his exile and loneliness, acceptance of his troubles and his sorrow, companion in the religious struggle, a link in the chain of his confines, his last daughter and during the last years of his life, his only child. After his death, she was his only survivor, the light of his home, the

only pillar of his family and, finally, the only mother of his children, his inheritors, and the wife of his Ali.

Just when Fatima needed the love of her mother and the kindness of her father, she senses that her mother and father, who had both only lived with pain, loneliness and misery, needed her child like kindness and caresses. Her sympathies and her life with him were only 40 years of death. The house which had made them house mates was the result of their being homeless. The attraction which they had between their family had made them strangers with others and had made them exiled in life. It was their loneliness which brought them together.

There is a saying that 'a heart which finds a friend through trouble and sorrow develops a friendship which, in comparison to a love based on happiness and pleasure, is much deeper and more certain.' The feeling with which one views how one has lived one's life and how one's friend has answered one's needs is not the same as the feeling of familiarity one senses with the friend in one's own being. For when one sees that one has sacrificed one's life and that the needs of the friend have been met, the spirit in the heights of its subtleness and the depths of its feelings where friendship and faith form another spirit within the self; senses a relatedness with the spirit of friendship. Perhaps both feelings are the same, but they have opposite orientations. No. They are not the same because to give friendship and to give love is not one and the same thing.

And Fatima gave such friendship to the Prophet that there is no comparison to one who gives love to one's father. The intimacy and purity of feelings which she had towards him created a continuous link and a situation incapable of being described. With the spirit of her father within, she was able to bear the years of difficulties, hatred, fear and torture. She bore the fact that her hero father was sacrificed for he was among those who remained a stranger in his own country, an unknown in his own city, alone among his family, those who spoke his language. He remained without someone to talk to. He had to confront all sides. He had to stand face to face with ignorance and idol worship, in wild conflicts with untamed elders, petty aristocrats and hated slave dealers.

His shoulders were bent under the heavy weight of the divine mission of the One God, alone in this long walk from slavery to freedom, from the dark valleys of Mecca to the heights of the peaks of the mountain of Light, alone and without a companion while his soul was suffering from the hatred, plots and unawareness of the people and his body was wounded from the troubles and blows of the enemy. He tried harder than anyone else to bring happiness and salvation to the tribe he was appointed to and yet he and his family suffered because of the trouble his tribe caused him. They treated him as a stranger.

On the one hand, he was alone, a suffering spirit, bearer of the Revelation and on the other, he was a storm of love and fiery faith. Tribal enmity, the unconsciousness of the people, the loneliness of not having anyone and the heavy weight of the load of the 'trust' he had brought caused him anguish. God had offered the burden of bearing the weight of the heavens and the earth to the mountains but it was rejected. Only mankind was willing to accept the responsibility. In following this, the Prophet, everyday, from morning until night, would cry out a warning to whoever passed by the Safa Hill of the danger the

people who were asleep and passive faced. He did this under the rain of problems that sought him out each day.

He announces the message in the sacred precinct of the Masjid al Haram, beside the dar *al-madweh*, the meeting place of the wealthy Quraish aristocrats and before the eyes of 330 dumb, senseless, spiritless idols who are the gods of the people. He calls the people to awaken. He cries for freedom. At the end of the day, tired and exhausted, wounded internally, his heart overflowing with pain, he returns to a silent home empty handed, followed by mockery. Within his home there is a woman broken under the sufferings of life, her body any! Her whole existence was full of love; her two eyes waiting in anticipation, watching the door.

Fatima, a young girl, weak, moves step by step with her father through the streets full of hatred, within the Masjid al Haram under the taunts of curses, mockery, contempt and difficulties. Whenever he falls he becomes like a bird that has fallen out of the nest. When a bird falls from its nest, the possibility arises that it will fall into the claws and beaks of wild animals or birds. Fatima throws herself upon her father. With all of her strength, she protects him. With her small, fine hands, she takes her hero into her arms. With the edge of her small, fine fingers, alive with kindness, she cleans the blood from her father's head and hands. She heals his wounds with her soft words. She encourages the man who carries the Word of God. She returns him to their home.

She is a link of kindness, attraction and love between a suffering mother, and a suffering father. When her bloodied father returns from Taif, she alone comes forward to greet him and with her child like, endearing efforts, attracts him to herself, in spite of all of his worries and troubles. She attracts his heart towards her warm reception.

In the valley of the confine she lives three years beside her sad, bed ridden, elderly mother and a suffering father with all of his difficulties. She bears hunger, sorrow, loneliness. After the death of her mother and the uncle of the great Prophet, she fills the sudden emptiness of the life of her father with her feelings, kindness and endless understanding for he is now alone both within the home and outside of it.

She acts as a mother to her father who is now very much alone. She devotes love, faith and all the moments of her life to her father. Through her kindness, the feelings of her father are fulfilled. Through her devotion and faith in the mission of her father, she gives him energy and honor.

By going to Ali's house and by accepting his noble poverty, she gives him hope. Through Hassan, Husayn and Zaynab she offers her father the sweetest and dearest fruits of her life, full of sorrows in return for the fact that her father did not have a son and had seen the death of his three infant sons and three grown daughters. These are the roots. They are deeper than those of the feelings of a child which extend for her whole life of 18 or 28 years. Stronger than life, purer than will and faith, richer than liking someone and at the same time woven together from all of the golden webs of the beyond are all created in the soul, depth and conscience of Fatima. They join her with the spirit of her father.

And now all of these roots suddenly become disconnected through the thorn of the death of her father. Fatima must now 'remain' without him and 'live'. How terrifying and heavy is this blow to the thin heart and weak body of Fatima, this girl who is alive only through love of her father, through faith in the faith of her father and because of her father.

It is no accident that the Prophet, upon his deathbed, consoles her and gives her the strength, the strength of bearing her father's death. This strength is the only gift from the death of her dear one. This special news is that she will join him sooner than any of the others.

Because Fatima is afflicted with the heaviest blow which nature in its power can give, she suddenly falls into the most painful and most broken state. The death of her father is enough for her but another blow comes to her as well, a blow which even though it did not have the strength of the first, it was at least as deep and perhaps deeper. The hand of fate gives her no respite, the second blow follows close upon the first with only a few hours separation.

'Someone else is elected to take the place of the Prophet.' What difference does it make if this person was Abu Bakr or anyone else for that matter? It is not Ali.

Her Final Struggle

Why Not Ali?

Everything becomes clear. Why had the Prophet upon his return from his last pilgrimage and prayer at Ghadir Khom introduced Ali in front of all of the groups of Moslems who had accompanied him to the gathering and have them admit that the leadership of Ali was the same as his leadership?

Why was it that when the Prophet had not yet entered the city, a group of 12 people circled the mountainous road so that he and perhaps Ali would be killed? And this plot which came about after Ghadir relates to it because the elections were no accident.

And why is it that, although the Prophet is informed about the plot before hand and orders them to be taken away after the event, he does not reveal their names? It is not a small accident especially considering the particular interest of the Companions of the Prophet who have even the least important events of his life recorded with care.

Why did the Prophet in his last battle, the Battle of Tabuk, accept considering his age and the age of his great and elder Companions and those who were not military men, who were not men of the sword but more political elements that they go to this battle to fight the powerful foreign Romans in the north of the

country where the danger of death was very great? Why did he single out Ali, and, against the will of Ali, the reproach of the Jewish people and the hypocrites, keep Ali in Medina even though Ali is known as a man of the sword, the hero of many battles, the bearer of the flag and the conqueror of the famous and great battles of the Prophet? He says to him, 'I leave you for that which I left behind in Medina. Are you not satisfied that your relationship to mine is the same as the relationship of Moses' with that of his brother Aaron?'

Why did he, at the time of his death, send an army to attack the Romans and not because of an emergency and/ or for defense? Why does he send Abu Bakr, Omar and the other great men and politicians who had influence along with the army? Why, with such an army, does he choose the 18 year old Usamah to lead the army while these great men are among the common soldiers? Why, when there is objection to his leadership because of his youth, does the Prophet get angry and in strong terms criticize those who think age is more important than worthiness?

And why when he is feverish and at the door of death, does he insist and persist, pray and insult so that the army would move quickly, the elders would move and he kept Ali in Medina? Why, at the last moment of his life does he ask for a tablet and pen and say, 'I want to write down something so that you will never go astray.' Why do those who had just been elected not allow him to write anything down? They even argue in front of him and create uproar. They bother him. They even insult and protest to his wives who were crying behind the curtain saying, 'The Prophet wants to leave his last will and testament. Bring him a tablet and a pen.' They delay. They call themselves friends of Joseph until the Prophet, in anger says, 'All of those women are better than you.' and then he asks to be left alone.

Why at the end of his life, when the Prophet says, 'I have three pieces of advice for you,' he mentions only two of them and the third one, which is about Ali, remains unsaid? Why when Balal says, 'it is the time of ritual prayer,' and he is not able to rise from his bed, he says, 'Tell Ali to come.' Suddenly both of them appear in answer to the message of his daughter and the Prophet sees all three of them at one time and then, without saying anything, asks all three to leave.

Why? Why? Why?

Why was it that the Prophet, who at the most difficult time of battles, face to face with the power of the enemy, and he lacking power, filled with loneliness, always spook full of hope and strength, certain of the future? Why during the last days of his life when he is on the edge of his victory is he so afraid and worried?

Why the last night of his sickness before his death, in the middle of the night, alone with his man helper, does he go to the graveyard and spend a long time whispering to the silent corpses, with the greatest of pain, saying, 'May God bless you all. How lucky you are to be dead and therefore not facing this present situation.'

Why is it that as he gets closer to death he repeats more and more often that plots and conspiracies like

parts of the black night are now continuously appearing? Yes. Now all of these whys are answered. A part of that black night has passed by. Ali has finished burying the Prophet and the great Companions, at the same moment, bury his rights.

They come from Saqifah to the mosque so that the Caliph can announce his leadership in a message to the people. Ali returns from the empty home of the Prophet to Fatima's home to begin 25 years of silence, full of pain, loneliness and blackness.

And it is Fatima who must bear the weight and anger of this unmerciful blow along with her delicate soul. Her father, her refuge, her dearest beloved, has gone. Ali, her brother, husband, friend and only familiar family and sympathizer, sad and broken, remains at home and, like her, remains alone. It seems like in a space of a few short hours, they all became strangers. Medina no longer recognizes them.

And Islam?

And Islam? This faith endows devotion in the soul of Fatima so that from her childhood onwards, in spite of her young years and delicateness, she can perform the jihad for the establishment of Islam during the lifetime of her father at the time of the first mujahids [warriors, those who fight to defend the faith]. The endowment also includes that she suffer difficulties, poverty, the barriers of life and sorrow throughout her childhood and her youth so that her soul may move upon the way. With her delicate and fragile feet, she steps along the way with the first mujahids and real pilgrims.

She paves this difficult and bumpy way for those who follow her. With all her faith, power and feelings, she helps so that the message of her father can find permanence amid this group, so that correctness, the worship of Truth, freedom, justice, piety, equality, the roots of brotherhood among all creatures can become strong and so that this young community, which is without power and without awareness, where the germs of old diseases are hidden in the depths of corpses, can take root in the powerful way of knowledge, awareness, justice and human chastity. She leads upon the way that the unlettered Prophet took her. She did the things that he had ordered be done and had made part of the Traditions.

But now for Fatima we could say all things have become silent. All the walls, foundations, watch towers and ramparts which are built with all that effort, suddenly fall into ruins.

The fate of Islam is decided in Saqifah without the presence of Ali, Salman, Abu Dharr, Ammar, Meghdad and others. Now, these people have all gathered in Fatima's home, sad and angry. Why have they remained faithful to Ali. They are not from among the aristocrats of the Oussand Khazraj tribes. They have no family or hold no prestige in Medina. They are not from among the original Quraish family whose luxury of blood, family and class has given them station and position. They do not desire to have the slightest part of the Caliphate of the Prophet.

These are people who are either strangers like Salman who was Iranian, or Abu Dharr who came from

the desert, or Ammar whose mother was a black African slave and his father had come from Yemen or other unknown people without any prestige or any claim to being high class. They are simple, deprived people like Meitham who sold dates.

These people, in the eyes of the Prophet, were dear and beloved but now that he has gone, they have been obliged to return to a permanent state of humility. Values have changed again.

Ali is the Only Refuge

Their only refuge is Ali. Ali himself has the same position they do in Medina. He also suffers from the renewed regime of old values. His story goes like this: He is a young man, thirty some years old (in comparison to the elders of the community). He is a man empty handed, without class, without the shackles of politics or tribal bonds. He holds only the pious virtues of knowledge, bravery, and persistence upon the way, high thinking and awareness. He has the power of speech and the sword. His entire fortune is amassed from and consists of the dangers he met remaining loyal to the Prophet as well as his sword which was raised in jihad and the great amount of blood which was drawn from the hatred of yesterday's enemies who have 'surrendered' to the 'decree' of the Prophet.

Those values, consciousness of self and the unawareness of provoking the jealousy of friends, sacrifices and courage, created hatred in his enemies which could never be made up for. Both friends and enemies alike joined hands and stories in attacking and condemning Ali. They slandered him, humiliated him and finally they ostracized him and left him alone.

When a spirit rises above the level of his time and grows beyond the container of the patience of the people of its time, it is left alone. The profundity, beauty and richness of his 'being' of and by it, humbles the empty, trivial ugliness of others. Whenever one humbles oneself, friend and foe alike, consciously and unconsciously join together to negate or destroy the spirit of the great personality or else they try to destroy its distinct rights. They mutually benefit each other. Then, friends, companions and those who have the same thoughts, because of the greatness of 'being', show contempt. They create a vacuum in their personalities. They suffer. They try by negating or denying his virtues to contaminate the personality, to feign closeness in order to reduce the space which is causing them to suffer. Since they can never reach the spirit directly, they try to pull it back so that they can reach it in this way. It is in this effort that they join with the enemies and find mutual interests. When this happens, friends also find a need to destroy that spirit. They unknowingly become the toys of the enemy. They become the representative of murder. They become amateur servants of oppressors. This is why Ali must be humiliated.

This is why the Omayyid tribe, who are the enemies of the Emigrants, Helpers and Ali advertise that, 'All is the son of the earth.' All does not perform his ritual prayers.' The Omayyad's are writers of revelation, who have gathered the Qur'an and the uncles and relatives of the Prophet. The daughter of Abu Sufiyan is the wife of the Prophet, so his house is a sacred place. It is an area where fighting is forbidden. It is in

the immense palace of Abu Sufiyan which, in the eyes of the Prophet like the house of God in Mecca is a place of refuge for all. Whosoever seeks refuge there is safe.

How is it that Ali is killed in the mihrab [the place which gives the direction of prayer] of a mosque? What sort of news is this? What was Ali the 'father of dust', 'the man who' supposedly, 'does not perform his prayers,' doing at the mihrab? Ali performing his prayers? How could that be?

Others Are Busy Destroying Him

Everyone knows that this hatred of Ali resulted from his heroic deeds at Badr , Khandaq and other such battles. But a friend? The sore becomes infected with those who participated in the battles of Badr and Khandaq against the Omayyad's, now join them and sing the same tune. Why?

The well known of the great Companions were obliged to lower their heads at the Battle of Khandaq where Ali, a young man, twenty seven years old, struck such fear into the enemy through his sword and the cries of *allaho Akbar* which issued forth from him that the Prophet praised him, 'The blows of Ali in the battle of Khandaq are worth more than the worship of all the men and jinn.' The blows of his sword made them happy and they grew eager for confrontation, but, hidden, nevertheless, was a jealousy which planted itself in their unconscious conscience. It grows later on without they themselves being aware of it. The seed grows into branches bearing leaves which eventually cover their whole spirit and thoughts. Its roots form in the depths of their bones.

At Khaybar where Abu Bakr carried the flag of the Prophet and went forward to conquer the citadel, and after great effort, he returns broken, then Omar goes and returns defeated, the Prophet says, 'Tomorrow, I will give the flag into the hands of someone who loves both God and His Prophet and both God and His Prophet love him.'

The next day he gives the flag to Ali. Ali amazingly conquers one citadel after another. He opens a citadel up and people enter in to plunder and he moves on to attack another citadel.

At Badr, at Ohud the great ones, the Companions who consider themselves from the point of view of age and position in society, to be at the highest level, either run away or else go and sit in a corner, afraid and hopeless. It is Ali who, like lightening and wind, passes through the scenes and creates a new front amidst the fear and defeat. When he carries the flag towards victory at Hunayn, while the great influential and respected Companions run away from the narrow strait and Abu Sufiyan cries out, 'The way they are running away, they will not stop until they reach the Red Sea!', Ali, like a rock, closes the mouth of the strait.

This sword creates hatred in the enemies as well as in the friends. Even though they are fighting for the same thing, jealousy and contempt arises. This is how friends and enemies join into one front whenever the character, virtues or strength of Ali is spoken about. This is when a friend needs an enemy and an

enemy needs a friend and they both work together. This is why the reaction to the greatness of Ali is compensated for by showing contempt for Ali.

How? By not taking his Islamic virtues into account and by not emphasizing them. Even though it is unmanly, they describe him in terms which are contrary to what he really is. They express words or spread stories in a way which is slander. If they do not reach this low level, they just keep quiet as to his values. If they mention his weak points whenever they get the chance, they exaggerate them and make mountains out of molehills. They oppress his rights and destroy the Truth. They admit the rights of Ali to the extent of Abu Bakr or Omar, but they do so in order to destroy his rights. They act from a motive.

The Result: His Chances Are Destroyed

'Ali? Yes. But he is still young. Let some years pass for him.'

'Ali? Yes. But he is a man of the sword, devoted, knowledgeable, but he knows nothing however about politics. He is brave but he does not know the science of war.'

'Ali? Yes. But he jokes too much.'

'Ali? Yes. But at the present time it is not advisable for Islam that he be elected. He has many enemies. At the time of the Prophet, during the wars, he killed many of the great and influential Arabs. The hatred is still warm. It is not advisable.'

'Ali? Yes. But he is too sure of himself.' (Their inferiority complex becomes obvious).

'Ali? Yes. If the Caliphate were to be given to him, he would run this camel firmly in the right direction. But is he really serious about that?'

The result? The result is that Ali is destroyed both at the hands of the Bani Omayyad's as well as at those of Omar, who is the enemy of the Bani Omayyad and of the same rank as Ali. Othman is victorious with the help of Omar and also the Bani Omayyad who are the enemies of Omar and the family of Othman.

Fatima knows all these things very well. She understands them. She is not someone who sits at home aware of nothing which is going on. Fatima has learned how to walk through struggles. She knows how to cut through propaganda. Her youth had been spent in the heart of the movement's storm and her maturing years in the political fire of her times. She is a Moslem woman: a woman whose ethical purity does not prohibit her from social responsibility. Now, a few hours have passed since the Prophet has been buried. Ali is in his home surrounded by some of the Bani Hashimi and the beloved Companions of the Prophet who had remained loyal to him. They have joined together in their opposition to what had happened at Saqifah and in their disobedience to the allegiance which had drawn people to it. The decree of the Caliph has been read at the mosque. People have also pledged allegiance to him. Omar, a

political agent, tries relentlessly to gather the remaining votes so as to pave the way.

Saied ibn Obadeh, the leader of the Khazraj, a man of influence who was the candidate of the Helpers at Saqifah, did not accept the Caliphate of Abu Bakr. Out of protest, he left Medina. He headed towards Damascus. News reached them that half way there he had been attacked and killed by a jinn! Who has assassinated him? They even knew the jinn who killed him because a poem circulated in praise of that jinn. But soon murmurs were heard that he had been murdered by command of Omar Khalid ibn Valid.

The fate of the tribes is still unknown. There is a possibility that they will not accept Abu Bakr as Caliph. But the most dangerous focal point is at Fatima's house. Yes. From this day on, the house of Fatima becomes a center, dangerous to governments.

Three Centers of Patience

Now in Medina, history shows us three important centers of great patience: the mosque, the home of Fatima, and next to it, the Prophet's home, which has now been silenced. It is strange that these three are all located in one place, wall to wall. Yes. Only the distance of a wall separates them.

Omar is very angry about this single point of strength in opposition to the new leaders. He who has struggled a great deal to establish Abu Bakr's leadership and who has removed hundreds of obstacles, cannot now bear the fact that there is a group in this house which has been established to resist, who gather together to put aside that allegiance. And still more important is the fact that this house is next to the mosque.

The mosque is the Parliament of the Caliphate, the house of government. Fatima's house is in the corner and the faces of those who were until yesterday the dearest and most beloved of the Prophet can be seen there.

Fatima, like a wounded bird, is pressed between two heavy tragedies: the death of the Prophet and the defeat of Ali. Her head is bowed with the weight of the black sorrow. She thinks about the past. She thinks of her father who had always been so worried about the future as to what would the fate be of the religion of justice and its leadership. Bitter sweet memories fill her mind and her spirit. Like a bird that flaps its wings within its cage, wing to wing of her father, flying through the past horizons, she is able to find peace for a few moments from the anger of the tragedy which has most recently fallen upon her and destroyed her home. Suddenly, a loud uproar comes from the mosque. Fatima, in the midst of the uproar, cries and confusion, hears the voice of Omar ibn Khatab saying, 'I will burn this house to the ground with all its inhabitants.'

She hears these words of attack loud and clear. They have come closer now. The door of Fatima's house opens to the mosque. She hears the words of someone in amazement, asking, 'Even if Fatima is in there?'

And Omar answers, 'Even if she is in there.'

It is true that Omar's servant brought fire to the mosque. The fire is now at her door. In the midst of the confusion, Omar shouts out, 'Ali come out!'

Inside the house there is great commotion. The flames of fire are close. They are visible from between the cracks in the door. The cries of Omar grow louder and more violent by the moment. Suddenly the cry of Fatima is heard. She is standing behind the door. Her cry holds within it all of the sorrow of the world.

'Father, Prophet of God! After you; what have I not seen from Omar and Abu Bakr!.'

The followers of Omar take several steps backwards. These are the cries and anger of the beloved daughter of the Prophet! A group can not contain themselves. They begin to cry and wail out loud. Another group remains looking fixedly upon the home of Fatima and the Prophet.

They say they were all fixed with shame. Omar, who had remained alone, stands confused for a moment. He does not know what to do. Then he returns to Abu Bakr. Everyone gathers around Abu Bakr. They relate the story of Fatima to him. Some of them tell it as if they are speaking of a tragedy.

Abu Bakr returns to Fatima's house followed by Omar and others, but this time they go softly and quietly. One says, 'Abu Bakr cuts with cotton [i.e. his policy is softness] whereas Omar cuts with the sword [his policy is rough].'

Fatima is used to difficulties. She has grown up in the cradle of resistance and struggle. She now finds herself facing the most difficult of her tragedies when she senses herself to have the least strength. She stands alone behind the door of this home like its guard, gathering together all of her strength before she falls to her knees under the pressure and weight weighing down upon her. She is trying to protect Ali who is now all alone.

They ask permission to enter. She does not give permission. Ali, whose patience is hard to conceive of, comes out. He asks Fatima to give them permission to enter. She does not resist Ali. But she remains silent, a silence which is overflowing with anger. Ali asks them to enter. They do so. They greet Fatima. Fatima, in anger, turns away from them and does not answer. She creates a distance between herself and them. Because of her anger, she places herself beyond a wall. Abu Bakr sense that Fatima's anger and disgust is beyond limit. He does not know what to say or how to begin.

Shame and silence create a shadow upon the heads of the two leaders. It is difficult for them at this moment to be present between Fatima and Ali. Ali is sitting beside them. They say there is only one host, silence. And Fatima, next to the wall, is pouting, full of anger. She has hidden herself from them so she will not see them. It is a wall, the distance between which is never removed from that time forward.

Abu Bakr tries to have a positive encounter. He tries to find the strength so .that he can speak at this difficult moment. Moments pass and the silence which is full of words remains fixed in this house. Abu

Bakr, with a face full of deep and apparent sorrow and in a tone trembling with sympathy, begins in a friendly voice.

'Beloved daughter of the Prophet, I swear that the family of the Prophet is dearer to me than my own family. You are dearer to me than my own daughter, Aiesha. The day your father died, I had wished that I had died so that I would not remain after him. You see that I know you and I admit your virtue and nobility and if I were to take the rights and heritage of the Prophet of God from you, it is only because I had heard him, peace be upon him, say, 'We Prophets do not leave a legacy. That which remains from us is charity.'

Abu Bakr grows quiet. Omar is also silent. They wait to see the effects of these soft and praiseworthy words upon Fatima's spirit. Fatima, without hesitating for a moment, in answer, begins with a quiet introduction full of reason, without any anger or cries. 'If I were to quote the words of the Prophet of God to both of you, would you admit them to be his word\$ and follow them?'

They both answer in one voice...'Yes...'

She says, 'I hold you both to your oath to God. Did either of you not hear the Prophet say, 'Fatima's contentment is my contentment and Fatima's anger is my anger. That which my daughter, Fatima, likes, I like. That which contents Fatima contents me. That which brings about Fatima's anger brings about my anger.'

They both answer, 'Yes. We heard these words from the Prophet of God.'

She immediately continues, 'Then I have authority from God and the angels to tell you that you both brought me to anger and you have not given me contentment. When I see the Prophet of God, I will tell him about you. I will complain to him about you.'

Abu Bakr begins to cry. He senses that neither does he have the strength to speak nor does Fatima have the strength to listen. He arises and Omar behind him. He enters the mosque. Full of confusion and tears, he cries out with anger and pain to those gathered there that

Fadak is Confiscated

The power structure and the policy making agents convince Abu Bakr that it is in the best interests of the community for him to move aside. With deep sorrow and after much disagreement, he is convinced. He accepts their advice and is tamed. He imagines that by accepting the Caliphate, he will be able to continue the victory of Islam and implement the Traditions of the Prophet. The first decision he makes is to confiscate Fadak, the grazing area which belonged to Fatima.

Ali is personally and economically paralyzed by this act. His income now depends completely upon what he received from the public purse. They leave Ali alone. Those who had gathered around him are

dispersed either through force or by their own decision. In this way, there is no danger of revolt from his non allegiance and disobedience. They know that as long as Fatima is alive, they cannot get Ali's allegiance. Ali cannot give his allegiance because Fatima opposes a power or force which does not know the meaning of right. She has not the least bit of softness for them. She holds her strict position until her death. The feeling of anger does not leave her. She attacks what she has in relation to them. She does not let go for a moment.

The Prophet dies. Ali remains at home. Fatima's legacy, which is the only means of income for herself, her husband and her children, is confiscated. Power falls into the hands of Abu Bakr and Omar. The fate and future of Islam is given into the political hands of men such as Abdul Rahman ibn Ouf, a worshipper of money, the aristocrat, Othman, the careless, Khalid ibn Valid and Saied ibn Vaqas, a man without piety. They become the principal agents of the Caliphate of the Prophet.

Ali remains at home. He spends his time gathering together the Qur'an because he fears for the future. Balal has to leave Medina. He goes to Damascus and remains silent forever. Salman retreats to a corner. He tells those who are hurriedly and victoriously returning from Saqifah, 'You did what you shouldn't have done and you didn't do what you should have done.' Then, full of sorrow, having lost hope, he returns to Iran. He dies at Madayen. Abu Dharr, the close Companion of the Prophet and Ammar remain idle.

Fatima Does Not Give Up

But Fatima does not sit down. Under a mountain, full of sorrow, bearing her bereaving spirit, she continues her resistance and her struggle against the oppressive Caliphate. She believes the Caliphate to be unworthy. In order to get back Fadak, she does not stand still. Her efforts are always to attack and criticize. She tries to prove to everyone that the Caliph was taking out political revenge upon her and striking an economic blow to Ali with this act of taking Fadak. Fadak is a small grazing area and even if it had been larger, it would have still been too small for Fatima to get involved with. But Fadak has taken on the importance of showing the usurpation and force of the new regime. By keeping the problem of Fadak alive, she tries to condemn the regime. She proves what rights they deny in order to serve their own purposes. They do not refrain from deviating from a saying of the Prophet or its meaning. She wants the thoughts of people to know to what extent these people who call themselves 'followers of the custom of the Prophet' and who actually establish their own Caliphate on this basis, oppress the family of the Prophet. They cut off the right which each and every Moslem child has to receive and every father has the right to give.

They say the Prophet has children, but leaves no legacy. Fadak becomes a political issue for Fatima and a means of rebellion. Fatima's insistence is because of this, not because of its economic value as her conscious enemies and unconscious friends announce.

Fatima does not give up. Even though the death of the Prophet has burned her spirit and strongly hurt

her. Each blow follows upon the other. The majority of the great Companions and Emigrants of the Prophet who have reached a number which can be counted on one hand, all have given their vote to the Caliph or they have accepted the election and coup d'état of Saqifah.

Fatima has no real hope to be able to get back any power. She knows that Ali has lost his rights. The chosen powers, which have pre-designed and pre-planned the whole thing, have become fixed. She must fight and struggle with the little hope that she has. She must rebel against the ruler. Even if she cannot defeat him, she will at least have condemned him. If it does not fall, it can, at least, be disgraced. If the truth cannot be implemented, it can be proven and designed so that time will come to know it. It can be kept alive, so that people come to know that the ruling forces do not represent the truth. They are oppressive. It is truth, justice and freedom which have been defeated and imprisoned.

This is why Medina now witnesses one of the most wonderful views of history. Next to the mosque of the Prophet, in the heart of the dark night, a woman in mourning, sitting upon a horse, being led by a man, passes through the dark empty streets of the town.

Ali walks. Fatima, the beloved and rebellious daughter of the Prophet rides. Every night they leave their home with the same purpose. Ali goes with her to seek out the Helpers. They are more sincere and impartial than the Emigrants who are mainly from the Quraish tribe. They support each other. An aged political structure brings them together. Now the Caliph, from among them, is their influential master. All of them share in his leadership. But the Helpers play no role in the present leadership. Their candidate has been Saied ibn Obadeh who left Medina and was assassinated on his way to Damascus.

They give in although they disagree with Abu Bakr's reasoning. Abu Bakr had been an emigrant, a relative of God's Prophet and the elder of the Quraish. They surrendered when he said that the Prophet wished for the Caliph to be from his Quraish family, from among the relatives and family of the Prophet. Out of respect for the saying of the Prophet and his family, they submitted and overlooked their differences. They gave leadership to Abu Bakr who was from the Prophet's tribe and the father in law of the Prophet. He had shown himself to be among the loyal followers and family of the Prophet. He received the majority vote. These are the present people of Medina.

Now Fatima goes to them personally. Every night she accompanies Ali to their sessions. She speaks with them. She speaks of each and every one of the desires of the Prophet. She accounts one by one for Ali's worthiness, virtues and superiorities. Through her influential spirit, with her great human personality, her political awareness, with the accurate knowledge she had of Islam, its spirit and goals and finally with the power of logic and reasoning, she proves the rightfulness of Ali and the wrongfulness of the election. She shows the deception. She counts the results and makes them apparent. She shows how they will suffer from this superficial and hurriedly determined decision of political negligence. She frightens them with the dark and unstable future which awaits Islam with their leadership of the community.

Not even one historian has mentioned this story. No one has retold the fact that no one opposes the logic of Fatima to argue with her interpretation and reception of the event. They stand by her. All give her the right. All admit their great error. All accept the virtues of Ali and the superiority of his leadership. Fatima is asking them to support Ali and help him get his rights.

But their answers? 'You should see the Prophet's daughter now that we have given our allegiance to Abu Bakr.' 'The affair is finished. If your husband, your cousin, Ali, had taken the lead and mentioned all of this sooner, we would certainly have elected him. We prefer him to anyone else.'

Ali, surprised and in a tone of protest, asks them, 'Do you really believe that I should have left the dead body of the Prophet in his home, neglected his funeral ceremonies, come out of the house, and fought for a legacy?'

Fatima, seeing that once again Ali is sacrificed because of his loyalty to the Prophet, says, 'Ali has done nothing other than what he should have done. He did the noble thing, but what did they do? God will punish them and will take care of them.'

The Promised Gift is Sent

Now everything has ended. Fatima is content to await death. She feels more alone than she ever thought she could. She sees all the familiar faces who for so many years surrounded her father, who went everywhere with him and who have now turned into strangers.

The Companions are now breathing another air. Medina is no longer the city of the Prophet. Policy and sovereignty are now governing the 'City of Faith'. The great and powerful spirit which had spirited the Bedouins, that is, feelings, generosity, worship of the truth, standing for the truth, sensitivity towards human values and the beauties of a life of spiritual struggle, faith and piety are gone.

Instead there is a burning and destroying of and a rebuilding based upon ancient customs, tribal traditions, blood relationships, selfishness, pride, self worship, tribal killing, inferior political games and conservatism. All of this opposes the lashes of his words which are lashes of certainty containing the fire of the revolution, commitment and engagement in social action, responsibility, progress, manifestations of the spirit, meaning and the constant chance of life and resistance to oppression.

Ali Remains Silent

Now he is silent. He is settled inside Fatima's house, His dearest friends are left out as well, they who had lived a classless existence and who had found a high place in the eyes and the heart of the Prophet. They who had earned their nobility and respect through their faith, sincerity, awareness and resistance had fallen from the eyes of the new political leaders. Those who are clever and eye catching, move forward.

Ears are so busy with talk of power, leadership and self protection that one can no longer hear the softness of emotions, friendship and sincerity. The personality of Abu Bakr, harshness of Omar and the sword of Khaled and the genius of Amr al Aas suddenly build a high wall around Medina, and the people, frightened and/or attracted, and the Companions aware and/or unaware, are taken into the middle of the wall. But Fatima's house is left out of it. Fatima's voice reaches no one!

The enemies of Fatima are much stronger than those whom they resisted and fought against in Mecca. Her father fought alone in Mecca with only his young daughter as his companion and support. In the Masjid al Haram, the place of the power of the enemy before Islam, the Prophet and his daughter faced the Quraish senate together. The Prophet has been calling the 300 idols, the worshipped and intercessors of the Quraish, and all Arabs, dumb, idiots. Without hesitation and weakness, he cries out that he will break all of them with God's help. He compares their ancestors to fools and that which they hold sacred as being superstition.

But we see that the Prophet, at the height of his power, when he was more loved, more powerful and more influential than ever before, during the last days of his life, cannot move Usamah's army. Even though he gives strict commands, prays and curses, tired and sick with fever, on the verge of death, he cannot move the army standing in Jazaf, near Medina.

What can I say? Even in his own house, among his nearest companions, he could not write a letter, he could not announce his testimony. If he were to simply say it, it would not be safe from alteration and deviation.

Her husband, Ali, the hero of the day, the man who in the battle of Khandaq where all of the enemy tribes had joined together to attack Medina, where both profane and religious groups had gathered to attack, that is, Arabs and Jews, joined in a single unit to destroy the young Islamic movement entirely, to crush Muhammad's support and the revolution upon the heads of its warriors, and, as they said, 'to take Medina's soil with the feed bags of their horses', while Ali, a young man, twenty or so years old, with one blow, changed the whole fate of the battle.

The man, who at the Battle of Ohud when the Quraish occupy the valley and the Moslems are dispersed and fleeing, when the great Companions are hidden, having lost hope and the Prophet is wounded and defenseless in his position, circles around the Prophet like a whirlwind, returns to the battlefield and scatters the front of the enemy which is pressing forward, progressing towards the Prophet over the bodies of the martyrs. He returns to Muhammad to circle around him once again. As he goes back to the battlefield, closing the way of escape, shouting to the scattered forces to form a new front, he regroups the defeated, hopeless, deserters and forms a resistance group which forces the Quraish, full of joy at hearing the news of the death of the Prophet, seeing the mass of martyrs, the defeat of the warriors and drinking the blood of Hamzeh, the Prophet's uncle, to retreat from the battlefield.

The men who guaranteed the victory of Khaybar, the man who upon the battlefield uses his sword like a

sickle which moves through the wheat fields at harvest time, harvesting heads and blood and amasses the army of the enemy and lays them in front of his horse, now sits in the corner of a house.

Where is His Sword?

What has happened to the famous sword of her husband, Ali? Whenever he returned from battle, it was full of blood and was given to her along with the sword of the Prophet. Ali would say to her in a voice full of honor, glory and pride, 'Fatima, wash these!' Now, he is becoming lifeless and after ten years of constant struggle, he is laying down in bed.

She also sees that they are attacking Ali's house, but he does not leave his silent corner. Thus, in the battlefield where the Prophet could not succeed, Ali, the warrior, the champion who gave glory to the field of battle, has been defeated and Fatima is alone. What can she do?

Always fighting in the battle front, he is more severe and causes more misery than the front in which the external enemy is standing opposite him. Now a battle has begun where Abu Lahab, Abu Jahl, Abu Sufiyan, Hind and Otbeh Omiyeh ibn Khalaf and Akarmeh are not opposite him. These visages are well known as lacking any respect or human desires. It is obvious that they fight only to protect their power, interests, force, strength, business caravans, slave markets and not because of poverty, spiritual meaning, faith and human wishes. It is a battle between despotism and revolution, slavery and freedom, captivity and salvation, humiliation and lordship, purity and filth. Finally, it is a war against the guardians of ignorance and darkness in human disguise by the messengers of awareness and enlightenment.

What is it? On one side are Ali and Fatima as it was in Mecca, Badr, Ohud Khaybar, Fath and Hunayn. But, on the other side is Abu Bakr, the first person who, outside the Prophet's home, joins him, his friend, his companion on the migration, and father of his wife. A person who gives him friendship when the Prophet has no one and is alone who spends all of his wealth in the way of the Prophet, and, as a result, in Medina, he is so poor that it is said that he had to work for Jews and strange and despised people. He was a person whom people had seen for 23 years, that is, from the first year of the mission of the Prophet until his death of the Prophet, beside the Prophet.

Omar, the 40th person who in the hidden Shelter of the Prophet, accepted Islam. With his joining and that of Hamzeh, the first few weak friends gained power and appeared among the people to announce Islam. From that time on, he gave all of his power towards the progress of the movement. He is from among the closest friends and most distinguished of the Emigrants of the Prophet. He was the father of Hafaseh, one of the other wives of the Prophet and people accept him as one of the leaders and great Companions of the Prophet of God.

Othman, an Emigrant who had made two emigrations in the way of Islam was the son in law of the Prophet who had married two daughters of the Prophet. He had an eye catching, sacred personality and he belonged to two of the great families of the Quraish. He had a great wealth which he distributed

among the poor friends of the Prophet and had actively participated in social services and helped the people a great deal. The masses of the people call upon him as one of the Companions, great Emigrants, friend and family of the Prophet.

And Khalid ibn Walid, who is a hero in the religious struggles against the enemies of Islam. At the Battle of Muteh, where he is a simple soldier, he breaks nine swords over the heads of Romans. He is known as 'the sword of God'. Amr al Aas is one of the four famous Arab geniuses who had become a Moslem many years before. He showed the power of Islam to the Emperor of Rome at the Northern borders. Saied ibn Vaqas , the first person who in Islam fires an arrow at an enemy, takes Moslems from the position of defense and shows them how to attack. He shows the enemies what attack is all about and at the Battle of Ohud he carefully released several arrows and saved the life of the Prophet who was in great danger. He had defended himself so bravely that the Prophet praised him.

There were many, many more including great Emigrants, Helpers, all the army, leaders and builders of the foundation of Islam and closest friends and pioneers of the Prophet among them.

Their Slogan is Islam

And their slogan? Not idol worship, disbelief, polytheism, myths, protection of the business of the Quraish nor the nobility of the tribe, but establishment of unity and the spread of Islam, the gathering and propagation of the Qur'an, piety, the negating of the gathering of wealth and gold, helping people, seeking of the satisfaction of God, the implementation of religious law and finally, the putting of the Prophet's Traditions into effect and most important of all, promoting Unity and the uniting of Moslems.

In the middle of this, a right is easily and quietly discarded: The rights of Ali. How? Very easily and with a very understandable logic because of sympathy towards the community and because of the fate of Islam and the danger of internal rebellion, pressure of the foreign enemies and the fear of separation among the Moslems and, in short, it is because it is advisable for the moment.

A young man, thirty some years old, often harsh, whose background does not stand well with the majority they are jealous of him. His behavior is of a type that causes the influential, effective personalities and groups to not be optimistic towards him.

'It is still too soon for Ali. It is not advisable for Islam at the moment.' Yes. Advisability! The inauspicious blow which is always used against the Truth. Advisability, a sword used by clever people to sacrifice the Truth. It is done in accordance with the Divine Law: face the *qiblah* and say, 'In the Name of God', a clean and pure sacrifice, a permissible meat.

How simple! Without any noise. Without anyone understanding. Without any who are asleep, awakening: Without the people rebelling. Without anyone to bring awareness to the people. Without anyone being able to distinguish the rights which are asleep under the blows of advisability, they silently die and are

forgotten. Finally, without any effort, or protest, to be able to save the Truth and stand against the power which is armed with `advisability', the struggles, cries, protests, moaning anti: even objections of Fatima go unheeded. When, a society is covered under advisability, nothing can be done.

The greatest tragedy in human history takes place. It. is a silent and defenseless tragedy which sacrifices Ali and Fatima and later on we see their successors and one by one all of their posterity. Fatima sensed it had begun and she could do nothing about it.

Suddenly she felt the exhaustion of a whole lifetime of resistance, bearing of miseries patiently, tortures, poverty, difficulties and the bitterness of her life. She becomes convinced that all has been lost. She senses that she can do nothing to keep what the Prophet could not keep and what Ali could not protect.

All of the nights become blurred in her eyes, nights which come successively. Her father, during the last days of his life, gave news of it to her. The time has come. What will happen tomorrow? What will become of the great efforts of her father in the cold winds of policy and advisability which have now begun? What is the future of this young community? Into whose hands will the future of these people fall whose fate is to be sacrificed because of policy? The smell of aristocracy, nobility and tribal ties once again has arisen. Allegiance replaces the commandment. How can the votes of the tribes who elect their leader or the Quraish who elect their elders be more acceptable than the vote of the Prophet?

What kind of people are these who at Saqifah first give their allegiance to Saied and then with one word from Abu Bakr, give their allegiance to him? Do they have sufficient growth and awareness so that the Prophet does not need to interfere in their politics? These people are the people of the Prophet's city who have lived near him and next to him.

Fear for the Future of Islam

They have performed the jihad together. They have learned of Islam from the Prophet but they have chosen Abu Bakr. Tomorrow when Islam spreads beyond Medina and this generation passes, what fate will this allegiance bring to the leader of the people? Who will vote and who will be chosen?

'Now that the most sacrificed visages of the Emigrants and Helpers of the Prophet of the first generation of Islam and the pioneers of faith have put Ali aside because of policy and he is forced to sit in his home, what will tomorrow's generation do to my children? What will tomorrow's policies be when people have not grown up in the atmosphere of faith, piety and jihad?' Even now the future of Hassan, Husayn and Zaynab can be seen and one can be certain what their future will be.

The beginning of Ali staying at home is the beginning of a frightening and bloody history. The allegiance of Saqifah, which began quietly and cleverly, will be followed by bloody allegiances and the problem of Fadak will be the beginning of extortions and the oppressions of tomorrow. Tomorrow is black, frightening and bloody. Successive tomorrows will bring plunder, murders and torture.

The Caliphate of tomorrow will be a great tragedy to Islam and a serious tragedy to humanity. But now what can be done? Fatima does everything her strength will allow to try and see that the first stone which is laid is not laid crooked. She can do nothing. She senses that the ears of the Medina of the Prophet are deaf to her cries. Her heart is made heavy by the silence of Ali, a silence which would cause any heart which has any feeling, who understands Ali and knows the times, to heat up and burn.

How difficult and merciless is selfishness to be able to express itself with faith, particularly when it is armed with policy. It causes the faithful and devoted Companions to sacrifice the rights of the people and to kill Ali's rights.

Fatima is exhausted after a lifetime of bearing patiently the weight of the mission of her father and the difficulty of resistance when faced with the ignorance of her tribe, with a life from beginning to end full of torture, danger, poverty and efforts because the wishes are far from the despots of the time. In the misery of mourning for the death of her father whose life had been mixed with hers and saddened by the unbearable fate of Ali, who after a lifetime of jihad with the enemy, is forced to sit at home by the hand of a friend, not that of an enemy. He is the sacrifice of a force which has come into existence with the power of his faith, sword, sacrifice and sincerity. She is defeated and without hope. She falls to her knees as her last efforts put forth to get back Ali's rights proves fruitless.

It is not only further effort which is difficult, but she finds the bearing of it patiently to be impossible, not for that which was going on outside but rather, patiently bearing what she sees within her home and finally, the bearing patiently of the frightening silence which is taking over the house neighboring her is the house of the Prophet.

Now the window is also closed, the window from which every day would open onto hers, where they would smile at each other, where kindness and faith would fall upon the simple house of Fatima. Now one of those windows is closed. Death closed it forever upon Fatima. Politics closed the one in her own home. And she is now imprisoned in this house, next to Ali, who sits like a mountain of sorrow and is silent. It is a silence which holds the fire of a volcano within itself. He reads in the innocent and sorrowful faces of the children of the Prophet, the frightening fate of the tomorrow of each one of them.

To remain alive is too painful and unbearable for her.

'To remain' is a heavy load. It is a load which is too heavy for the tired shoulders of Fatima to bear. Heavy time slowly moves upon her wounded heart and passes by her. Every moment, every minute, and every step is heavy and slow.

She Seeks Out the Soil of Her Father's Grave

Now the only meaning she finds in life is the kind soil of her father's grave and the hopeful news he, gave her when he said, 'Fatima, you will be the first person to join me from among my family.'

But when? What an exciting anticipation!

Her suffering spirit, like a wounded bird whose wings have been broken, is imprisoned and impatient from three sides: the silent and sorrowful visage of her husband, the saddened faces of her children and the silent, cold earth upon her father in the corner of Aiesha's house.

Whenever the pain in her heart increases and she loses her breath from crying, she senses that she is in need of the kindness and condolences of her father. She seeks him out. She falls upon the silent earth of her father. She stares at his grave and suddenly it is as if she just heard of the death of her father for the first time. She cries out.

She pushes her fingers into the earth: She fills her empty hands with it. She tries to see him behind the curtain of tears. She puts the earth upon her face and with all of the emotions through which she loved her father, she smells it and for a moment she is at peace, she has found condolence, but suddenly, in a tone which breaks with tears, she says, 'Anyone who smells the earth of Ahmad (Muhammad) has lost nothing if they never again smell any other musk. Oh, father, what miseries have fallen upon me after you? If they had fallen upon a bright day, they would turn it into night.' Gradually she would grow silent. The earth of her father's grave pours through her senseless fingers. She looks at it with painful amazement. Then she becomes motionless and silent.

She puts all of her sorrows in the death of her father. Each day is like the first day of his death. Her impatience grows everyday and her cries become more painful. The wives of the Helpers gather round her and cry with her. The pressure and pain and the wave of sorrows are pressing upon her heart and causing her eyes to bleed. She complains of their extortion and remembers what they did to her and the right they destroyed.

Her sorrow is more disturbing than anyone can conceive of to be able to console her or ask her to be patient. Nights and days pass like this. The Companions have been warmed by their powers, richness and conquering and Ali in his sorrow, silent and Fatima in thoughts of death. The moment of impatience arrives, the gift her father had promised her.

The Death of Fatima

Each day that passes she becomes more impatient for death. The only way she can bear to remain alive is if she could seek refuge in her father and be drawn beside him when her faith and spirit overflow with complaints and pain.

What need does she have to such a refuge, such a peace? But time passes slowly. Ninety five days have passed since her father promised her death and death would not come.

It came. Today is Monday, the 3rd of Jamadi al-thani, the 11th year of the migration, the year of the death of her father. She kisses each one of the children. Hassan is 7, Husayn is 6, Zaynab, 5, and Umm

Khulthum, 3.

And now is the moment to bid farewell to Ali. How difficult it is! And Ali must remain alone in the world for thirty more years. She sends for Umm Rafe'a to come. She had arranged the Prophet's funeral.

She says, 'Oh slave of God. Pour water on me so that I may wash myself. With patience and peace, she performs the ablution. Then she puts on the clothes which she had not worn since the death of her father and had put away. It is as if she had put aside the memory of her mourning and now is going to see a dear friend.

She says to Umm Rafe'a, 'Put my bed in the middle of the room.' Softly and quietly she steps into the bed. She faces the Kaaba and she waits. A moment passes, moments...

Suddenly cries are heard within the house. She closes her lids and opens her eyes upon her beloved who was awaiting her.

A candle of fire and sorrow is extinguished in Ali's house.

And Ali remains alone, with his children.

She had asked Ali to bury her at night so that no one would recognize her grave and so that those two elders would not follow her corpse to the grave.

Ali did as she had asked. But no one knows how. And they still do not know where. In her home? Or in Baqiah'? It is not clear. And where in Baqiah? It is not clear. That which is clear is the pain of Ali, tonight, next to the grave of Fatima.

Medina is silent in the night. All Moslems are asleep. The night is only broken by the quiet whisperings of Ali. Ali is very much alone both in the city and in his home without the Prophet and without Fatima. Like a mountain of pain, he is sitting upon the earth of the grave of Fatima. Hours pass. Night, quiet and silent, listens to the pain of his whisperings. Baqiah is peaceful, fortunate. Medina is without loyalty and impoverished. All remains in silence. The awakened graves and sleeping city listens!

The wind of the night takes the words which flows with difficulty from the spirit of Ali at the side of Fatima's grave towards the house of the Prophet. 'To you from me and from your daughter, who fell down beside you and who in such haste joined you; Greetings, oh Prophet of God.'

'My patience and my ability have weakened from the fate of your dearest, oh Prophet of God. But how can I seek patience with such terrible misfortune and missing you?

'I placed you in the grave but you still exist in my heart. We are all from God and unto God we shall return. But my sorrow is eternal and my nights, sleepless until God takes me to the same home in which you are now.

'Right now, your daughter will tell you how your tribe joined each other against her and took away her rights. Insist that she tell you everything that happened. All these things happened even though not much time has passed since your death and people have not forgotten you.

'Greetings to both of you, greetings from a man who has neither anger nor sorrow.'

He remains silent for a moment. He suddenly senses the exhaustion of a whole lifetime. It is as if with every word which is pulled from the depths of his being, he gives up a part of his existence.

He is alone. He does not know what to do. Stay? Return home? How can he leave Fatima here alone? How can he return alone to his home? The city looks like a devil in the darkness of the night. Schemes, treacheries and shamelessness awaits him.

How can he stay? His children, the people, Truth, responsibilities and a heavy mission await him. His pain is so heavy that it destroys his strong spirit. He cannot decide. Hesitation grips his soul. Go? Stay? He senses that he is unable to do either. He does not know what he will do. He explains to Fatima.

'If I leave you it is not that I do not want to stay near you and if I stay here have I not been unfair to the fate that God promises for those who bear patiently?'

Then he arose; stood, faced the Prophet's house, with a state which would overflow if poured into the word, feelings, he wants to tell him that he is returning that which had been entrusted to him. 'Listen to what she says. Ask her to tell you everything precisely. Have her count all the things that she saw after you, one by one!'

Epilogue

Fatima lived like this and died like this. After her death, she began a new life in history. Fatima appears as a halo in the visages of all of the oppressed that later become the multitudes of Islam. All of the usurped, extorted, oppressed, sufferers; all of those whose rights have been destroyed and sacrificed by pressure and have been deceived: had the name of Fatima as their slogan.

The memory of Fatima grew with the love, emotions and wonderful faith of the men and women, who throughout the history of Islam, fought for freedom and justice. Throughout the centuries they were nourished under the merciless and bloody lashes of the Caliphates. Their cries and anger grew and overflowed from their wounded hearts.

This is why in the history of all Moslem nations and among the deprived masses of the Islamic community, Fatima is the source of the inspiration for freedom, the desire of that which is a right, the seekers of justice, the resisters of oppression, cruelty, crime and discrimination.

It is most difficult to speak about the personality of Fatima. Fatima is the woman that Islam wants a woman to be. The concept of her visage is painted by the Prophet himself. He melted her and made her pure in the fire of difficulties, poverty, resistance, deep understanding and the wonder of humanity.

She is a symbol in all the various dimensions of being a woman.

The symbol of a daughter when facing her father.

The symbol of a wife when facing her husband.

The symbol of a mother when facing her children.

The symbol of a responsible, fighting woman when facing her time and the fate of her society.

She herself is an Imam, a guide, that is, an outstanding example of someone to follow, an ideal type of woman and one who bears witness to any woman who wishes to 'become herself' through her own choice.

She answers the question of how to be a woman with her wonderful childhood, her constant struggling and resisting on two fronts, inside and out, in the home of her father, in the home of her husband, in her society, in her thoughts and behavior and in her life.

I do not know what to say. I have said a great deal. Still much remains unsaid.

In the expression of all of the amazing aspects of the great spirit of Fatima, that which causes the most wonder in me, is this that Fatima is the traveling companion, steps in the same steps, flies together with the great spirit of Ali, through the ascension of humanity towards completeness and the stages of the descent of the spirit and the psyche.

She was not just a wife to Ali. Ali looked upon her as a friend, a friend who was familiar with his pains and his great wishes. She was his endless refuge, the one who listened to his secrets. She was the only companion of his loneliness. This is why Ali looked at her with another look and also at her children.

After Fatima, Ali took other wives and he had children from them. But from the beginning, he separates the children who were from Fatima from his other children. The latter are called 'BaniAli', [that is, sons of Ali] and the former, 'Bani Fatima' [the children of Fatima].

Isn't it strange! When face to face with their father, and he, Ali, the children are related to Fatima. And we saw that the Prophet also saw her with different eyes. From among all of his daughters he would only discipline Fatima. He only relies upon her. From an early age, she accepted the great invitation.

I do not know what to say about her. How to say it? I wanted to imitate the French writer who was speaking one day in a conference about the Virgin Mary. He said, 'For 1700 years all of the speakers have spoken of Mary. For 1700 years, all philosophers and thinkers of various nations of the East and

West have spoken of the values of Mary. For 1700 years, the poets of the world have expressed all of their creative efforts and power in their praise of Mary. For 1700 years, all of the painters and artists have created wonderful works of art showing the visage and states of Mary. But the totality of all that has been said, thought and the efforts of all the artist throughout all of these many centuries were not able to sufficiently describe the greatness of Mary as these words, 'Mary was the mother of Jesus Christ.'

And I wanted to begin in this manner with Fatima. I got stuck. I wished to say, 'Fatima is the daughter of the great Khadijah.' I sensed it is not Fatima. I wished to say, 'Fatima is the daughter of Muhammad (ﷺ).' I sensed it is not Fatima. I wished to say, 'Fatima is the wife of Ali (ﷺ).' I sensed it is not Fatima. I wished to say, 'Fatima is the mother of Hasan and Husayn.' I sensed it is not Fatima. I wished to say, 'Fatima is the mother of Zaynab.' I still sensed it is not Fatima.

No, these are all true and none of them are Fatima.

Fatima is Fatima

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