

# Analysis and Examination of the Monotheistic Society Characteristics in the Thought of Ayatollah Khamenei

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## Abstract

Monotheistic society reflects the economic and political dimensions derived from the cultural-epistemological measurements from monotheism's social and objective interpretation. It was a response to the lack of research on the social characteristics of Islamic monotheism, which was emphasized and analyzed by often contemporary Muslim thinkers and reformers in the context of the military and intellectual domination and invasion of foreign colonialism and the deviation and decline of Islamic societies. Ayatollah Khamenei (1318 SH) is one of these thinkers who addressed this concept with his approach before the Islamic Revolution. The present study aimed to pay this concept in his thought. The present study is divided into three sections. Its methods are library, documentary, explanatory, and analytical. In the first part, the epistemological and theoretical characteristics, in the second, the economic dimensions and in the third part, the political attributes of the monotheistic society in his thought are discussed. The first part analyzed concepts such as the high importance of monotheism in Islamic thought, monotheistic worldview and ontology, and Islamic monotheistic ideology. The second part proposed a society without monotheistic class differences, economic justice, and poverty and inequality in a monotheistic community and techniques to achieve this goal. The third part explained the role of monotheism in human freedom, denying non-divine governments and proving Islamic rule, the role and position of the ruler and the people in the monotheistic political system and foreign policy in a monotheistic society in Ayatollah Khamenei's thought.

**Keywords:** Monotheism, Monotheistic Society, Monotheistic Culture, Monotheistic Economy, Monotheistic Politics, Ayatollah Khamenei.

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### Introduction

From the beginning of its emergence in human life, Islam has made changes in the minds, beliefs and souls and subsequently the deeds, interests and heads of habits and patterns governing the behaviour and individual and social actions of its intended and desired societies. This religion went beyond the realm of mere mental relations and also regarded the realm of social relations. Therefore, as soon as expressing Islamic concepts and principles, it followed its objective and practical extension in society. "Monotheism" is the most fundamental principle of Islam (Karimi, 2000 AD/1379 SH: 19-20). Monotheism has different definitions from the theological view and jurists, theologians, philosophers and mystics of other Islamic sects and religions. It is divided into intrinsic monotheism, attribute monotheism, verbal monotheism, devotional (Muhammadi Reyshahri, 2012 AD/1391 SH: 5, 419), divine, holy, and governance monotheism. Of course, the present study does not aim to address these concepts. Instead, it expresses an objective, "Social" and more recent and contemporary subjects that seek to revive and rebuild itself based on the time requirements, during a purposeful and deliberate return to the religious texts and papers of the early Islam, free from the interventions of various currents and tendencies throughout history. This concept is "Monotheistic Society" and the different characteristics and aspects in the heart of its arteries. The idea of a monotheistic society (in its modern form) is infiltrated by the "Social Interpretation" of Islamic sources. Tendencies that followed the domination and foreign domination of Islamic countries or alien colonization on the one hand and the decline, deviation, corruption and stagnation and internal deprivation of Islamic societies, on the other hand, emerged among the "Reformers" and predominantly Muslim thinkers. It brought various practical changes in society (cf. Bouzari Nejad, 2018 AD/1397 SH: 347-352).

This concept was introduced many times in the contemporary era, especially in the years leading up to the Islamic Revolution of Iran by theorists and thinkers related to different sects (but with different meanings and examples). It was the basis for many theoretical and practical disputes between political and intellectual groups. From about a decade after the Islamic Revolution, i.e., after the end of the imposed war (Iraq's eight-year war against Iran) and the beginning of the so-called construction period in the fifth and sixth governments of the Islamic Republic, the concept of Monotheistic society has been marginalized in the discourse of most governments.

Contemporary Muslim thinkers who have argued this issue with different and sometimes contradictory approaches are Motahari (in the Monotheism

and the Monotheistic Worldview), Beheshti (in the Truth and Falsehood according to the Qur'an), Sayyid Muhammad Baqir Sadr (in al-Madrasa al-Quraniyyah and the Traditions of History in the Qur'an), Sayyid Qutb and Ali Shariati. In addition to the fundamentalist scholars mentioned above, some eclectic and deviant movements tried to use these concepts, like the Monafiqin and Forqan. But their views were based on Marxist and socialist opinions rather than on Islamic principles. Consequently, the ideas of Muslim thinkers about monotheism, social monotheism and monotheistic society conflicted with their thoughts and ideas.

Ayatollah Khamenei is a thinker who, with his approach and interpretation in the years before the revolution and after it and even now, in written and unwritten works and lectures, spoke abundantly about this concept and its various aspects. Of course, with all their emphatic and influential statements and clarifications in this field, studies and researches to explain the multiple dimensions of this concept by researchers are few and even absent. Undoubtedly, scholars' lack of analysis of this concept, despite the passage of four decades since the Islamic Revolution and their great emphasis on it, highlights the need to address various aspects of this "Issue," especially in his thought. It is the "Issue" that the present study aimed to do. 'What is meant by a monotheistic society in general?' According to the definition of "Monotheism" by Ayatollah Khamenei (which will be determined in future sections) and some sociologists such as Bruce Cohen and Joel M. Charon (Cohen, 2006 AD/1385 SH: 348 -349; Charon, 2013 AD/1392 SH: 72-73) can be briefly stated that: "Monotheistic society in this study means a social organization that has "Ideas," "Theoretical Foundations," "Epistemological" and "Cultural" aspects, and consequently "Symbolic Interactions," "Laws," "Economic" and "Political" and "Social" relations governing its people based on the concept of pure Islamic monotheism organized and expanded and implemented. Therefore, the monotheistic society has cultural-epistemological features and dimensions and consequently economic and political features. In this article, these dimensions and features are investigated in the thought of Ayatollah Khamenei. It is necessary to pay attention that the cultural-epistemological dimensions of the monotheistic society are of particular importance in Ayatollah Khamenei's opinion. These are the cultural-epistemological dimensions that should be reflected in economic and political relations."

## 1. Research Questions

Every scientific research has primary and secondary questions that must be answered during the study. As specified in the title and explained in the

introduction, the central question of this research is:

- How are the various characteristics and dimensions of a monotheistic society defined and analyzed in Ayatollah Khamenei's thought?

Sub-questions arising from the central question of the article also include:

1) How are the characteristics and cultural-epistemological dimensions of a monotheistic society (monotheism and monotheistic culture, monotheistic worldview and ontology, monotheistic ideology) explained and analyzed in Ayatollah Khamenei's thought?

2) How are the economic characteristics and dimensions of a monotheistic society defined and analyzed in his mind?

3) How are the characteristics and political dimensions of a monotheistic society analyzed in his thought?

## **2. Research Method**

This research has used explanatory, descriptive and analytical methods, and the data collection technique is library and documentary. First, all the data of Ayatollah Khamenei's written (books) and non-written (statements, speeches, etc.) documents are extracted based on the research questions. Then, the data are divided into three sections: Characteristics and cultural-epistemological dimensions: Worldview and ideology; features and economic dimensions: resolving class differences, creating fair and justice, etc.; elements and political dimensions: Human freedom, the denial of non-divine governments, etc., are analyzed and explained, and will answer the questions of the article.

## **3. Cultural-epistemological Characteristics and Dimensions**

Sociologists have offered various and sometimes contradictory definitions of the concept of culture. If we want to emphasize a general, comprehensive, often accepted definition of this concept and show its homogeneity and overlap with epistemological matters (values, norms, beliefs, worldviews, ideologies, etc.), we should refer to an important point. In other words, a particular culture in its intangible aspects includes ideas, values, norms, thoughts and imagines that are important and desirable for the members of society. They give meaning to their social world interactions and embody the rules of their social behaviour, and intangible aspects also include individual and social actions and deeds (Giddens, 2011 AD/1390 SH: 35). In this sense, cultural-epistemological characteristics represent monotheistic culture and thought and worldview, monotheistic values, ideology, and

norms. The quality of a monotheistic society's economic and political dimensions depends on its dimensions and cultural-epistemological characteristics in Ayatollah Khamenei's thought.

### **3.1. The High Importance of Monotheism in Islamic Thought**

In Ayatollah Khamenei's view, "Monotheism" and monotheistic culture have a high rank and importance in Islamic thought. The significance that none of Islam's principles, beliefs, teachings, and practices reach. Because all of them derived from monotheism and turn to it, and monotheism is current in all Islamic pillars: "Monotheism is part of the worldview of Islam and the constructive life-giving ideology of Islam. In addition, monotheism manifests itself in each of the sub-rules of Islam. Wherever you see a ruling and law and order in the name of religion in which monotheism falters, there is anti-monotheism in it, and there is no monotheism in it, know that this is not from Islam" (Khamenei, 2018 AD/1397 SH: 143).

Therefore, in his view, monotheism and monotheistic culture have a far-reaching influence and inclusion and include various theoretical and practical areas of the worldly and religious life of the Muslim individual and the religious community. Hence, the concept of monotheism is "the First and Last Word of Islam" (Khamenei, 1981 AD/1360 SH: 3) and the primary root and cornerstone of all the foundations of religion (ibid., 19). Therefore, he also criticizes the approach that views monotheism as a purely subjective, ideological, philosophical and abstract theory and writes about its objective and practical dimensions: "Monotheism, contrary to popular belief, which is merely a philosophical and subjective theory, is an underlying theory of man and the world, as well as a social, economic, and political doctrine. Among religious and non-religious words, few words can be found that is so full of revolutionary and constructive concepts and refer to various aspects of human social life" (ibid., 5).

Elsewhere, he explicitly states that the purpose and goal of the "Belief in Monotheism" is to create a "Monotheistic Society" and says that: "Belief in monotheism means creating a "Monotheistic Society." A society formed and governed based on "Monotheism;" the belief in monotheism is this; otherwise, there would be no enmity with the prophets" (Khamenei statements. Meeting of students of seminaries in Tehran province, 1396/06/06).

On the other hand, monotheism has a literal and an idiomatic meaning based on his vision. The literal meaning, which most Muslims and monotheists accept, is "Unification." In other words, monotheism is from root of "Unity," meaning "Being One." But its literal meaning, which is

apparent and derived from the same literal sense, is: turning the various and numerous gods into one God, uniting the polytheists and turn a "non-Monotheistic Society" into a "Monotheistic Society." The means of monotheism has very importance in his attitude and includes commitment and enormous weight (Khamenei, 2018 AD / 1397 SH: 226-227).

### **3.2. Monotheistic Worldview and Ontology**

Worldview and ontology are the most critical aspects of culture and cultural-epistemological values in a society. In Khamenei works and writings, there are divisions and branches derived from the concept of monotheism. The most important divisions are "Islamic Monotheistic Worldview" and "Islamic Monotheistic Ideology." He believes that to know any school of belief, thought, philosophy and culture, including material and spiritual schools, one must pay attention to its "Basic Principles." These doctrinal principles begin with "Worldview" and ontology and then end with "Ideology" and "Minor sub-Rules." (Khamenei, 2019 AD/1398 SH: 737)

In his view, in the general culture of a monotheistic society, a monotheistic worldview has several fundamental features. These are 1) The unity and integrity of the whole world and the kinship of all its components and elements; 2) The purposefulness of creation and the calculation and discipline of the calculated world and the existence of meaning and spirit in the individual of its components; 3) The obedience of all the objects and elements of the universe to God (Khamenei, 1981 AD/1360 SH: 5-7). By accepting and surrendering to Him, God, all gods and material powers are rejected and violated. Gods and deities who are not merely worldly idols but can be made of wood and stone etc., that is, inanimate and alive.

In Ayatollah Khamenei's monotheistic Islamic culture and worldview, obedience to other than God, as well as non-divine and anti-divine powers, is considered "Polytheism." (cf. Khamenei, 2018 AD/1397 SH: 180 and 186-185; Khamenei. Statements in the fourth meeting of strategic ideas on the subject of freedom, 2012/08/23) He emphasized the two dimensions of "Monopoly Divinity," i.e., the absolute monopoly of the legislation and "Canonisation" to God, who has the genesis of the universe, and "Monopoly Lordship," i.e., the total trust of ruling over the Almighty God. He does not allow obedience except to those God Himself has determined to be the executors of divine commands and decrees (Khamenei, 2018 AD/1397 SH: 173-174).

This view of the cultural-epistemological dimensions of monotheism and consequently the monotheistic worldview leads to a concept called "Governing Monotheism." In case of its practical extension in social objects, it establishes the theoretical foundations and obstacles of "Islamic

Government." As Ayatollah Khamenei, in many cases, introduces the basis and backbone of the Islamic system and government "Monotheism" and "Obedience to God." (Khamenei statements. Meeting of Experts Assembly members, 1388/12/06; Khamenei statements. Meeting of Zanzan students, 1382/07/22) He believes that: "Monotheism is the main pillar of the vision and view based on which we want to launch this government, system and movement." (Khamenei statements. Meeting of regime agents, 1379/09/12) We will discuss in more detail in future sections.

### **3.3. Islamic Monotheistic Ideology**

In Ayatollah Khamenei's view, Monotheistic ideology is those practical instructions and commands that a monotheist Muslim who believes in a deep and correct monotheistic worldview must believe in and commit and fulfil it in the objective realm of the society for "de-Polytheism" from all spheres of existence. So, monotheistic ideology is a part of the monotheistic culture and the manifestation of norms and rules governing the behaviours of the monotheist individual and society. According to Ayatollah Khamenei's thoughts, the monotheistic faith and worldview without ideology, norm and practice in human organs, human orientation, choices and political, social and economic equations around man do not affect his existential, social, or social, worldly and otherworldly destiny. This man is not a true believer (cf. Khamenei, 2018 AD/1397 SH: 49-50, 176 and 226).

Based on this view, the incomplete and incorrect understanding of monotheism and monotheistic culture and the lack of connection between monotheistic worldview and monotheistic ideology and practice caused the fulfilment of the social destiny of disorder in Islamic societies. As a result, it has led them to slavery, colonialism-accepting, weakness, humiliation, slavery and servitude to ungodly powers. Some mistakenly attribute such a self-inflicted fate to Islam and monotheism. Regarding the above mentioned with more accuracy, it is not valid. Instead, man and consequently the monotheist Muslim community who believes in and is committed to the correct and comprehensive Islamic monotheistic worldview is a human being and a society that does not accept any of the aforementioned restrictions and does not bow down except in front of the oneness of God.

### **4. Economic Characteristics and Dimensions**

Expressing the cultural-epistemological dimensions of monotheism in the concept of monotheistic worldview and ideology to explain this concept's social, economic, and political dimensions was proposed as the "Monotheistic

Society." The cultural-epistemological foundations of monotheism are the foundation of a monotheistic society and system. In the following, we will discuss the economic and political relations field prevailing in the heart and context of a monotheistic community.

#### 4.1. A Monotheistic Society, A Society without Class Differences

Regarding the role of monotheistic culture or, in other words, theoretical and epistemological monotheism in building economic monotheism in a monotheistic society, Ayatollah Khamenei believes that: "When the spirit of monotheistic culture and worldview enters the body of a society, it must change this social body and form in all economic dimensions. In other words, theoretical mental, cultural, and epistemological monotheism leads to objective and economic class monotheism<sup>1</sup>. If we believe culturally-epistemologically and ontologically that God is unique, we must also be economically different from those who believe in two or three gods. This difference, willingly or unwillingly, penetrates our economic relations, consciously or unconsciously, and destroys class differences" (Khamenei, 2019 AD/1398 SH: 191; Khamenei, 2018 AD/1397 SH: 216-217). He defines class differences as follows:

"What is the class difference? It means that the people who live in this society are not the same. Some are doomed to suffer deprivation and serve other groups, and they should not complain about this deprivation and suffering. Some people should also have, benefit, have the pleasure and enjoyment of life, be able to enjoy all the benefits and have no problem" (Khamenei, 2018 AD/1397 SH: 210).

He points to the fundamental and actual role of monotheism and monotheistic culture and worldview (as defined in the preceding sections) in the negation of class differences in society. He believes that in a monotheistic community that believes in a monotheistic culture and worldview, "Class Differences" and "Discrimination" are meaningless, up and down are meaningless. In this society, "You are all of Adam and Adam is of dust"<sup>2</sup> is established; aristocracy and non-aristocracy have no meaning. People's enjoyments are not very different; they are all on the same level

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1. It should be noted that the concept and meaning that he introduces from the classes is including economic classes. That is, it includes all economic, political, social, etc., classes, but in this section, according to the discussion, we rely more on economic dimensions and enumerate economic classes.

2. Referring to the noble hadith of the Holy Prophet (PBUH): "يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّ رَبَّكُمْ وَاحِدٌ وَإِنَّ أباكُمْ وَاحِدٌ كُلُّكُمْ لِأَدَمَ وَ أَدَمٌ مِنْ تُرَابٍ" (Nahj al-Fasaha: 675): O people, your Lord is one and your Father is one, you are all of Adam and Adam is of dust.



and have the same rights and benefits; some are not slaves to others (Khamenei statements. Community of pilgrims and neighbours of the holy shrine of Razavi, 1387/01/01). This society should not rule different gods and goddesses, and there should be no economic exploitation. Emperors, kings, tyrants, and great capitalists should not dominate the people, rule over them, milk them, and suck their blood. Divide the masses into sects and classes by creating veils and profound and significant class differences (Khamenei, 2018 AD/1397 SH: 164-165, 214 and 282-283).

On the other hand, Ayatollah Khamenei called the monotheistic society a "Classless Society" and said in this regard: "A monotheistic society is a classless society in which groups of people are not separated based on the rights and benefits. All human beings live under the same legal roof. Everyone lives and moves in the same direction, with the same facilities and privileges. It is a society that puts monotheism in front of our minds and imaginations according to the social classification [and consequently economic]" (Khamenei, 2018 AD/1397 SH: 210).

In his view, in a monotheistic society the people "Classes" and "Strata" have the same levels regarding the "Legal," "Licit" and "Judicial" enjoyments. In such a way that "Opportunities" and "Possibilities" are distributed "Equally" among all sections of society. Therefore, the word monotheistic society within itself also follows the negation of the class system. So, there is no need to take advantage of a "Monotheistic Classless Society" Marxist and non-Islamic; because the concept of class in the sense that Marxists have is also incorrect in the eyes of Islam. In other words, according to Islam, a monotheistic society is one in which there is no legal distinction between two classes and groups, and everyone enjoys equal opportunities and powers (Khamenei, 1982 AD/1361 SH: 72-75).

#### **4.2. Fair, Economic Justice and the Elimination of Poverty and Inequality in a Monotheistic Society**

Ayatollah Khamenei believes that monotheism and a monotheistic society and the elimination of class differences are meaningless without justice and the establishment of the fair (Khamenei statements. Meeting with Basijis, 1378/09/03). He knows the implementation of "Justice" and "Economic Justice" as the duties of the prophets, governments and monotheistic societies. Referring to verse 25 of Surah al-Hadid<sup>1</sup>, he believes that the prophets' primary mission after forming a monotheistic society is to establish justice and a fair environment in the community (Khamenei, 2018 AD/1397 SH:

1. لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْمِيزَانَ لِيَقُومَ النَّاسُ بِالْقِسْطِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا الْحَدِيدَ فِيهِ بَأْسٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَنْفَعٌ لِلنَّاسِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ مَنْ يَنْصُرُهُ وَرُسُلَهُ بِالْغَيْبِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ.

308-309). He proposes strategies for creating justice and a monotheistic economy and eliminating class differences in a monotheistic society. These strategies emanate from the heart of monotheistic culture and its components, namely, Islamic monotheistic worldview and ideology. The most important of these solutions are:

#### 4.2.1. Denial of Monopoly and Amass of Wealth

By forbidding and denying the "Monopoly" and "Amass" of wealth in a monotheistic society, he paves the way for presenting Quranic solutions to avoid the problem of poverty and inequality in the body of human society. Referring to the hadith of Imam Ali (AS): " ما رأيت نعمة موفورة إلا وإلى جانبها " <sup>1</sup> he believes that the accumulation and gathering and monopoly of wealth by a specific group of the people, willingly or unwillingly caused to create a class system and increase the weakness and increase deprivation (Khamenei, 2018 AD/1397 SH: 335). In this regard, referring to a part of verses 34 and 35 of Surah al-Tawbah<sup>2</sup>, he refers to the concept of (Kanz) "Treasure," which means amass and consolidation and accumulation of wealth and avoiding spending it in the way of God and the public: "Kanz is absolute collected money that not use for the general public. The symmetry of this meaning is the " وَلَا يُنْفِقُونَهَا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ " in verse, which shows if the literal meaning of the treasury was [just] accumulating money and burying it, the clause " وَلَا يُنْفِقُونَهَا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ " was not useful. It understands that what the Qur'an condemns is lack of almsgiving" (Khamenei, 2019 AD/1398 SH: 227-228).

As a result, in the economic system of the Islamic government and the monotheistic society, measures must be considered to prevent the amass and accumulation of wealth.

#### 4.2.2. Limitation and Control of the Economic Property System

According to Ayatollah Khamenei's view, the ownership of property and assets in Islam, like capitalist systems, is not unlimited and absolute but has limits, conditions and restrictions. Regarding a part of verse 33 of Surah al-Noor,<sup>3</sup> he denies unconditional ownership in the monotheistic worldview and considers property as "God's property." He believes that such money should be spent on eradicating the poverty of the poor and

1. I did not see any accumulation of wealth or blessings unless I saw the lost right next to it.

2. وَالَّذِينَ يَكْنِزُونَ الذَّهَبَ وَالْفِضَّةَ وَلَا يَنْفِقُونَهَا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَبَشِّرْهُمْ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ، يَوْمَ يُحْمَى عَلَيْهَا فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ فَتُكْوَى بِهَا جِبَاهُهُمْ وَجُنُوبُهُمْ وَظُهُورُهُمْ هَذَا مَا كَنْتُمْ لِنَفْسِكُمْ فَذُوقُوا مَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْنِزُونَ.

3. وَأَتَوْهُمْ مِنْ مَالِ اللَّهِ الَّذِي آتَاكُمْ.

needy (as specified in the Qur'an). He about the "Borrowed" and "Fiduciary" ownership of property and assets in the monotheistic worldview and consequently the economic relations branching out from it within the monotheistic society, says: "God is one and not two. It means that all you have of wealth, you and all other human beings, is for God; you are nothing more than "Trustees." Who is ready to monotheist now? " المالُ مالُ الله، " جَعَلَهُ وَدَائِعَ عِنْدَ النَّاسِ " God has entrusted wealth to human beings. This [attitude] is a requirement of monotheism" (Khamenei, 2018 AD/1397 SH: 164).

To prove the absolute ownership of God and to deny the absolute and unconditional privilege of man, he concludes that: "The absolute and genuine ownership of all the blessings, reserves, and beings of the world belongs to God. No one owns anything directly and independently. Everything is a "Trust" in human hands" (Khamenei, 1981 AD/1360 SH: 16).

In Ayatollah Khamenei's view, in the economic relations of a monotheistic society, the right of ownership over property and wealth is conditional on fulfilling the obligation and the divine mission, that is, the duties and responsibilities that God has determined. Among them is the creation of fairness and justice and the elimination of poverty, inequality and economy with monotheistic coordinates in society; otherwise, man has no property (Khamenei, 2019 AD/1398 SH: 231-237).

#### 4.2.3. Extensive Attention to "Anfal" and "Infaq"

Other issues, relations and strategies that Ayatollah Khamenei refers to establish justice in a monotheistic society are "Anfal" and "Infaq." In his view, Anfal is a wealth that is "Public" and belongs to the "General Muslims." Wealth such as a specific part of revenues and spoils of war, mines, forests, plains and vast pastures, etc., belong to the whole nation. According to him, the purpose of creating all humanity, based on a monotheistic worldview, is absolute servitude and perfection; and public wealth is a unique tool for this perfection. In a monotheistic society, these riches must be available to all people (Khamenei, 2019 AD/1398 AD: 234-235). Its divider and distributor is the Prophet (PBUH), Imams (AS) and the righteous ruler (Khamenei, 2018 AD/1397 SH: 47-48).

Referring to verse 134 of Surah Al-Imran<sup>1</sup> and verse 3 of Surah al-Baqarah<sup>2</sup>, he considers man and society pious, believing, Muslim and united when they pay Infaq. In his view, Infaq does not mean the usual

1. الَّذِينَ يَنْفِقُونَ فِي السَّرَّاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ: Those who donate in abundance and poverty

2. الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ.

spending of money; even mere material and spiritual help to needy people and beggars cannot be called Infaq. Instead, Infaq means filling the gaps and basic needs in a monotheistic society to overthrow the foundations of class divisions and poverty and public inequality. Infaq in this approach is not limited to the financial and material dimension but includes all measurements. But in the material economic dimension, it means that the monotheist man, based on the Qur'anic and monotheistic approach, must pay attention to the primary economic vacuum and need of the society at present, and based on it, to fill these gaps and real needs pay Infaq (ibid., 39-40 and 58).

#### **4.2.4. Alms and Zakat**

Another of his strategies for establishing fairness and economic justice in a monotheistic society is to adhere to Quranic principles such as Alms and Zakat. He believes that according to the Qur'an, "Financial Charity" is called Alms, and it is divided into obligatory and recommended alms. In his view, obligatory Alms is never summed up in Zakat. Instead, based on the narrations, it includes any property and money that individuals are obliged to pay according to the laws of the Islamic monotheistic society. It must be handed over to the treasury, the Imam or leader of the Islamic community to be distributed in the proposed uses of Quranic verses. The leader and guardian of the Islamic society have full authority over the quality of its division (Khamenei, 2019 AD/1398 SH: 385-386). Another solution, according to him, is Zakat. He considers Zakat as one of the pillars of faith. He believes that no government, social structure and monotheistic society can survive without financial resources, much of which is Zakat (ibid., 487-490). According to Ayatollah Khamenei, Zakat is the absolute Infaq that a Muslim has from his property (Khamenei. Statements in the holy shrine of Razavi, 1394/01/01). Zakat has become obligatory on the nine commodities (i.e., wheat, barley, dates, raisins, gold, silver, camels, cattle, and sheep). It includes all the Infaqs mentioned in the Qur'an and Islam (Khamenei, 2019 AD/1398 SH: 382). According to him, Zakat has two individual and social dimensions. The individual dimension grants "We Love," and its social and systematic direct is the general and structural effort to eliminate poverty and inequality. Hence, he described Zakat as "the Financial Regulator of Society" and the "Eradicator of Poverty" (Khamenei. message to the first annual prayer meeting in Holy Mashhad, 1370/07/16). Based on Shia hadiths, he knows this act as a factor in achieving high economic income, the balance between classes of society, creating fairness and justice, eliminating economic poverty and finally, the emergence of monotheistic coordinates in the economic dimensions of a

monotheistic society (Khamenei, 2019 AD/1398 SH: 392-393).

## 5. Political Dimensions and Characteristics

In this section, we pay to the political dimensions and characteristics of the monotheistic society. We show that in Ayatollah Khamenei's view, the cultural-epistemological dimensions of monotheism (as mentioned before) have the objective effects and manifestations in the political sphere of a monotheistic society.

### 5.1. Monotheism, Human Freedom and the Denial of non-God Worship

In contrast to the false Western freedom, which is rooted in the desires, the low human inclinations based on the paganistic material worldview, Ayatollah Khamenei introduces the root and origin of "Freedom" in Islamic culture the "Monotheistic Worldview." (Khamenei statements. Sermons of Friday prayers in Tehran, 1365/10/19) He says: "Based on the monotheistic worldview, the "First Principle" and fundamental of the "Monotheistic Resolution" in the context of a society's political relations is the decisive and victorious denial of "Servitude" and "Obedience" of non-God. The denial guarantees man's political and social freedoms to an infinite degree - albeit limited to the limits of God and not to His servants. In this view, Prophet quotation: "قولوا لا اله الا الله تفلحوا" (al-A'raf: 65) or "O people, worship Allah, for you have no deity except Him" above all, it emphasizes the denial of the worship of non-God. In other words, in this call, "Divinity" and godliness other than God are denied (Khamenei statements. Meeting of the regime's agents, 02/07/1382; Khamenei. Statements in the meeting of the agents in Hajj, 1388/08/04). In this monotheistic view, all gods are rejected except the great God:

"The denial of deities and idols [also] means the rejection of all those who strive to oppress the people and, by imposing or fooling themselves, ride on the shoulders of human beings and saturate their rebellious instincts and inclinations" (Khamenei, 1981 AD/1360 SH: 30-31).

Therefore, in the view of Ayatollah Khamenei, criminals, non-divine political powers, oppressors of history throughout human history have always been imposed on people under various letters and titles. They oppressed the people for their material interests, tyranny and oppression, enslaved them and tore them apart from their true human freedom. Based on the monotheistic worldview, they have no little place in the context of the monotheistic society and its political relations and are doomed to decay and destruction because:

"The creation of a "Monotheistic society" means "the Exclusive Rule

of God" and "Exclusive Obedience to God." Monotheism means the equality of human beings before the Lord of the universe. If a person, a society and a system are based on monotheism, there is no oppression in that system and society" (Khamenei, 2018 AD/1397 SH: 319-320).

### **5.2. The Role of Monotheism in Denying non-Divine Societies and Political Systems and Proving Islamic Rule**

Monotheism and monotheistic society in Ayatollah Khamenei's view do not deny the authoritarian and oppressive domination of "Individuals." Instead, it emphasizes the rejection of "Systems" and non-divine political systems and governments. At this point, he explains the "Governing Monotheism" in a monotheistic society and believes that one of the "Worship" meanings based on the Qur'anic culture and the Imams hadiths is "Obedience." Therefore, in a monotheistic society, "Obedience" to powers, laws, political systems, governments, rulers, inclinations, and instincts etc., with any title and name that have a non-God source are a clear example of "Worship" other than God and "Polytheism." (Khamenei, 2018 AD/1397 SH: 178 and 193-196 and 207-208; Khamenei, 1982 AD/1361 SH: 148-149)

After denying political systems and non-Islamic governments in the monotheistic worldview of Islam, Ayatollah Khamenei proves the Islamic government. Using the epistemological foundations of the monotheistic worldview, which we have already discussed in detail, he believes that the main foundation for the theory-making and proving the Islamic government and state is institutionalized in the concept of monotheism and its main slogan and description "لا اله الا الله."

"لا اله الا الله" is not merely a pure belief and mind-matter. It is the source of "Effect" and "Action." The same Islamic state that emerged in Medina is the result of "لا اله الا الله." That is, "Government" is just for God Almighty and God's messengers. [Hence] the Muslim Ummah must return to monotheism" (Khamenei statements. Meeting of officials and ambassadors of Islamic countries, 1397/01/25).

On the other hand, they believe that God has the highest "Expediency" in governing, legislating, ruling and guiding the universe with all its components. Therefore, all matters are related solely and exclusively to the God Almighty. It is only God who is able to design and implement the way of life and the program of communications, interactions and actions of human beings, and that is why:

"Any interference [arbitrarily] by others in determining the path and practical policy of human beings is an encroachment on the realm of divinity and a claim to divinity and causes polytheism" (Khamenei, 1981 AD/1360 SH: 13).

He, about reasons for the rational and Qur'anic proof of divine sovereignty and rule, based on al-Mulk: 1 and Yunus: 32, emphasizes the necessity of giving power of "Legislation" to God. In other words, he believes that in a "Monotheistic Society," to free themselves from the shackles of human sovereignty and ungodly governments, which as ungodly masters rule political, intellectual, cultural and economic destiny have taken human beings and societies under their tyrannical will and made them slaves to their interests and purposes, "Legislative Rule "is for God that "Formative Rule "carries it (Khamenei, 2018 AD/1397 SH: 184-185).

### **5.3. The Role and Position of the Ruler and the People in the Political System of a Monotheistic Society**

As a result, a monotheistic society is a free and non-authoritarian society in which no one has the right to rule except God and those he has determined. According to the thought of Ayatollah Khamenei, the political government formed in a monotheistic society is the ruling of the divine "Law" and not the "Individuals." If individuals are to be considered for government, they have to carry out divine commands and laws in the context of human society. Referring to Al-Baqarah: 213,<sup>1</sup> he concludes that what the Prophet use to judge the people is not the personal opinion and will of the individual who is the "Book." The book in this verse also means divine commands and laws. Therefore, any tyranny of opinion and hypocrisy is rejected in this way and manner. Everyone can comment, criticize and offer solutions in governmental and political affairs as long as it does not contradict the divine laws. Ayatollah Khamenei, referring to the letter 53 of Nahj al-Balaghah, points out that in the political system of a monotheistic society, people without power and wealth and ordinary people in the society should be able to get their legal rights without the fear and anxiety from those in power and wealth, the Islamic government must support them in this (cf. Khamenei, 2018 AD/1397 SH: 254 and 333-336).

The Islamic community members can order to goodness and prevent evil to each other and those in charge of affairs, thereby creating an atmosphere of political freedom, social responsibility and spreading the ground of criticism, demand, and vulnerability to create justice.

### **5.4. The Principle of Order to Goodness and Prevent Evil: a Symbol and Reflection of Freedom and Socio-Political Responsibility in a Monotheistic Society**

١ . كَانَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً قَبَعَتَ اللَّهُ النَّبِيِّينَ مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ وَأَنْزَلَ مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ فِي مَا اختلفوا فِيهِ.

Ayatollah Khamenei, based on al-Tawbah: 71,<sup>1</sup> knows the faith sign and one of the aspects of "Freedom" and "Socio-political Responsibility" in the worldview and the monotheistic Islamic society in the principle of "Order to Goodness and Prevent Evil." The code guarantees the "Survival" and permanence of the "Islamic Principles" and the "Revolutionary Spirit" and has a fundamental and apparent conflict with corruption, oppression and injustice. He does not limit this liberating social and political responsibility to ordinary members of society. He believes that this duty is an "Objective Obligation" that all community members, including ordinary people and officials, and members of the caravan and the caravan leader must perform towards each other (cf. Khamenei, 2019 AD/1398 SH: 471-474). He considers the order to goodness and prevent evil, and consequently the freedom of criticism and opinion if it does not collide with deceit, seduction and misguidance, as the factor of survival and preservation of the "Revolutionary State" in society. This state creates the pillars and conditions that guarantee the maintenance of monotheistic thought and belief. He also considers this duty not as anti-security but as a factor in achieving social security (ibid., 478).

Based on the narrations, simultaneously removing social duty from the monotheistic society, corruption, deviation, oppression, tyranny, and injustice remain; all previous sufferings derived from the abandonment of this "Objective Obligation." (ibid., 483)

##### 5. 5. The Quality of Foreign Political Relations in the Political System of a Monotheistic Society

Ayatollah Khamenei refers explicitly to "Monotheism" and "Unity" about the political relations of the Islamic political system in a monotheistic society. A monotheism causes the development of the central part of the unity between the various Islamic sects and creates conflicts and struggles with the oppressive political powers (Khamenei message. Hajj Congress, 1379/12/12). In this view, the political system of a monotheistic society in the relations with Islamic societies and Ummah should try to move towards the unity of Islamic communities and countries and prevent any differences and divisions in this area (Khamenei. Statement at the closing ceremony of the 18<sup>th</sup> competition of recitation, evidence and interpretation of the Holy Quran, 1380/07/26; ibid., Statement at the meeting of System Agents, 1382/02/29).

On the other hand, the relations of the monotheistic society with "non-

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1. وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَيَطِيعُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ أُولَئِكَ سَيَرْحَمُهُمُ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ.



Islamic" and "anti-Islamic" states and countries are discussed. He believes in taking decisions to prevent the fulfilment of their province over the Islamic world and subsequent dependence and the destruction of independence. In his view, the very formation of a monotheistic society (in a sense mentioned) creates enemies whose interests, governments, and sovereignty conflict with this society. Because such a society seeks the rule of God and the divine laws, and its enemies seek the command of their lusts and desires. Therefore, he has rejected the view that he believes in living peacefully and sincerely with everyone. He believes that historical experiences and numerous Qur'anic verses confirm that such a view is impossible in the real world and the realm of practice. The concept of monotheism in its heart, "Total Peace" (i.e., we should peace with all), denies: "The monotheism of total peace, the monotheism that agrees with "Rivals" of God the monotheism that is only an accepted hypothesis in mind, is nothing more than an imitation of the prophets monotheism" (Khamenei, 1981 AD/1360 SH: 20). Thus, the conflict with the dominating and oppressive powers of the international community is the result of such a monotheistic attitude in international relations (Khamenei statements. Meeting of regime officials in the resurrection of the Holy Prophet, 1387/05/09). In his view, unlike the people who believe, there is no attempt to apparent enemy-creating. Instead, speaking of monotheism and a monotheistic society (with its extensive meaning) will create enmity and hostility towards the great tyrants<sup>1</sup> and international hegemony and their dependent and indigenous tyrants (Khamenei statements. Meeting of regime officials and ambassadors of Islamic countries, 1398/01/14). Therefore, monotheism is the cause of this hostility and struggle and the outline of this struggle's generalities, principles, and main lines. Hence, a monotheistic society cannot accept the force and oppression and not stand against the oppressor (Khamenei statements. Meeting of officials and ambassadors of Islamic countries, 1397/01/25).

Of course, he states that this lack of communication with anti-Islamic countries and a regulated and controlled relationship with non-Islamic

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1. He considers the Great Taghut the regime of the United States of America and explicitly says in this regard:

"Quran says: *فمن يكفر بالطاغوت و يؤمن بالله فقد استمسك بالعروة الوثقى* (al-Baqarah: 256). This means scratching to *Habl allah* for us. What is it? By believing in God and disbelieving in Taghut. Today, the greatest tyrant in the world is the regime of the United States of America (Khamenei. Statements during the meeting of the participants in the conference of the Islamic Unity Conference, 1385/05/30).

countries does not mean political, economic, commercial, etc., isolation. Instead, it means the absence of "Vilayat" and "Connection" and the essential connection with them. Otherwise, normal relations with non-Islamic countries have no difference in superiority, power, stability and vigilance in the Islamic society, and its political system has no obstacle (Khamenei, 2018 AD/1397 SH: 429-430).

### **Conclusion**

The present study aimed to explain and analyze the cultural-epistemological, economic and political characteristics of the monotheistic society in the thought of the Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Khamenei. A goal has been tried to address to a large extent in the article. What can be deduced from his set of arguments and conclusions, and consequently the decision, is that Islamic monotheism in its deep, pure and straightforward sense is not a mere theological, jurisprudential and philosophical thought. Instead, it was the most fundamental principle of Islam that should have manifested in all cultural-epistemological, economic and political areas of society. By institutionalizing the monotheistic worldview and ideology in the culture and public mind and the implementation of instalments and justice in economic and social relations and the fulfilment of true human freedoms and the rule of God and His Shari'a in political dimensions, its objective reflections in the form of a concept called "Monotheistic Society" has manifested. This way offers the world an ideal example of an Islamic community. Despite the great importance of this concept in the development of social relations of Islamic society, unfortunately, little research is found. One of the primary purposes of this article was to fill the relative gap in this area. Of course, an article's technical and structural limitations can explain. However, what has been claimed and desired by this article is a concise, analytical, specialized, and practical address to the essential features of this society in Ayatollah Khamenei's thought. In the end, we can suggest for future research the explanation of the monotheistic society concept and its various aspects in the minds of other prominent contemporary Muslim thinkers such as Imam Khomeini, Motahhari, Beheshti, Sadr, etc., and consequently new theories in this field according to the requirements of the time and the modern context.

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