The Tradition of Rationality in Islamic Culture
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Introduction
These reflections aim to develop two major propositions: first, there are no dogmas beyond reasonable examination among the fundamental concepts of Islam; second, rationality here means knowledge based on common sense. The paper thus concludes that Muslims must learn from their substantial treasure of rationalism and need to contribute to a "rational faith" in the current world. Moreover, by rationality, I mean an unbiased thinking for or against religion; this should be the common denominator for all discussions of secularism.

Rationality and religiosity have a long history in human culture, but because humanity has opened a special objectivity in the modern era, those matters gained a new extension and importance in meaning. In this extension a main human question is the search for the relationship between them in their dealings with one another.

Whether we accept it or not, religion is a main human element in the world and Islam is one of the great world religions. As historical entities, human beings cannot but give attention to the history that made us and played a unique role in our identity. This is especially true with respect to Islamic society and culture. Hence we must think about the relation between Islam and modern rationality; this is what Islamic religiosity requires.

The history of Islamic theology's appearance and growth and its position concerning the other sects and schools show this as well, which joins philosophy and theology in the Islamic world.1 A contemporary Muslim apologist and theologian writes: the rational and essential right and wrong principle used as a ground for morals in ancient Greek philosophy, provides a firm basis for knowing the

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1 The Contemporary theosophist, the Grand Ayatullah Abdullah Jawadi Amuli, writes: "If something is understood through valid intellectual argument, it will be considered as a part of religion. If the explored point is about a cosmological subject like the origin and the end of the world the same point will be a philosophical study" (Jawadi Amuli, 2000).
acts and attributes of God (Allah) and fundamental concepts of Islamic theology (Subhani, 1368, p. 8). We can see the importance of this principle in the al-Tusi, Khwajah Nasir’s (1201-74) work (Tajrid al-Itiqad; Abstract of Theology) when he argues about acts of God and in the Allamah al-Hilli’s (d. AH 726/AD 1325) work, when he argues on the wisdom and justice of God (Allah). The justice and wisdom of Allah were the two main subjects of fundamental Islamic Theology. Islamic theology was divided into two sects the “People of Justice” and the “Others” (al-Adliyyah wa Ghairahum) because of this principle; the principle of rightness and wrongness based on self-sufficient reason is the core for knowing ultimate truth. The first Islamic theologians “People of Justice” argued for radical rationalism. Later, the opposite group, the Ash’ari, emerged to develop a kind of textualism. However, the later development of the Ash’aris, like Fakhr al-Din al-Razi (1149-1209) tended toward rationalism as well. Though rejecting classic theology and philosophy in Islam, the intellectual father of Salafism, Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728/1328) approved, to some extent, the principle of rational goodness and badness.

Muslim philosophers searched for agreement in philosophy and the revaluation of religion on the basis of the self-sufficiency of reason. In this discussion there is a special place for Averroes as a great and distinguished expert on Muslim law (Shariah). His thought on the relationship between Islamic religiosity and philosophical rationality was highly significant as he emphasized both the Islamic requirements but also rational independence (Ibn Rushd, 1994, p. 42-3). He opened the way for humanity saying: “Oh human being, I do not say what you call divine knowledge is wrong, but I say what I know is human knowledge.” This motto helped usher in the modern world as Corbin showed (Corbin, 1993). Etienne Gilson, likewise, has demonstrated the importance of Averroism right up to modern times (Gilson, 1999).

When we search the way of living faithfully in these changing times, we must ask whether there is an inevitable gap between human cultures, which puts them in conflict. Euro-centric thought and extremist Islam are two examples of the wrong answer. Even such a deep thinker as Martin Heidegger considers philosophy as a purely Greek and western product, which in political terms leads to “The Clash of Civilizations.” But what do we Muslims think when we know “The Book” to be the last and most perfect evidence of divine religion, the conclusive argument that begins by “You must Read” (Quran, 78:1) and swears by “the pen” (68:1)? However, can we talk about something, read “the book,” and take “the pen” without believing in the capacity for dialogue, respect for the reader and audience, and mutual comprehension? The main basis of the Islamic mission is the nature of reason that leads to intercultural dialogue (listening to all speeches and following the best) (39:18).

There is then a connection between the modern and pre-modern West, and we can examine Western culture through the Islamic perspective and ask how we can live faithfully as our times turn to, more or less, total rationality. To answer this question we shall first consider the characteristics of modern rationality in general, and secondly review its place in Islamic culture.

Rationality as the Axis of Modernity

The base of the modern world is its special rationality that appears by reflecting on itself, as Ernest Cassirer shows, following Alexander Pop, “The proper study of mankind is man” (Cassirer, 1955, p.5). This joins two important concepts: pure rationality and free will of the human.

Pure Rationality

Modern rationality is like Enlightenment rationality, against fideism, voluntarism and composed of empiricism and rationalism. It is self-sufficient and naturalist, though not necessarily materialist. It perceives objective reality in spite of two obstacles: the past dominance of theology and religion and the current dominance of state and government (Cassirer, 1955, p. 238). This autonomy does not mean hostility to both of them, but only the self-sufficiency that can be a background for dialogue and relations.

Free Will

The belief in free will and choice is the result of Enlightenment rationality. In this the Enlightenment was against Luther’s and Calvin’s reform that saw the will as a captive of divine predestination,

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and saw human greatness in its humility before the divine will and mystery. Cassirer writes:

Grotius was the real spiritual champion of the movement led by Bishop Arminius in the Netherlands which opposed the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination...He stands at exactly the same spot where Erasmus had stood; he defends the humanistic idea of freedom against the fundamental thesis of the bondage of the will revived by the reformers, Calvin and Luther, in all its rigor (Ibid., 239).

Rationality and Tolerance

These two bases, rationalism and free will, lead to the necessity of tolerance. Because tolerance is the spirit of philosophy and rationality; one must not fall into dogma in believing in rationality itself. This rational spirit opposes two things at the same time: dogmatism and being careless regarding fundamental questions of human traditions, especially religion (Ibid., 164). Tolerance is the appendage of reason as Voltaire said. It is the base, not a secondary requisite, for philosophy whose history is that of the dialectical movement of different thoughts, for its unity and harmony as Heraclites said (Cassirer, 1961). Also tolerance shows the proximity of religion to philosophy. "It is the greatest triumph of philosophy if today the period of religious wars is over. [...] as Voltaire wrote down," Philosophy, philosophy alone, that sister of religion, has disarmed the hands of superstition which have so long been reddened with gore; the human spirit awakened from its intoxication is astonished at the excesses it committed under the influence of fanaticism" (Cassirer, 1955, 169).

This attitude to religion replaced the ethos of objective comprehension instead of the pathos of subjective feeling regarding sublime religious values. Thus we can speak of "the unity of religions" or "one Universal Religion." That was one of the main differences between the Enlightenment and the Reformation: Enlightenment religion was a religious universalism or deism: "Deism springs from the inner repudiation of the spirit in which the religious quarrels of the preceding centuries had been conducted; it gives expression to a deep longing for that "peace of faith" which had been hoped for and promised by the Renaissance but never attained. Not in religious wars, but only in religious peace can and will the truth and the nature of God be revealed to us; such is the general conviction of the deistic movement" (Ibid., 175).

The "Philosophers" attention to Eastern religions and schools reflected the will to truth, not pure inquisitiveness. Cassirer continues: "in the eighteenth century, however, the peoples of the Orient especially attracted attention and demanded equal recognition for their religious convictions" (Ibid., 166).

Rationality in Islam

We can distinguish two kinds of religion in a philosophical viewpoint: supernatural or revealed religion and natural religion. These two may be known from their origins. The origin of natural religion is the rational nature and disposition of humans, and its validity is based on human reason. Revealed religion's origin is revelation and divine will; its validity is from a revealed subject or divine inspiration. So we can distinguish two sorts of religiosity: supernatural religiosity and natural religiosity. Deism or natural religion is a common denominator of all religions, if one believes in a rational base for religions, as Baumer says. This kind of religiosity was in all the pre-modern religious cultures and joins to the belief in the foundations of the modern world. Voltaire, during the Enlightenment, learned from John Locke's "The Reasonableness of Christianity." Locke reduced the three Abrahamic religions to a natural religion. But we can find the seeds of these before Locke: "there is no sharp line separating Christian Deists and orthodox Christian theologians (such as Thomas Aquinas or Duns Scotus) who maintain that some parts of Christian doctrine can be known by natural reason" (Eliade, 1993, 4:263). Thus the deistic approach did not just begin in the 18th century and end in this century, because deism remained alive in all religious societies and all faithful individuals

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3 This is the reason Voltaire rejects Holbach; the Holbach fought against dogmatism with a fanatical zeal for dogma. Ibid., p. 72.
who believe with independent thought (Ibid.5). Religious universalism is the criterion of one religion truth, because God and human nature are continuous, such that rational religion is one, continuous and universal. Hence revealed religion is a re-publication of the law of nature. We can identify religion finally as knowing our duties as to the will of God, as Kant put it. We can also find this interpretation of Islam in the primary period of Islamic culture and civilization.

The Grounds of Islamic Rationality

We will consider these grounds in three steps: the Holy Quran, the greatest text in Islamic world; the Tradition that quoted from the great Muslim leaders; and the Islamic Doctrines about what is necessary to be a Muslim.

The Quran

This holy book invites Muslims to a faith that is more than a confession and submission (22:8; 25:44; 49:14). People who do not apply reasoning to their opinions are considered less than beasts (8:22; 25:44). The holy book acknowledges rationality and humanity, and on this basis grounds morals and belief in eternal life (22:5-6; 90: 8-10; 91:7-9).

The Quran speaks of reason or rationality about 50 times. Although reason and revelation have been known as the saving ways, the verse 42 of Yunes (Jonah) chapter says that we cannot understand revelation and transmission without the use of reason. Hence transmission without reason is not what Islam professes. The Quranic verses state the aim of revelation to be the use of reason, namely, the learning of the book and wisdom (2:129; 2:242; 30:28; 43:3; 62:2). The Quran calls itself “remembrance” or “recollection” (dhikr) more than one time (15:9; 16:44; 21:50; 36:69). This means that the mission of this Holy Book is the remembering of what people comprehended, but forgot for whatever reasons. Once, God says to his prophet Muhammad: “Remember, you are a reminder only. You do not have domination upon them” (88:21-22).

The words, such as reasoning, knowing, understanding, thinking and being faithful (namely, believing on the basis of reason) are in the holy Quran more than one hundred times. Thus:
- Knowing and its derivations, about 600 times
- Reason and its derivations, 49 times
- Consciousness (intelligence) and its derivations, more than 20 times
- Thinking, 18 times
- Speculation and its derivations, more than 50 times
- Certainty and its derivations, 27 times
- Faith and its derivations, 800 times

It is noticeable that with all the emphasis on, and repeating of, the importance of rationality, the word “reason” was not used in the Quran in its nominal form, but in its verbal form, to show that rationality depends on event, time, subject and object which determine and limit human conditions. And if we have no understanding and reasoning without subject, object and time, then there is no unchanging and absolute comprehension and rationality.

In addition, there are a lot of Quranic verses which: encourage studying and knowing, reprimand those who are lazy in studying, introduce ways of studying, reproach dogmatic imitation, warn followers of unknown subjects going astray, and caution against following them (2:170; 5:104; 7:179; 12:40; 17:36; 31:21; 37:69-70; 43:23; 67:10). Concerning this textual proof, the great Muslim interpreters show that the Quran speaks of “taking the book and truth” or “taking hold of the Quran” and not “just knowing it.” The “taking” or “taking hold” indicates a strong approach; meaning faith should be based on demonstrative syllogisms (Jawadi Amuli, 1374, p.47). The Quran itself repeatedly uses demonstrations.6

Al-Sunnah (the Tradition)

Action, speech and expressions (verification) of the Islamic Prophet (and immaculate leaders in the Shi’a denomination) are known as the Islamic tradition (al-Sunnah). They are collected and protected

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5 Muslim philosophers also contributed in Deism in the Islamic context. See, Sayed Hassan Akhlaq, “Islamic Philosophy between Theism and Deism,” in Revista Portuguesa de Filosofia, Braga, Vol. 72, 2016, pp. 65-84.

throughout Islamic history, and are used usually for new deductions and in search for answers to modern questions. This tradition is full of references to reason and rationality, on which there is a book entitled “the book of reason” or “the book of knowledge” in the first chapters of books in the Islamic tradition, such as “al-Usool-e al-Kafi” and “al-Sahih-e al-Bukhari.” For example we have some surprising reports (Hadith) on the greatness of reason and rationality in the book of reason in “al-Usool-e al-Kafi.” One finds, for example: a transmitter of the Shi’a’s traditions quoted to Imam Sadeq (the 6th Imam of Shi’a and grandchild of the Muslim Prophet): there is a man that is in worship, piety and virtue thus and thus. The Imam asked: How is his reason? He answered: I do not know. The Imam added: the reward corresponds to reason (Kulaini, First book, 7th Hadith). Imam Ali says in the first sermon of his great book “al-Nahjul al-Balaghah”: God sent prophets to make the people’s reason bloom. He declares clearly the connection between happiness and the use of reason and experiment, when he wrote “unlucky is he who does not use reason and experiment” (Ibid., the 78th Letter).8

Hence for Islamic culture, it seems that any opposition to rationalism and fideism is basically non-Islamic because faith based on reason (or reason’s priority on faith) was the obvious and definite matter for the Prophet and primary Muslims.9 This is the meaning of a famous story in the Islamic tradition that says: one day the Prophet of Islam asked an aged woman to present an argument for believing in God’s existence, and to others: “You must learn from the aged woman religion” when she gave her answer. This attitude of the

Prophet shows that gender, age or language could not excuse avoiding reasoning in religiosity.

The second Hadith of “al-Usool-e al-Kafi” says from Imam Ali: Adam in the first minute of the human creature was awarded by Gabriel full authority to choose one of three things and leave all others: reason, modesty and religion. He chose reason, but modesty and religion did not leave him because they always accompany reason. The other Hadiths express that human life depends on reason just as death depends on not using reason (Ibid., 30th Hadith). The religious person is not respectable if he does not reason (Ibid., 32th Hadith). The prophets do not reach their high position without achieving the perfection of reason (Ibid., 11th Hadith); however, the prophets talk to people in terms of people’s intellects (Ibid., 15th Hadith). Fundamentally God has two proofs (reason and the prophets); from the Islamic viewpoint, these are complementary to one another and do same thing (Ibid., 12th Hadith). This is the high position for rationality acknowledged fully by Islamic sources.

Islamic Doctrines

Islam is not a historical religion; to be a Muslim you do not need fundamentally to accept a history. Rather, Islam is a propositional religion meaning that to be a Muslim implies analyzing and confirming three fundamental propositions: there is a God; God sent people the prophets; and humanity is eternal, and, thus people face Judgment Day. These three fundamental beliefs respectively are called Tawhid, Nabwawat, and Mi’ad. Islam does not accept for belief any authority or reference except reason and rationality. So it wants its addressees to choose its principles by their reason only and to avoid imitating other’s opinions. This means that Islam hesitates neither on its rationality, nor on the understanding of its addressees. For this reason, it takes a discursive status regarding other religions and invites them to full dialogue, supposing equality with their addressees, even polytheists (34:24-26). For more information, we can consider the principles of Islamic faith, which are in propositional form. A Muslim must accept these principles by personal research and acceptence and place them as the criterion for his life:

A. God: The world has an origin and its creator is all-knowing, all-powerful and a cosmic designer. He must be known and believed by reason only.

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7 After the Holy Quran, there are six most important texts in Sunni denomination titled Kutubb-e Sittta (al-Sahih-e al-Bukhari is the first one) and four texts in Shi’a Islam titled Kutubb-e Arba’a (al-Usool-e al-Kafi is the first amongst them). It is believed that these ten volumes consist of the authorized narrations about the Prophet (and infallible Imams in Shia case) (Hadiths).


9 Also see, Kulaini, First book, 8th, 9th, 20th, 28th & 30th Hadiths.
B. Prophets: God elected some people to guide human beings and sent them for this mission only. They are merely middlemen that invite people to God, not to themselves. They are like other people, neither gods, nor are they appointed to make humans God. Prophets are sent to people as a result of God’s grace (Lutf); the grace is obligatory to God because He already gave people both rational capacity and irrational desires. This mixture causes many people to not achieve happiness and, thus, being a more perfect human. So, the Prophets came to enrich and flourish human reason.

C. Human beings: humans have free will and are responsible; they can know good and evil by reason. All men and women choose their fates by their wills. Their perfections and deficiencies are the results of their thoughts, actions and speech.

D. The relationship between humans and God: The relation between divinity and humanity is also knowable by reason. The Prophets’ rules and principles are declared for human guidance. After this direction and guidance people will be rewarded and punished based on their own response and behavior.

E. Resurrection: After this worldly life, people go to another stage, namely, life in the next world which is the result of human acts in this world. Embracing a world created from our own decisions and being means Judgment Day.

All of these principles and foundations are reasonable; it means our reason can understand, conceive and assert them. We can doubt each of them, which happened in the time of the Prophet and which still form the debates of Muslim leaders today. But we must not forget that none of these principles have their value from a revealed authority. The revealed sources provided Islamic theology with a refreshing meaning, direction and development in order to contribute to the human search for ultimate truth, good, and beauty.

The Influence of Rationality on Primary Islamic Culture

Early Islamic history shows various examples of Muhammad’s trying to lay the foundations of a rational tradition. Also Muhammad and his followers exercised opinion (or independent judgment) and encouraged reasoning and deduction. It was said that Muhammad was a follower of reason before receiving revelation. At one point the Prophet invited a person to accept Islam but the person wanted two months to decide. Muhammad suggested four months, instead of two months, to decide with more thought and insight (Subhān, 1380, 354). In this background the Mu’tazila appeared as the first speculative school of theology in the Islamic world. This school collected various thoughts and was focused on a pure rationalism: its motto was “reason before revelation.” They went so far that some introduced doubt in terms of knowledge and religion as the first duty of an individual.

Islam’s emphasis upon rationality provided a ground for dialogue between it and other cultures, sects and thought systems and developed philosophical investigations and questions. This continued as the seat of government (Caliphate) moved from Medina to Baghdad and Damascus, the greatest Islamic translation offices in this period. It is important that the desire for translation was a cultural and social desire, not political or governmental. Aristotelianism was the more appealing to Muslims; it is based on pure rationality and common sense. Although, at first Aristotelianism in Islamic culture was mixed with Neo-Platonism, it became clearer and more direct especially in Averroes and his position on the relationship between religion and philosophy. Picking Aristotle from among all ancient philosophers and developing his philosophy in harmony with Islam and institutionalizing peripatetic philosophy as the mainstream study of philosophy inside Islam, all refer to the inner potential of Islam to adjust with rationalization.

Hence the rational attitude is consistent with Islamic foundations and its religion. In the following section, I will try to show the characteristics of Islamic rationality.

Features of Islamic Rationality

What is the background and characteristics of pure rationality? How can we speak of their coherence with Islamic principles? There are some things to consider.

The Self-Sufficiency of Reason

Reason’s self-sufficiency is an explicit expression of believing in reason’s independence in understanding ontological and moral truths. We can speak of reason’s self-sufficiency if we know reason as the religion ground in Islam. We do not need to find any clear proof
as to its authority. We have no further common and clear concept, it is the judge that can judge itself. This originates from the unique nature of reason. When we say essential good and evil we affirm its independence from divine will. This means the self-sufficiency of good and evil; their merit originates from their essence, not divine or human will. Islamic doctrines emphasize this self-sufficiency of reason.

The Parallelistism of Rationality and Humanity

We saw that some verses of the Holy Quran consider those who do not reason as inferior to animals (8:22 & 25:44) because they forget their special nature and fall into a kind of self-alienation. On this basis, it had been said that the believing person, who does not reason, is not notable and they are not addressees to Allah. Reason is the source of moral values. There is a famous and long Hadith in Shi’a denomination that cited “the reason and ignorance soldiers.” It emphasizes two things at the same time: first, speculative or pure reason is not the desired rationality in Islam, because rationality must lead to an objective and pragmatic result. If they are linked together this means they influence one another. Namely, rational acceptances are changeable, deformable and transformable, if the moral characteristics are changeable, deformable and transformable.

The Free Will of Humans

There is communication between accepting pure rationality and free will in Islamic thought so that Muslim Sufis (Mystics) that denigrate reason and reasoning argue based on the free will of human beings. The Quran verses emphasize both of them at the same time: the all-powerfulness of God and the free will of humans. So Adliya’s theologians collect them in such a manner that free will does not become a victim of Allah’s greatness and infiniteness.

In this background a great Shi’a apologist “Shaikh al-Mufid” said: Adam’s fall is more fit to human rank and dignity than living in the gifted heaven, because living in the heaven obtained by human effort is more honorable than living there based on divine grace without human effort (quoted: Yasrebi, 1388, p.41). Goodness and badness is a
ground and canon for Islamic apologists, based on believing in human free will as they justify divine justice by human free will.

The Quran, the Holy Book of Muslims tells about two human patterns for Muslims in order to show human independence: one person became a monotheist in an atheistic context, while the other became an atheist in a monotheistic context; the first is the wife of Noah and the second is the wife of Pharaoh, respectively role models of evil and good in the Quran (66:10-11).

Respecting free choose and the self-sufficient intellect, this Quranic pattern reappears in Hayy Ibn Yaqzan’s (The Living Son of the Vigilant) story by Ibn Tufayl. He described a person who reached a high level of Islamic religiosity by his own will and reason without outside aid.

Parallelism of Rationality and Tolerance

The Quran and Islamic traditions accept the limitations and fallibility of reason. When Averroes, the great legal theorist and philosopher, searches Islamic judgments about studying philosophy, he found that philosophical attainments are mixed with right and wrong. But because they are known by a rational necessity (the necessity of the premises producing the conclusion) they could not be purely null and void (Averroes, 1994, 53). Rational necessity and certainty do not, necessarily, lead to dogmatism or skepticism.

The great Muslim philosophers emphasized two matters at the same time: our inability to understanding the essence of things and the importance of collective work and going gradually toward truth (Farabi, 1371, pp.130-1; Averroes, 1994, p.38-9; Kendi, 1369, 103-4). The desired necessity is rational rather than ontological. Namely, we attain to certainty by rational argument, not ontological arguments. This certainty is not classic logical certainty, but a justified belief consistent with fallibility. We say this because Islamic sources encourage us to attain rational knowledge and express its limitations, and do not require more than human abilities. Also it informs us that some prophets and saints confess their inability to attain perfect

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11 Kulaini, the first book. The contrast between reason and ignorance in Islamic Sunnah indicates that reason depends on a training process, as it is in ignorance.

12 The unjust and dictatorial ruler of ancient Egypt.

knowledge. Encouraging independent judgment and the acceptance of its fallibility in Islam could be a sign of this.

Which Rationality? Moses and Khidr

Which rationality is the one that Islamic thought encourages? There is lots of evidence in the Quran and al-Sunnah that reason from the Islamic viewpoint is common sense and that general objective reason is not pure and ideal reason. To repeat our three points from above: the self-sufficiency of reason, religion based on reason, and religious understanding by reason. Let me mention one piece of evidence.

There is a famous story in the Quran about a great prophet called Moses (18: 56-82). He goes to see a very important saint in the Islamic tradition called Khidr. Moses sees three inadmissible and incorrect actions of Khidr (18:71-74), which, according to the Quran, make him protest (18:71, 74 & 77). Those inadmissible things were: making a hole in a ship, killing a child, and rebuilding a wall for persons who did not help Khidr and Moses. Although all of them happened for some mystical and supernatural reason, what is important is that Moses’ protesting is based on common sense. He protests on behalf of common and calculative reason and does not know the unseen world. This protest separated Moses from Khidr (18:77). But from the Islamic viewpoint, Moses is one of the arch-prophets so that Muslims must confirm his prophecy, whereas the prophecy of Khidr is not certain. The Holy Quran recalls Moses more than 130 times and he has a lot of valuable characteristics in the Quran.14

This story shows that a rational person cannot remain loyal in promising submission and not protesting, when appropriate, to a mystic. This is not a negative situation because the rational individual did not forget his nature. This story shows a needed confrontation with non-rationalist doctrines in the Islamic viewpoint. Also there are some Hadiths in Islamic sources which show that God’s criterion is worldly reason (Kulaini, the first book, 7th hadith), reason that is appropriate to our times and could open us to new horizons. Another

14 Moses was qualified to “possess the Furqan (the standard to distinguish right and wrong)” (Quran, 2:53), “receive fully and in detail the Book and guidance from God” (6:154); he is known as “the God Interlocutor” (7:144) who wanted to export his people from the darkness to the lightness (14:5). Moses has joined his peoples in a request based on common sense asking God to be seen (4:153).

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hadith says that the prophets speak to people in accordance with their sharing of reason (Ibid., 15th Hadith).15

Finally, I think the opposition between reason (not knowledge) and ignorance in Islamic traditions illuminates the human inability to attain either absolute knowledge or absolute ignorance. Being reasonable means first accepting gradations and hence the ability to acquire the character of reason and rationality; second, this graduated openness to reason encourages us to turn our research toward truths that aid human beings in seeking and attaining a better world. Renewing this potential within Islam helps Muslims to adjust themselves to the secular world and contribute positively to dialogue between secular and sacred.

References:

The Holy Quran.

15 This is why many Muslim theologians argued, based on the common sense of their time to show the emergence and end of the Prophets was necessary. Islamic theology (kalam) used to apply common sense and natural reason more than transcendental and speculative reason.
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