



## The Relationship between Religion and Government in Neo- Mu'tazilite Thoughts with an Emphasis on the Thoughts of Mohammed Arkoun

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Received: 10 Feb 2021

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Accepted: 20 Sep 2021

### Abstract:

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between religion and government in neo-Mu'tazilite ideas with an emphasis on the thought of Mohammed Arkoun. The present research is fundamental in terms of purpose and descriptive in terms of implementation method. Data collection is done through library studies, documentation, and filing of study sources. Research findings confirm that the most important goal of the pillar is the revival of religion in the context of human life. Emphasizing the revelation of the Holy Quran, he removed the sanctity from this valuable book and placed it in a secular sense. According to the Islamic pillar, it is a comprehensive and complete religion that emphasizes ethics in human relations, and fully implement it in human societies, there is a need to re-read and re-know Islam.

**Keywords:** Religion, Government, Neo Mu'tazilite Thought, Mohammad Arkoun.

### Introduction

The relationship between religion and government, and its successor, the relationship between politics, modernity, and tradition, remains unresolved among Islamic thinkers after many years. Thus, the thinkers of the neo-Mu'tazilite movement, especially thinkers such as Muhammad Arkoun, Nasr Hamed Abu Zayd, and Hassan Hanafi, like other neo-Mu'tazilites, sought to establish a new way in Islamic societies regarding the intel-

lectual and narrative teachings of Islam. The neo-Mu'tazilite school of thought is one of the leading theological tendencies in the Islamic world and its origins can be found in the views and theories of the ancient Mu'tazilites, who tried to base the epistemology of Islam on rationalism. Today, many contemporary religious modernists and modernists, mostly Arabic-speaking; Consider this important aspect of the Mu'tazilites' work, that

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is, the rational interpretation of revelation and the Shari'a, to revive the neo-Mu'tazilites and adapt them to the teachings of the modern and modern world, to adopt appropriate solutions and positions. In this research, the researcher seeks to examine the relationship between religion and government from the perspective of Mohammad Arkoun one of the prominent thinkers of the neo-Mu'tazilite school of thought.

The accepted and used concept of politics today goes beyond the concept of political science. Today, the term politics refers to current issues of government and society that have a political-economic nature in the scientific sense. According to Robert Dahl, politics is one of the inevitable facts of human life. Human beings are involved in all kinds of political issues in every moment of life and time, and it is only through the political process that human beings can hope to base their lives on desirable wisdom and perfection. "A person who does not engage in politics is not worthy of a harmless citizen, but we should consider him an indifferent citizen," says the Greek Pericles. (Alam, 2000, p. 22)

Politics is the management and justification and regulation of human social life in the path of rational life and rational life is the same as the high life of divine prophets and divine saints. And in general, politics in the Islamic view is the general management of the government and the strategy of public affairs for the common good and the choice of better methods; And the administration of the affairs of the country or the science of governing an organized society and the art of managing the affairs of the people to the state, which is always in connection with a part of human life. And because it relates to human action, it inevitably comes into contact with religion, which is responsible for

expressing lifestyles. Hence, it acts in opposition to it or on its side, and in any case, religion acts on politics, and politics, in turn, acts in the realm of religion. (Zanjani, 2000, p. 56)

Religion is one of the most serious issues that are difficult to define and the reason for this is the great diversity of religions in human societies. Although scientists have tried to find one or more commonalities in the definition of religions, their work has not been successful, and this has led to numerous definitions of religion, none of which are comprehensive and comprehensive. Some have considered it a sacred thing, some have considered it faith in spiritual beings, and some have said that religion is a belief in one or more superhuman forces worthy of obedience and worship. (Towfiqi, 2002, p. 13)

#### **Mu'tazilite historical background**

The Mu'tazilite movement at the end of the first century after the emigration of Muhammad, on the one hand, was a moral reflection of the ideological and practical excesses of the fanatical Khawarij; On the other hand, it started as a reaction to the moral weakness of Murji'ah's political supporters. They rejected the Khawarij insistence that the only measure of faith is human deeds; At the same time, they rejected the beliefs of Murji'ah, who disregarded religious practices and considered verbal faith sufficient. And hence emphasized the need for responsibility for the believer; And they testified to some verses of the Qur'an that emphasize the responsibility and power of human free will. (Rais al-Sadat, 2003, p. 65)

Regardless of how the Mu'tazilites were formed, there are different views on the origins of the Mu'tazilites; Abu Muhammad Hassan ibn Nobakhti, for example, believes that after the assassination of Uthman, groups

of people shook hands with Ali and pledged allegiance and became known as Jamaat. But the allegiance of the people was Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas and Abdullah ibn Umar ibn al-Khattab and Muhammad ibn Muslimah Ansari and Osama ibn Zayd broke after a while and they withdrew from Ali and were isolated; they refused to help Ali in the war and did not consider the war to be permissible either for or against Ali. Hence, this group was called Mu'tazilites and they were the ancestors of the Mu'tazilites who were found later (Nobakhti, No Date).

Since the name of the Mu'tazilite sect is tied to the religious thinker of that time, Wasil ibn Atta, and the bedrock of its emergence can be considered the school of Hassan Basri; The beliefs of these two thinkers can be considered as the beginning of the formation of the Mu'tazilites. (Malayeri, 1996, p. 103)

Due to the oppression of the political atmosphere of the Umayyad period, it was not possible to express many political opinions and dissatisfactions; hence, in some circles of scholars and thinkers of that time, these political ideas were presented in the form of philosophical issues and theological debates. Hassan Basri's school was one of the schools where these ideas were presented in the form of ideological and theological debates. Among these, one of the beneficiaries of this school, Wasil Ibn Atta, always followed the discussion of great sin as a debate and benefited from discussions in this field. (Mohsen, 2006, p. 38)

Regarding the formation of the Mu'tazilites, it should be emphasized that the grounds for the Mu'tazilites' thoughts were provided to some extent in the circle of Hassan Basri and to some extent in the surrounding circles belonging to the Mubid ibn Abdullah Jahani and Ja'd ibn Dirham. What makes the first Mu'tazilite teachers most in-

debted to Hassan Basri; is the many years of his training in his circle and learned methods for interpreting texts based on comprehension, and has been clear in combining texts and rational arguments in the field of understanding religion. (Mousavi Bojnourdi, 2004, p. 208) The Mu'tazilites is the name accepted by the opposition and by themselves; Opponents called them Mu'tazilites because they considered them untrue and ambiguous. But they have adopted this title because they have avoided the oppressors in the political dimension and the holders of false beliefs in the doctrinal dimension. (Shafi'i, 2010, p. 39)

### **The process of neo-Mu'tazilite formation**

The first wave of the neo-Mu'tazilites is attributed to its founders, who play a major role, starting with Seyyed Jamal al-Din Asadabadi (1837-1898 AD) and ending with the neo-Mu'tazilite thinkers in the mid-twentieth century. Factors for returning to the Mu'tazilites in the new era can include the following:

- 1- Western colonialism, revolutions, and independence movements.
- 2- Asadabadi's activities.
- 3- The modernization of intellectuals.
- 4- Islamic reformism and Islamic modernism.
- 5- The appeal of classical Mu'tazilite thought for Western scholars (Orientalists).
- 6- Searching for Islamic thinkers to answer the problems that were raised as a result of facing and challenging Western civilization, modernity, and rationalism.
- 7- Finding and discovering Mu'tazilite books among the Zaydis of Yemen. (Wasfi, 2008, p. 75)
- 8- The rise of Western-style scientific-academic centers and the growth of modern education versus traditional

education created a gap between the literate and the illiterate, the gap between traditionalists and modernists; And this strengthened the current of religious reformism (religious modernism). (Abu Zayd, 2013, p. 88)

### **Theoretical foundations of neo-Mu'tazilites**

The neo-Mu'tazilites have a certain theoretical diversity and are divided into different readings and readings of the neo-Mu'tazilites; In such circumstances, formulating and explaining the common theoretical foundations (ontology and epistemology) of the neo-Mu'tazilites is difficult.

### **Neo-Mu'tazilite ontology**

In general, the neo-Mu'tazilites are realistic in the field of ontology; That is, they know the objective, external world as real. In general, the neo-Mu'tazilite ontology can be divided into two parts:

- 1- God: The neo-Mu'tazilites believe that God cannot be the subject of analysis and research; The divine essence and the supernatural are not exact and clear identities, and they know it, according to Arkoun, in the so-called misty sky. Like the Mu'tazilites, they believe that existence is a creation of God, God is absolute power, everything is under the divine will; And God is connected to our tangible world through will, justice, reason, and revelation. And this connection is permanent. The special revelation of the Prophet is over, but the revelation in the form of "divine inspiration" is constantly in progress; This group of thinkers consider only God to be ancient and the rest of the phenomena and categories to be "events"; Like the classical Mu'tazilites, they emphasize

the principle of purification, God, and the non-likeness of God to man.

- 2- Universe (nature): As mentioned earlier, the neo-Mu'tazilites are realists. The truth of the nature of this world is known as this tangible world, the rational and good world, because it is the creation of the wise God and the absolute good. The neo-Mu'tazilites see nature and history as mirror-like manifestations of metaphysics, meaning that nature and metaphysics, religion and history, and the sacred and the unholy are inseparable. (Abu Zayd, 2013, p. 86) Also, the researchable reality is considered as "reality", an objective and tangible truth that can be talked about; Broad conceptual reality includes economic, social, political, and cultural institutions. (Abu Zayd, 2013, p. 72) Neo-Mu'tazilite rationalism (like the classical Mu'tazilites) has led to an empirical and realistic approach to the "existence of this world"; And interpret some of the categories in traditional Islamic theology, such as: "jinn and some stories of the Qur'an" with the interpretation of "virtuality" and deny their authenticity and emphasize the "purposefulness" of the message of the Qur'an. (Wasfi, 2008, p. 67)

### **Fundamentals of epistemology**

In neo-Mu'tazilite epistemology, the place of reason and argument is obvious; Like the classical Mu'tazilites, they care about the human intellect and want everything with rational justification and argument. As Abu Zayd has explicitly stated that Islam is the religion of reason and no other religion has called for a reason. (Abu Zayd, 2006, p. 112) Also, most neo-Mu'tazilites, including Ar-

koun and Jabri, have focused their research projects on the critique of Islamic and Arabic reasons; because the root and the main cause of the lack of progress in Islamic societies are considered to be the quality of the ruling intellect in society, which is described in the topic of readings. In general, it is important for the neo-Mu'tazilites in the field of an epistemology of human intellect and interpretation; But the main difference in this regard is that the neo-Mu'tazilites, especially the second wave of neo-Mu'tazilites in epistemology, have been influenced by modern and postmodern philosophical schools.

According to the new philosophies in their epistemology, the neo-Mu'tazilites pay special attention to these categories: Scientism; Empiricism; Objectivism; Relativism; Consensus and discourse understanding of Arkoun's proposal; Controversial and dialectical (dialectic of text, context, and text), skepticism, hermeneutics (mostly neo-Mu'tazilites), genealogy of revelation; Aql (Arkoun, Jabri Abu Zayd); Phenomenology (phenomenology of revelation); Semiotics and linguistics (Quranology of Arkoun and Abu Zayd) and all other elements and tools of modern epistemology. In the meantime, it can be said that genealogy, semiotics, and postmodern ideas have been very powerful tools in the hands of the neo-Mu'tazilites. Arkoun and Abu Zayd categorize the basic features of cognition as follows: 1- Relativity of cognition; 2- Variability of cognition; 3- Dynamics of cognition; 4- Dialectical nature of cognition; (There are two-way relationships between society and the historical period and the cognitive mind, and the historical period defines our cognitive paradigms.) 5. Absolute truth is "revelatory" and is hazy, mysterious, and inaccessible; As a result, no one can claim to have access to the Absolute Truth, and consequently one can claim the Absolute

Truth (this false world). Absolute truth does not exist (in human cognition), and everything is relative, Abu Zayd said in this regard, "Knowledge is relative, but divine truth is absolute." They believe that although the idea of "truth" is a relative thought, this relativity means cultural relativity, not intrinsic relativity (Abu Zayd, 2013, p. 42).

Nasr Hamed Abu Zayd's epistemology (which can be said to include other neo-Mu'tazilites) is based on three cognitive principles. First, human beings have the power to acquire knowledge and its tools based on divine justice. Second, cognition is relative and fallible because it is human and with limited tools. The third principle is the result of the previous two principles; because man has cognitive ability but is relative and has the form of evolutionary evolution. As a result, we must take a critical approach to cognition. (Abu Zaid, 2010, p. 72)

### **Neo-Mu'tazilite Anthropology**

Neo-Mu'tazilite anthropology is a combination of philosophical and scientific anthropology. In the philosophical dimension, they are influenced by the classical Mu'tazilites and share these aspects with the classical Mu'tazilites. Intellect; The necessity of rationality; Equality of man in receiving the blessings of reason; Their definition of human intellect; Emphasis on the ability of human intellect and authority. (Razani, 2016, p. 162) According to the neo-Mu'tazilites, man, as a part of existence, is a creation of God and the manifestation of God's will; Body and soul are both creatures of God and both are honorable. Existence is divided into two parts, God and the world of creatures, the special and general revelation is the means of communication, and the world of the creation includes essences and manifestations. (Wasfi, 2008, p. 70) In the neo-Mu'tazilite views, the

human intellect is an esoteric and God-given soul that does not contradict the law of the prophets; according to this, the human intellect is the criterion of knowledge and the means of discovering the divine truth. And in the scientific and modern dimensions of neo-Mu'tazilite anthropology, it can be said that they emphasize the need to pay attention to material, spiritual and artistic needs, the need for freedom, welfare, and equality (including equality between men and women). (Abu Zayd, 2006, p. 103)

### **Neo-Mu'tazilite axiology**

In terms of axiology and philosophy of ethics, it can be said that most neo-Mu'tazilites, like the classical Mu'tazilites, believes in the goodness and ugliness of reason in ethics. In other words, in the field of value and morality, the human intellect is considered capable of distinguishing between good and evil. In other words, "intellect" is the supreme criterion in distinguishing between good and evil; and they consider the rules of reason to be signed by God. (Wasfi, 2008, p. 11) Most Mu'tazilites and neo-Mu'tazilites emphasize the value of "thinking and reasoning freedom of action, responsibility and inviting to what is good and forbidding what is evil"; they also consider the goal of religion and sharia to be happy in this world. (Wasfi, 2008, p. 73) Jaber criticizes Ibn Sina with his challenging claim that "religion is for human happiness and the message and guide of life for this world"; why he had made happiness supernatural. (Wasfi, 2008, p. 61)

But neo-Mu'tazilite modernism, influenced by the values of modernity, upholds values that are distinct from Mu'tazilite axiology. For example, Abu Zayd believed that "beauty and art" are closely related to religion and emphasized the freedom of artistic activities and freedom of expression as fun-

damental values. (Abu Zayd, 2013, p. 83) In general, the fundamental values of the neo-Mu'tazilites are humanism; Attention and emphasis on religious, political, educational, research, and personal freedom and human rights issues; Growth and development, and the right to critique and research.

### **Theology Fundamentals**

The neo-Mu'tazilites have several theological foundations, two of which are discussed here:

A- Separation of religion from religious knowledge; Some neo-Mu'tazilites such as Fadl-ur-Rehman, Abu Zayd, Arkoun, Soroush, and Mujtahid Shabestari believe that Islam is the narration and understanding of the Holy Prophet from the religion of Islam; As when receiving revelation through the Prophet, the divine revelation and word become personal and Arabic words. From another perspective, Abu Zayd and Arkoun claim that knowing and narrating the elders and jurists of religion is not a sacred thing because their narration is about religion. Another argument put forward by Abu Zayd and his genealogical roots in the ideas of the ancient Mu'tazilites; That the religion and the word of God are an absolute category with God and the word of God is equal to the whole universe; This means that the whole universe is the word of God, and if we accept that the Holy Prophet is the recipient and transmitter of the whole word of God, we have somehow become polytheism. (Abu Zayd, 2010, p. 521)

B- Intrinsic and transversal separation of religion; Neo-Mu'tazilites based on the division of the text of the Qur'an into various contexts, including the context of Madani and Meccan verses, the context of general and partial affairs, and the context of the case and environment; Also by opposing the traditional partisan interpretation and emphasizing the

main and general purpose of the Qur'an and believing in the historicity of the Qur'anic rules; They believe that those rulings should be considered as contradictory. (Abu Zayd, 2010, p. 65) Not only is it not necessary to act on them today, as Fadl-ur-Rehman wrote; "The insistence on literally implementing the rules of the Qur'an is to turn a blind eye to the social changes that have taken place so far or are now taking place openly before our eyes; "And this means defeating the socio-values and goals of the Qur'an." (Goli and Yousefian, 2010, p. 80)

The oppositions of religion are the product of specific temporal and spatial conditions and have been influenced by those conditions; these transitions could have come down in other ways. In some discussions, another meaning is mentioned for the essence or essence of religion and we divide what has been revealed to the prophets into two parts, intrinsic and transverse. In other words, the part of a religion that forms the structure of religion is inherent and the part whose task is to transfer nature from one culture to another and from one period to another; And in each period and culture it takes a special shape, it is called transverse. (Arab Salehi, 2011, p. 93)

#### **Post-structuralist and post-modern neo-Mu'tazilite reading: Mohammad Arkoun**

Mohammed Arkoun (1928-2010), an Algerian philosopher and professor of Islam at the Sorbonne, was one of the most prominent neo-Mu'tazilites. Like other Islamic modernists and neo-Mu'tazilites, he is a critic of traditional Islamists. He is also a critic of violence, formalism, and religious dogma. The challenge between critical intellect and dogmatic intellect was the foundation of his problem. (Arkoun, 2014, p. 61) He believed that scientific research on religion was necessary to find a way out of this problem. Ar-

koun's fundamental purpose and problem were how to free the critical intellect from the epistemological shackles of dogmatic intellect. Arkoun's goal is "non-ideological analytical and interpretive critique." This means that in the analytical critique of religion, attention should be paid to all objective and subjective issues and it should be free from the theological and ideological presuppositions governing Islamic societies (Arkoun, 2014, p. 125). He had concluded that the fourth century AH (the peak of Eetezali thought) was created in the Islamic civilization of open space and rationality shone and small modernity was formed. The pillar of the history of Islamic thought consists of:

- 1- Classical era (1st to 5th century) full of creation and innovation.
- 2- The scholastic period (fifth century until now) suffers from repetitive repetitions, annotations, and descriptions. (Arkoun, 2014, p. 91)

Arkoun went in search of its causes and criticized Islamic reasons. As his main project is "Critique of Islamic reason" and in this critique, he considers the influence of the discourse of power and ideology as the main factors in the lack of growth of Islamic societies in recent centuries. (Arkoun, 2015, p. 35)

#### **Critique of Islamic Reason**

Arkoun distinguishes "intellect" from several points of view, in the main division he claims that we have two types of cognition and intellect, scientific and religious. He compares the two intellects comparatively but does not aim to determine the value and superiority of one over the other. According to him, the goal is not even integration and compromise between them, but the purpose of explaining their practical consequences (Arkoun, 2017, p. 76). The purpose of the critique of Arkoun

Islamic reason is to discover the factors and elements that govern the action of the thinking intellect, forces, and factors that conflict with each other. According to him, Islamic reason will not be used to create thought until it is criticized; criticism is to get rid of imitation. Arkoun means intellect in the project "Critique of Islamic intellect". Reason in the general sense is the common queen among human beings (Arkoun, 2017, p. 34).

According to Arkoun, dogmatic intellects are 1- religious fundamentalists, 2- extremist secularists, 3- extremist scientists, 4- technocrats, 5- propagandists.

Arkoun claimed that there is no Islamic intellect, there is Islamic intellect, Shafi'i intellect, Hanafi intellect, Shi'a intellect, Mu'tazilite intellect, and other intellect, but the supreme intellect is the "revelatory" intellect. All these mentioned intellects surrenders (in other words): they are in the direction of revelatory intellect, but the method of obedience is different. (Arkoun, 2017, p. 137)

### Arkoun Suggestions

1. Arkoun claims that we can reconstruct rational theological human religious thought in two phases and step by step.

Step One: Purify (reform) all the ideas that Islam alone can counteract the phenomenon of globalization and "science"; and the remove and correction of all the claims of the "dogmatic secularists" who claim that they can be flagged with "pure reason" at this important stage and claim to solve all problems.

The next step: is to analyze "revelation" within the "integrated epistemological space", to "recover" the "religious symbols" that have fallen into disrepair; Join modern secular-

ism in exploring new meanings. (Arkoun, 2017, p. 75)

- 2- From Arkoun's point of view, combining theology with humanism is necessary and the key to success.
- 3- Ijtihad with new methods is necessary for human freedom. Read Islamic heritage in the light of the latest linguistic and historical methods, sociology and anthropology; Then we get a comprehensive philosophical assessment of this heritage; And based on language and logic, we reach a consensus on knowledge and communicative rationality in religion and ijthad, like Habermas's theory of communicative action. (Arkoun, 2017, p. 69)
4. Traditional scholars must take the example of the scholars again, and it is necessary to mediate modern faith and requirements.
- 5- Religious modernism should not hurt the conscience of faith.

### The Relationship between Religion and Politics in the Thoughts of Mohammad Arkoun

*Religion and secularism in the view of Mohammad Arkoun*

One of the political ideas of Mohammad Arkoun is the association of religion and secularism. In a process optimistic about the mystical current, he believes that religion can survive with secularism, even better than it does today; and play its historical role in the field of spiritualization and moralization of human life. But the secularism that Mohammad Arkoun speaks of is not the kind of secularism that is commonly portrayed in newspapers, newspapers and the media; rather, it is secularism that calls itself positive, and in contrast to Arkoun's negative secular-



ism, it organizes this process with a comparative approach to the history of religions. And he believes that, as people like Rojer Bastide have spoken of comparative anthropology, they have advanced it through comparison and adaptation; Secularism and religion in the Islamic world can also, according to the history of Christianity in the West and comparison with it, begin to coexist and coexistence. (Arkoun, 1990, p. 275) What Mohammad Arkoun has constructed as a comparative Islamology is not just a concept aimed at rejecting the methodology of Orientalism, which he calls classical Islamology; rather, he wants to take another approach to think about religion and religious teachings.

In other words, according to Arkoun, secularism is more a method and a kind of thinking than a political problem and dilemma. In this regard, Burhan Ghalioun agrees with Arkoun; Secularism is a theoretical method through which a real problem is posed, but the problem itself is not real. In other words, secularism is a way in which attitudes turn into problems. That is, to problems that can be determined and demarcated and provide answers and solutions to it. The reason for this is that reality itself is an abstract thing and is like a Hyle in Greek philosophy. Therefore, there must be a rational form to act on it and make it achievable, controllable, and worthy of interacting with and with it.

Arkoun also divides secularism into positive and negative aspects. Because negative secularism is the militant and anti-religious aspect that has always existed, Muslims' perceptions of secularism today are often the same. As some similar divisions are seen among Persian-speaking Muslim intellectuals; In one of his speeches, Dr. Soroush spoke about political secularism and philosophical secularism. (Mirahmadi, 2008, p. 90)

According to Arkoun, secularism that has been formed in some Islamic countries, such as secularism in Turkey, Tunisia, and Morocco, is often from above and was first formed in the minds of the leaders of those countries and then implemented in society. Despite some positive aspects of this type of secularism, he considers it very dangerous in the future. (Arkoun, 2010, p. 79) The Turkish secularism is challenging, and has not been able to cover all aspects of Turkish civil society, especially in its religious dimension. Turkish secularism has dealt with religious elements in such a way that these elements do not seem to exist in society. In other words, he has forgotten them. That is why this kind of secularism, in the view of Mohammad Arkoun, is one-sided and blind to secularism. (Arkoun, 2010, p. 80) Because he dealt with elements such as religion, creed, and ethnicity in such a way that it seems that after the rule of secularism in Turkey, all these elements will disappear. While this has never been and will never be the case, Arkoun strongly opposes the elimination of secularism here, arguing that this is precisely why a model such as Turkish secularism cannot and should not be prescribed to other Muslim societies. (Arkoun, 2010, p. 81)

#### **Secularism from Arkoun's point of view**

But the most important and challenging part of the concept of secularism is where this approach and attitude conflict with religion. It seems that as we will say later in its historical course in the West, the main essence of secularism is de-religionization or religiosity. As one Western writer and scholar points out, six meanings for secularism, almost all of which contain a kind of anti-religious attitude. Larry Shiner equated secularization with the decline of religion, conformity to this world, the liberation of society from the

shackles of religion, the displacement of religious beliefs and institutions, the desecration of the world, and the movement from a sacred society to a secular society. (Mirahmadi, 2008, p. 100)

From Arkoun's point of view, secularism belongs more to the realm of human knowledge than to the discourse of today's media, and whoever wants to condemn the other side for opposing or supporting it. In other words, secularism raises and responds to epistemic challenges more than anything else. Accordingly, secularism has two main responsibilities:

- 1- How can reality be known as it happened? (Arkoun, 2010, p. 10) This, of course, does not mean that we, like the experimental sciences, find all the details of the history of science, but rather how he became aware of the general knowledge of age and a period. In other words, how can one achieve the epistemic mental and intellectual consensus of a time (despite differences and contradictions)? This is where, according to Arkoun, secularism achieves the permanent freedom of human intellect.
- 2- The second responsibility or task of secularism from Arkoun's point of view is that the field of education should be emptied of ideology. That is, when we have been able to obtain the facts and rational space of a period without our presuppositions and preconceptions, we should not pass them through a particular ideological filter. Rather, we must pass it on to others as we have been drafted. Of course, Arkoun says this because he emphasizes that he has been in the field of higher education in France for three decades and has personally experienced them. (Arkoun, 2010, p. 10)

Arkoun emphasizes that if we consider secularism as a process, it is nothing more than what has been said and it has no more than two tasks. In fact, at the end of his discussion, which he presents under the title *What is Secularism*, Arkoun concludes that secularism is nothing more than that. "At least that's what I understand about secularism," he says. Get the facts as we feel they are and are true and pass them on to others and in the social space. Anything other than that is related to our incomplete understanding of knowledge and the intellectual space and the kind of epistemology that has governed a social or religious or cultural phenomenon. It is for this very reason that Arkoun attacks the extremist French secularists here who oppose any religious education in French schools; As well as Muslims who ridicule secularism and feel that secularism seeks to destroy their religious beliefs and teachings.

Mohammad Arkoun divides secularism into two different types; The kind that he says is negative and militant secularism and the kind that is considered positive secularism. (Arkoun, 2010, p. 101)

From Arkoun's point of view, positive secularism has many components. "The secularism I call secularism is positive and active secularism, which means cultural attachment to the world and acceptance of intellectual responsibility," says Arkoun. I am not afraid to deal with hot and difficult issues, but in dealing with these issues I do not allow myself to prefer one religion over another or one religion over another. I aim to examine the structure of religious reason and the function of religious thought. It does not matter to me what the beliefs and religions are. Themes and details are always different but the mechanism is not the same. What is important to me is the study of rational mechanisms that

have led to the production of various religious and ideological systems. It also studies the social mechanisms by which these ideological systems are used for authoritarian purposes. In other words, the common and non-common mechanisms between the theological and the political and the influence of the two on each other are also important to me. Positive secularism, which aims for peace between different religions, denominations, and tribes, is nothing but this. (Arkoun, 2010, pp. 101-102) As Arkoun concludes, the secularism he proposes never contradicts religions, especially Islamic teachings. Rather, its sole purpose is to remove politics from the presence of religious owners and trustees. This is what he is looking for. Perhaps that is why he compares secularism in Lebanon, which some Lebanese groups call for, with Turkish secularism. According to Arkoun, if secularism is seen in Lebanon and the problems of ethnic and religious tribes and groups have been solved to some extent, it is because it has targeted and formed a political and social problem. (Arkoun: 2010, p. 278) Secularism in this case is not only against religion but will also be based on the means and ends of religion. Because it is because being critical and trying to understand and think that pits secularism against authoritarian and totalitarian regimes. It seems that religion wants nothing more than that.

Arkoun calls for secularism that is open to man and encompasses all aspects of his life. Even the religious and spiritual dimensions of life without one dimension of life-dominating the other dimensions. That is why Arkoun denounces secularism, which places religion only on the shelf as an ancient and ancient being, and demands that religion should be able to play its spiritual role in all areas of human life. (Arkoun, 2010, p. 278) The secularism that Arkoun calls for has the

essence of knowledge that seeks the freedom and liberation of human knowledge from all external constraints and dominations; It does not matter whether the shackles are from religion or the world is from religious men or kings and sultans, from religious ideology or non-religious. Anything that prevents society from being renewed and enlightened is reprehensible, even if it is in the form of secularism.

According to Arkoun, the fact that Muslims always repeat that Islam is the religion of this world and the hereafter is true in one sense, but it is the meaning they mean. When Muslims say such a thing, they often mean that religion controls worldly affairs and all aspects of life, as well as the affairs of the Hereafter. In other words, Muslims feel that when in Islam they oppose monasticism and professional asceticism of religions such as Christianity, it means that the religious leaders also wear the robe and the robe of the caliphate and the Imamate, and the monarchy. While the main purpose of Islam has been that religion should not be pushed into the posts of churches and mosques like Christianity and no help should be taken from it in life. The important thing is that religion should not be ruled over the intellectual and customary aspects of life in such a way that it ignores everything and argues.

What can be deduced from Arkoun's view of secularism is what Ghalioun's argument has expressed in one sentence: The root of the negation of the principle and system of monasticism in Islam comes from here. In the Islamic view, power, government, society, politics, work, business, invention, marriage, and otherworldly affairs are accepted by the Shari'a, and the Shari'a did not come to change it, overthrow it, or mobilize people against it. This fundamental denial of the rupture of the human soul and body and the ac-

ceptance of the two-way perfecting relationship between the two and taking it as the basis of human unity and unity was the cause of the success that Islam achieved.

### **Secularism in Islam**

With the meaning that Arkoun offers of secularism, we can find many examples in Islamic history that flowed because of a kind of secularism. Arkoun does not confine modernity and the current of modernity to a particular time and place, so he does not confine secularism to a time and place. For this reason, he always mentions examples in the history of Islam, albeit with regret and regret, that they were never able to establish themselves at the level of the societies of that time. The first stage and sect that he always mentions as a secular example in the history of Islam is the stage of the Mu'tazilites and the intellectual sect of the Mu'tazilites. He even introduces the Mu'tazilite current as of the intellectual current of the second and third centuries of Islam. (Arkoun, 2000, p. 60) The Mu'tazilites were originally a stream that crawled into their ears to think, not deviate from religious traditions and teachings, as the orthodox current called it. According to Arkoun, the Mu'tazilites in their time undertook two basic tasks, each of which could be the beginning of a great epistemological and intellectual break; Thinking about the principle of revelation and what it is, as well as about Greek philosophy that entered the Islamic world in the second century AH. (Arkoun, 2000, p. 60)

In the first part, as soon as the Mu'tazilites, after thinking about revelation, concluded that the Holy Qur'an was created; It was a sign of a great determination in the process and understanding of the Holy Quran in this world, especially an important phenomenon such as revelation. This issue is even

more important and sensitive to the thought of the religious thinkers of the thirteenth century in the West; When all ideas about religion and religious teachings changed and people like Calvin and later Luther came up with new interpretations of religion and religious phenomena. And that was the beginning of the Western Renaissance. Because the creation of the Holy Quran meant that for the first time the Qur'an was exposed to the language and culture of the time. Naturally, language and culture are human industries, and that amount was enough for a discontinuous and rational movement so that we do not suffer the same fate as we do today. But alas, the orthodox current and also the caliph of that time, Al-Qadir Bellah, did not allow this current to rise and grow. Of course, from Arkoun's point of view, Mu'tazilite thought was not only based on the depth and truth of religion but also had other reasons. In other words, the Eetezali movement owed more to the growth of thought as well as to the social and even economic atmosphere of its time than to religion. In Arkoun's view, therefore, secularism must be sought in five fundamental areas; Intellectual field, religious field, political field, economic field, and cultural field. (Arkoun, 2000: p 60)

### **Consequences of secularism**

One of the issues raised by Arkoun is the possible consequences of secularism in Islamic thought. As we mentioned before, secularism has no value in itself. In a sense, secularism is neutral. The only positive aspect of secularism is that human reason must be freed from any shackles. In society and everyday life, man must act in a way that his intellect commands, and nothing else. It seems that this amount has no opposition to religion and other social institutions. But if secularism is formed and man can free him-

self from the shackles of the unthinking, the unthinkable, and the taboos of thought, what will be achieved? In answer to this question, Arkoun raises four basic axes as the consequences of secularism in the Islamic world, each of which, of course, is of fundamental importance in the process of formation of Islamic modernity.

As mentioned earlier, Arkoun introduces modernity in two ways; one is the formal modernity that is mostly manifested in the form of technology and the other is the intellectual modernity that determines the way of thinking and thinking. What is important from Arkoun's point of view is the second type. He also pays attention to this part when counting the consequences of secularism. In the sense that everything counts as the result of secularism related to intellectual modernity rather than superficial modernity, the dialogue between Islam and Christianity as two symbols of East and West is one of the most important foundations of intellectual modernity. If such a thing is formed, the relationship between East and West, which has always been hostile and has always been accompanied by misunderstandings and allusions, will become a rational relationship and dialogue. Because these two religions, as a symbol of the culture of the East / Islamic world and the West / Christianity, make the process of dialogue and relationship cultural and take it out of the state of enmity and militancy.

1- Interfaith dialogue: One of the most important issues for human beings today is the dialogue of religions. Religions, especially Islam and Christianity, as two great religions with many followers in the East and West of the world, need to sit down for a conversation. The need for dialogue between Islam and Christianity lies in the fact that much of the violence in the world today is seen as the result of religious bigotry. Terror-

ism and the ambitious goals of fanatical religious people have obscured many human fields in the world. There is no doubt that interfaith dialogue is a necessity today and has many consequences. But the important question from the point of view of someone like Arkoun is where and what can be the starting point of dialogue and dialogue? This question is important in that many talks have taken place so far, and many international meetings are held every year in the East and West of the world, but it has not yet yielded practical results. The secret of this point, according to Mohammad Arkoun, is that the dialogue often takes place on issues that will be nothing but the prolongation of religious disputes. For example, raising theological and theological problems such as revelation, prophecy, the Trinity, monotheism, the trinity, and infallibility, not only do not reduce the problems but also increase the problems. Because such dialogue takes place only through traditional and classical dialectics and imitative religious language. The vocabulary and culture of traditional dialogue are full of ambiguities and misunderstandings. (Arkoun, 2000, p. 53)

That is why he suggests that another way should be found for dialogue. In this new direction, first of all, it must be based on the knowledge of anthropology, language, and new history. According to this method, one can rely on religious connection points and starting points. What has so far been called religious tolerance is incomplete and divisive in Arkoun's view. Because when we talk about religious tolerance, not only do we not put aside differences and the foundations of hostility, but we also emphasize them and assume their existence. On the other hand, if we look at the essence of religions and study the ends of religions, we come to a single source. In other words, religions and their

leaders must jointly and religiously project religious responsibilities in the public sphere of the world; And then talk about the negative consequences that these problems can have and the solutions that religions provide for those problems. Entering traditional literature and immersing oneself in the theological and jurisprudential terms of religions can only add to the problems. According to the pillar of religions, based on the new epistemology, human problems and issues should be raised and answered with a new perspective. This is not possible unless we create a completely secular atmosphere free from religious restrictions before discussing and raising the general problems of human beings. (Arkoun, Religion, and Knowledge: p. 53) Here, Arkoun more or less approaches that ideal of idealism, which is referred to as the "ideal verbal state." From the point of view of the pillars of religions, they can only have a dialogue in a secular atmosphere, where human wisdom is pre-existing and free from presuppositions, and such a dialogue will be fruitful.

Thus, Arkoun believes that the foundations of philosophical and epistemological secularism will first be formed in the minds of religious communities and then spread to the public sphere. Hence, secularism in the field of global dialogue of religions does not go to just one address, but it is the field that it has in mind; one is in the hands of the West and the other is in the hands of the East. It is natural that the focus of the dialogue of religions will no longer be theological and theological concepts, but will be the main spiritualizing and spiritualizing contexts for human beings today and tomorrow. It is here that religions must recognize their responsibilities and share the ultimate responsibilities among themselves.

2- Human Rights: According to Arkoun, human rights are current that emerged as a result of the philosophical reflections of Enlightenment philosophers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; Finally, these philosophical reflections were reflected in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, published in 1968. Although we will skip the philosophical discussions and discussions of human rights and provide a simple definition of them; Human rights are what is stated in this Declaration on the Freedoms and Rights of Individuals. But the main foundation of all these declarations consists of two basic principles; one is the right to freedom and the other is the right to equality. From Arkoun's point of view, it seems that the materials and principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are not so much theoretically and theoretically problematic. In this regard, they have created such a threat to human rights that under its cover, they justify and interpret any immoral treatment of others through human rights. (Arkoun, Cases in the Critique of Religious Reason, p. 190)

3- Democracy: Naturally, the first and most important outcome for secularism is the political outcome. The only form that can be imagined in the political arena, especially governance, for a post-secular world is the system of democracy. According to Arkoun, the most important and other intellectual of the Arab world, in today's world there is no talk of the possibility of democracy but its necessity (Mirahmadi, 2008, p. 82).

### **Religion, the world, and government in the thought of Mohammad Arkoun**

One of the most important controversies that have now arisen among the thinkers of the Islamic world is the controversy over the three main poles; Religion, government, and

the world. According to Mohammad Arkoun, even the issue of ethics can be interpreted and re-examined through this process and the process of linking religion, government, and the world. Religion in the view of Mohammad Arkoun can refer to three concepts and meanings; one is religion, which means the spiritual and moral life of man, as opposed to the French word "religion". Second, religion means reward, and third means custom and habit. The above three meanings reflect the lexical meaning of religion to some extent. But the general meaning of religion, which can be derived from the concepts of Qur'anic terms, includes something of a set of lexical meanings. From this point of view, religion is one of the duties and responsibilities that God has made obligatory on His wise servants or, according to Gorgani, on those who have intellect. (Arkoun, 1991, p. 46)

The world also belongs to everything that is on earth and earthly. The world, meaning the earthly and material life of man, has always conflicted with religion. Because religion has always been associated with the concept of the hereafter and the afterlife, while the world is associated with material life and this world, and the state includes the world of politics and human social life. (Arkoun, 2008, p. 79)

The state is nothing but the political embodiment of human life in which religion and the world are united. (Arkoun, 1990: p 46) Arkoun criticizes those who always emphasize that Islam is a mixture of religion and the world. According to Arkoun, the fact that one of the most important Sunni religions, the Hanbalis, distinguishes between the infallible religion and the variable religion, is the reason for the contradiction between the unity of politics and religion. According to Hanbali thought, religion is of two types:

A- The religion is infallible from any change that includes belief and worship.

B. Religion that can be changed according to the time and place of religion in this sense includes ethics and transactions.

Also, many schools of thought in the Islamic world believe that the Holy Qur'an does not mention many of the details that affect a man during his social and earthly life. These two issues show that the Qur'an has also given a very wide and wide opportunity for human life that should be considered based on human thought and thought and the Qur'an has not said anything in those cases. In other words, the worldly and social life of man has not been completely under the tutelage of religion and religious teachings. (Arkoun, 1990, p. 46)

According to him, this is an amalgam that Orientalism still beats. As classical and orthodox Islam does. That is why Arkoun wants to express and discover the formation of such thinking based on his genealogical and historical methods. In his view, there are four basic issues in this regard, which are:

- 1- Founding experience: The growth of Islamic intellect and state intellect in the first years of the advent of Islam. (110 and 191 AD)
- 2- The relationship between the three concepts of religion, government, and the world.
- 3- Expanding this interest and the connection between the three concepts of religion, government, and the world, the resistance against this connection. (Arkoun, 1990, p. 144)

From Arkoun's point of view, what matters at this stage is the description of the first topic (expressive experience). Because when we can properly describe and interpret the founder's experience, the other three are automatically resolved and interpreted. Because

when we talk about experience, we have considered a kind of historicity for the first stage of the connection between religion and politics. The word experience is a historical and tangible act that happened to the Prophet of Islam. This experience took place in the light of the realities of life for 23 years.

From Arkoun's point of view, based on the type of historical narrative that traditionally and classically exists from the experience of Medina; There is no doubt that the Prophet of Islam came to Medina and formed a government during the last ten years of his life, and this government is a great example of Islamic and religious government. It is true when it is said in traditional Islam that Islam and politics are separate and that religion and politics are inseparable in Islam in terms of foundations and origins; it cannot be criticized in the first place. Because the Prophet of Islam formed the Islamic State in Medina between 922 and 132 AD, and after his death, the Caliphate was established in Medina between 132 and 991 AD, which was inherently a political institution. This institution then continued in Damascus between 991 and 750 AD and was transferred from Damascus to Baghdad from 750 to 1258 AD and continued its life there (Arkoun, this is the contemporary Islamic thought, p. 175). Also, this is a kind of historical view of political phenomena in the Islamic world with the lines of politics and caliphate from the time of the Rashidun caliphs to the time of the Umayyads, then the Abbasids have recently continued with the Ottoman dynasty. This inscription in history shows that the history of Islamic civilization has not been written yet and many details of large and small historical events remain unwritten. For this reason, from Arkoun's point of view, Islamic history has not been written yet and it must be rewritten (Khalaji, Nondate, p. 277).

As we can see, there is such a history in terms of historical reality and there is no doubt about it. This unquestionable political history in the process of forming the foundation of politics and government in Islam is so strong and definite that it has formed an unmistakable image of the category of "Islamic state" in the minds of all Muslims. In this process, not only concepts and categories called Islamic state but also concepts such as just power, holy domination, religious domination, and also attributes such as caliph, Imam, leader, ruler have been created that express the political view of the Muslim man.

According to Arkoun, if we study history in a classical way or the style of Western Orientalists; The above data is a historical fact and at the top of the chain of politics and government in Islam is the person of the Messenger of God. And after him, the next Muslim caliphs and rulers are in the centuries after the first centuries. But the point is that this process must be based on modern historiography and following the existing methods in political psychology, anthropology, sociology, semiotics, and new methods of critique in modern philosophy and social sciences. For this reason, Arkoun has followed the genealogical analysis of Islamic political reason or, in his own words, the political imagination of Muslims in its Foucaultian sense. For this reason, he starts the formation of the Islamic political mental image from the starting point, which is the experience of Medina / the experience of the founder. There were two types of words in the experience of the founder; the word of God which was revealed to the Prophet and the word of the person of the Prophet which was expressed on various occasions in daily life.

While in the first two centuries AH the Qur'an was written and all the words were overcome and harmonized, everything was



forgotten. It is always repeated that the Qur'an seems to have gathered between religion, state, and the world and stated everything in one place; However, this issue has always been influenced by the fact that the Prophet also played a role during this period and lived among the people as an active and practical person of God's words and accepted many of their cultures and beliefs and acted according to the culture of his time. In other words, while the subordination of political power to divine power is inferred from Qur'anic instructions and verses; The opposite relationship, which is the role of the Prophet's political initiatives in using Qur'anic definitions and concepts to capture consciences, has not been considered. (Arkoun, 1991, p. 223)

Muslims have neglected many psychological, historical, and sociological factors because of the sanctity of the founding experience, also known as the Golden Age. Because Arkoun calls himself a historian rather than a philosopher, in Arkoun's view, history is fundamentally different from traditional and famous history. If we can get from the totality of the Qur'anic discourse and the prophetic discourse how in the experience of the founder of the religion and the state, together and with the help of each other, grew and intertwined and formed the Islamic intellect; We will easily be able to identify and examine the dialectical implications of the two in later Muslim societies.

According to this view, what matters is the historical psychology that he inherits from people like Lucien Febvre and Marc Bloch. He also continues his work, especially in his important book entitled "Islam, Ethics and Politics", which discusses topics such as anthropology and historical psychology, which are based on the ideas of the likes of Georges Balandier and Pierre Bourdieu. Ac-

ording to Arkoun, based on the new methods of historiography known as annual historiography; in history, rather than looking for big and significant issues, we should look for small and small issues that constitute the main themes of history. According to the official and orthodox view of Islam, the turning points that have existed in the history of Islam are always alive in the minds of Muslims and will not be forgotten and should not be forgotten. Because every true Muslim tries to adjust his life based on what he remembers from the past. For this reason, the experience of Medina and the subsequent political experiences still have a special sanctity and greatness for Muslims.

Every Muslim tries to rebuild his life according to the social and political life of the caliphs. This reconstruction and reproduction are provided through historical rhetoric and capitalization. In this way, the nostalgic view of Muslims is distorted and connected to points that are only the great points of history; But history cannot be tracked and traced only in those places. Therefore, according to Arkoun, based on the usual and official Islamic historiography of Islam, only its political turning points in history have been recorded; And many basic and historical points have been missed. That is why, according to Arkoun, Islamic history has not yet been written and must be rewritten. (Khalaji, 1997, p. 277)

According to the new historiography on which Arkoun bases all his ideas before philosophy; Human geography and the prevailing intellectual space are more important than anything else in shaping historical data. If we look at Arkoun's archaeological view, which is based on Foucault's views, we get this. Accordingly, none of the historical sites can be reconstructed and reproduced. Because in the historical view of the anal school, there is a

rupture between historical data and the present; And they can have no connection with the present. From Arkoun's point of view, exactly what has happened in history cannot be reproduced and reconstructed; but it can be researched and studied in certain ways. He sometimes calls his method the "regressive method" inspired by Marc Bloch (Khalaji, 1997, p. 278). According to this method, the researcher starts from the present and gradually goes to the past and examines it.

Sometimes it calls itself the Progressive-Regressive method; Which Hashem Saleh translates into Arabic as the "precedent-translational" method. According to this method, both the past and the present are considered two-way and interactive. From this point of view, no point in history remains reasonable and everything is considered. From Arkoun's point of view, according to the methods used in the critical view, the history of the Medina experience and the golden history after it are studied in the light of the paleontological and genealogical view. One of the consequences of the historical method of anal, which is based on historical psychology, is that it distinguishes between written culture and unwritten culture. According to this view, unwritten culture always resists written culture. For this reason, it is not possible to distinguish well now, after centuries, between pure morality derived from revelation and morality called Islamic idioms. For this reason, Arkoun distinguishes between the three categories of "Islam", "Islamic society" and "Islamic thought". (Arkoun, where is contemporary Islamic thought, p. 110)

As we can see, from Arkoun's point of view, these three categories are in a hierarchical process. In other words, first, there is Islam, which is the revelation of the house from God, and then this revelation is spread in the Islamic society and organizes the social

life of Muslims, and then it gradually becomes an Islamic thought. That is why Arkoun believes that ethics and politics and any other category that is called Islamic today has inevitably gone through such a process. He especially emphasizes the role of written culture and its difference from spoken culture. Because the Qur'an has been written as a book of the law in the lives of Muslims since its inception; From then on, the emerging governments were forced to submit to such a thing and try to carry out all their political and social actions in accordance with the Qur'an. This was done right after Ibn Muqaffa in his *Sahibah Risala* advised Caliph Mansour to establish uniform Sharia and law for the whole of the Islamic Empire. (Khalaji, 2001, p. 279) Of course, the prevalence of spoken culture and its contradiction with spoken culture does not apply only to the Qur'an; The same is true of the written philosophical culture that entered the Islamic world.

Arkoun believes that the moral system of the Qur'an, because it relies on written culture, could not dominate among societies with a spoken culture. This system faced this problem both in its infancy and in this day. (Khalaji, 2001, p. 279) This is important because, from a sociological point of view on the spread of Islam, it can be seen that Islam, wherever it has set foot, has adapted to the local and regional culture there and has never fundamentally changed everything. This is why many indigenous and ethnic ideas have influenced many religious teachings. He cites the example of Islamic Morocco and believes that Islam still does not fully control the lives of the people of Islamic Morocco and that they still live with their ethnic and national culture.

However, according to one scholar, Mohammad Arkoun's approaches to ethics as

well as politics are more diverse and multi-dimensional than ending in a sociological approach alone. In his important book entitled *Islam, Ethics, and Politics*, he tries to study ethics and politics in Islam during the four chapters with the help of semiotic, hermeneutic, deconstructive, and historical methods and approaches. (Khalaji, 2001, p. 286)

In general, from the point of view of Mohammad Arkoun, if we want to have a critical view of the moral and political teachings of Islam; We must reveal many of its hidden points with new methods and determine which doctrine was from the origin of Islam and which doctrine was one of the influential cultures in Islam. Undoubtedly, Islam must be re-recognized as a great religion in the eyes of Muhammad Arkoun. It is not possible to know and identify except by studying and researching in new ways and using the experiences of others. Islam, as a heavenly religion, undoubtedly seeks to spread morality and spirituality in the lives of human beings. But how the morality and spirituality of Islam should dominate life and how the life of human beings should become moral has a lot to say.

### Discussion background

Considering that the relationship between the institutions of religion and the state is one of the important axes of political sociology and is considered one of the topics of today's society; Therefore, many thinkers with various views in this regard have conducted research and thought. Some of the most important works published by researchers in this field are:

- Collection of articles and books of the neo-Mu'tazilite thinkers Nasr Hamed Abu Zayd and Hassan Hanafi from Egypt.
- The works of the neo-Mu'tazilite thinker and thinker, Mohammad Arkoun from Algeria.

- Works and ideas of Dr. Abdolkarim Soroush from Iran.
- Comments of people such as Iqbal Lahori, Seyed Jamaluddin Asadabadi, and Mohammad Mojtahed Shabestari from Iran.
- Hamoudeh (2018), research entitled *Religious Reason and Modern Reason*; Analyzed the views of Ayatollah Javadi and Mohammad Arkoun.
- Maliki and Bakhshaish Ardestani (2016) wrote an article entitled "Reading and its methodology in the thoughts of Mohammad Arkoun".
- Hedayat (2010) conducted a study entitled *The Political Aspects of Critical Thought* by Mohammad Arkoun. In this study, he examines Arkoun's ideas and the relationship between religion and government.
- Wasfi (2009), wrote a book entitled *Interview with Nasr Hamed Abu Zayd, Abed al-Jaberi, Mohammad Arkoun, Hassan Hanafi*.

### Innovation

Even though numerous studies have been conducted to examine the ideas of Islamic sects and especially the ideas of the neo-Mu'tazilite school of thought, each of them has addressed this issue from one perspective. But so far no research has examined the relationship between religion and government in the ideas of neo-Mu'tazilites and in particular the idea of Mohammad Arkoun, which is why the present study is innovative.

### Conclusion

In a general assessment, it can be said that Arkoun's main concern is to restore religion in the context of human life and spiritual life. Because in his view, religion is the only safe and costly refuge that human beings seek in

times of danger and the hardships of life. This role cannot be played by any phenomenon other than religion. According to Arkoun, human life is inevitable from both material and spiritual dimensions. In other words, two religious and worldly factors are two inseparable dimensions of human existence. But these two factors must be properly put in place. As we have explained, Arkoun believes that Islamic ethics should be properly recognized through discourse and critical methods and return to human life. But understanding Islamic ethics and how to return to life is not an easy task. That is why he believes in the secularism of a special kind in politics.

For this reason, many of his thoughts are even considered misleading and attacked. However, some writers have compared Arkoun's works intellectually and culturally to Salman Rushdie's works. We know that this analogy is very biased and far from fair. Because he argues that just as Salman Rushdie questions the revelatory nature of the Qur'an, Arkoun removes the cloak of holiness and holiness from the Qur'an and places it in the process of secular understanding. But we know that Arkoun does not doubt the revelatory principle of the Qur'an, but wants to say that a person who wants to understand something from the Qur'an must study and research the Qur'an in a secular process based on human intellect. Of course, many of Arkoun's remarks are somewhat destructive. He adheres to the concept of "destructive production of meaning", which is one of the concepts created by Julia Cristova; Meaning does not come into being or form unless it is destroyed and replaced by another meaning. Meaning is created only through destruction or on its ruins. The old narrow meaning, which has lost its relevance, must be de-

stroyed to be replaced by a newer, broader, and more inclusive meaning.

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