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An Examination on The Problem of the Legitimacy of Islamic Philosophy in the Maktab-e Tafkik School¹

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Abstract

This study examines the critiques that Maktab-e Tafkik directs at the legitimacy of Islamic philosophy and evaluates the consistency of those critiques. It considers the views of Mirza Mahdi Isfahānī, Muḥtaba Qazvīnī, Sayyid Ja'far Saydān, and Muḥammad Riḍā Ḥakīmī, who are regarded as significant representatives of this Khorasan-centered movement. The school advances two fundamental claims. First, philosophy has come from "outside" and has no connection to the religion of Islam. Second, truth cannot be attained through this externally derived discipline. Our aim is to question the consistency and accuracy of these claims and to assess the issue of the legitimacy of philosophy with conceptual clarity. For the claims in question regarding philosophy seem open to criticism from various perspectives. For example, the school's concepts of "pure religion" and "the boundaries of the religious knowledge" are ambiguous. To take disagreements among philosophers as evidence that the discipline is invalid is a methodological error. The school's claims rest on logical fallacies. A model of knowledge reduced solely to revelation is dogmatic and impracticable. The study is limited to the problem of the legitimacy of Islamic philosophy; comprehensive information on the school's history and biographical analyses are excluded. In this study, the school's anti-philosophical arguments -relatively little known in the literature outside Iran- were systematically brought into the Turkish literature, tested from the perspectives of logic and epistemology. Consequently, it was demonstrated that the claim that philosophy is illegitimate cannot be substantiated. The methodology follows qualitative documentary analysis based on primary texts -the works of the school's representatives- alongside comparative argumentation analysis. Relevant secondary literature is used for support, and the study concludes with a concluding section.

Keywords: Islamic Philosophy, Iran, Shi'a, Philosophical Criticism, Maktab-e Tafkik

Atf

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Mekteb-i Tefkik Ekolü'nde İslam Felsefesinin Meşruiyeti Sorunu Üzerine Bir İnceleme

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Öz

Bu çalışmada Mekteb-i Tefkik'in İslam felsefesinin meşruiyetine yönelttiği eleştiriler ve bu eleştirilerin tutarlılıkları incelenecektir. Horasan merkezli bu hareketin önemli kabul edilen temsilcilerinden Mirzâ Mehdî İsfahânî, Müctebâ Kazvîni, Seyyid Câfer Seydân ve Muhammed Rızâ Hakîmî'nin görüşleri ele alınacaktır. Ekolün iki temel iddiası vardır. Bunlardan birincisi felsefe "dışarıdan" gelmiştir ve İslam dini ile bir bağlantısı yoktur. İkincisi dışarıdan gelen bu ilimle hakikate ulaşamaz. Amacımız bu iddiaların tutarlılık ve doğruluğunu sorgulamak ve felsefenin meşruiyeti meselesini kavramsal açıklıkla değerlendirmektir. Çünkü felsefeye yönelik söz konusu iddialar çeşitli açılardan eleştiriye açık görünmektedir. Örneğin ekolün "Saf din" ve "dinî ilimlerin sınırları" kavramları muğlaktır. Filozoflar arasındaki ihtilafları bu ilmin bâtil olduğuna delil saymak metodolojik bir hatadır. Ekolün iddiaları mantık hatalarına dayanmaktadır. Yalnızca vahye indirgenen bilgi modeli dogmatik ve pratikte uygulanamazdır. Çalışma İslam felsefesinin meşruiyeti sorunuyla sınırlandırılmış, ekolün tarihi ile ilgili ayrıntılı bilgiler ve biyografi tahlilleri dışarıda bırakılmıştır. Çalışmada İran dışı literatürde görece az bilinen bu ekolün felsefe karşıtı argümanları Türkçe literatüre sistematik bir biçimde taşınmış, mantık ve epistemoloji açısından sınanmıştır. Sonuçta felsefenin meşru olmadığı iddiasının temellendirilemediği gösterilmiştir. Çalışmada ekolün temsilcilerinin eserleri olan birincil metinlere dayalı nitel dökümantasyon analizi ve karşılaştırmalı argümantasyon çözümlemesi izlenmiştir. Konuyla ilgili ikincil literatür destek olarak kullanılmış ve çalışma sonuç bölümü ile bitirilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İslam Felsefesi, İran, Şîa, Felsefe Eleştirisi, Mekteb-i Tefkik.

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Introduction

Maktab-e Tafkik is a school that emerged in the Khorasan region of eastern Iran and has a history of approximately one hundred years.² This school, which is basically based on criticism of philosophy and Sufism, mostly relies on Qur'anic verses (āyāt) and narrations (riwāyāt) to discover the truths of existence and to justify their thoughts.³ The most comprehensive information about the name, general framework, and purpose of this school can be found mostly in the works of Muḥammad Riḍā Ḥakīmī (d. 2021). In the scientific journal *Keyhān-e Farhangī*, the 12th issue of which was published in 1992, Ḥakīmī used the term "Maktab-e Tafkik" for the first time, thus officially naming this movement.⁴ After his article in this journal, he wrote a comprehensive book titled *Maktab-e Tafkik*, published in 2004, in order to introduce the general framework of this movement, of which he was a member. In his work, he stated that he used the name "Tafkik" for this movement for the first time and that the school in question was known by this name after him.⁵ With the publication of this book, the term "Maktab-e Tafkik" was officially introduced and became the subject of study by researchers.⁶

According to Ḥakīmī, although it may seem modern, in fact the beginnings of this movement go back to the early periods of Islam. Nevertheless, its first official representatives were some scholars from Qazvin and Khorasan who lived in the 20th century. According to him, although there are many representatives of this movement, there are three important figures. These are Sayyid Mūsā Zarābādī (d. 1934), Mirzā Mahdī Isfahānī (d. 1946), and Shaykh Mujtaba Qazvīnī (d. 1966).⁷ Although the first two of them taught in Najaf, they never met. The third was a student of the first two.⁸

Sayyid Mūsā Zarābādī, whom Ḥakīmī counted among the pillars of the school, wrote various commentaries but did not author any works in the field of rational sciences.⁹ For this reason, we will primarily examine the views of Mirzā Mahdī Isfahānī and Shaykh Mujtaba Qazvīnī regarding the Islamic philosophy of the Tafkik School. Isfahani's work, particularly *Abwāb al-Hudā*, and Qazvini's comprehensive rational reflections on the Qur'ān formed the foundations of this school of thought.¹⁰ However, alongside these, the views of Sayyid Ja'far Saydān (b. 1934) and Muḥammad Riḍā Ḥakīmī (d. 2021), who are considered important representatives of the school today, are also important to us.

It is possible to say that these names are important and influential representatives of the movement. However, it is Isfahānī who stands out among them and is considered the real founder of the movement. When he arrived in Mashhad, he began to criticize philosophy in his jurisprudence classes. Parallel to his fame in the field of fiqh, his critical stance towards philosophy became popular in the region.¹¹ His attitude towards the humanities and philosophy in particular is strict and definitive. Especially after his arrival in Mashhad from Najaf (1922), his attitude towards the humanities became widespread in the region, and his followers spread these views after him.¹²

² Majid Sāqī - Zeynab Ḥosrevī, "Niğāhī ba Marifat-i Dīnī wa Maktab-e Tafkik", *Vakf-i Mīrās-i Jāvidān* 61 (1387), 61.

³ Muḥammad Ḥasan Vakīlī, *Sirāt-e Mustaqīm Naqd-e Mabānīyi Maktab-e Tafkik* (Mu'allif, 1429), 20.

⁴ Moḥammad Riḍā Ḥakīmī, "Maktab-e Tafkik", *Keyhān-e Farhangī* 95 (1371), 5-25.

⁵ Moḥammad Riḍā Ḥakīmī, *Maktab-e Tafkik* (Qom: Intishārāt-i Dalīl-i Mā, 1383), 159.

⁶ Ğulāmhüseyin İbrāhīmī Dīnānī, *İslām Dünyasında Felsefi Düşüncenin Serüveni*, çev. Tahir Uluç (İstanbul: Ketebe, 2020), 3/306.

⁷ Ḥakīmī, *Maktab-e Tafkik*, 1383, 538.

⁸ Sajjad H. Rizvi, "Only the Imam Knows Best' The Maktab-e Tafkik's Attack on the Legitimacy of Philosophy in Iran", *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 22 (2012), 492.

⁹ Ḥoseyn Moẓaffarī, "Mo'arrefi-ye 'Maktab-e Tafkik' va Naqd-e Negāh-e Īn Maktab be Tarjome-ye Falsafe az Yūnānī be Arabī", *Ma'ārif-e Aqlī* 2 (1384), 88.

¹⁰ Mirzā Mahdī Esfahānī, *Abwāb al-Hudā*, ed. Ḥoseyn Mofid (Tehrān: Markaz-e Farhangī-e Enteshārāt-e Monir, 1387), 493.

¹¹ Sayyid Meqdād Nabawī Razawī, *Mirzā Mahdī Esfahānī, az Maktab-e Solūki-ye Sāmīrrā tā Maktab-e Ma'ārif-e Khorāsān* (Tehrān: Negāh-e Muāsir, 1396), 120-121.

¹² Moẓaffarī, "Mo'arrefi-ye 'Maktab-e Tafkik' va Naqd-e Negāh-e Īn Maktab be Tarjome-ye Falsafe az Yūnānī be Arabī", 84.

This school, which is the subject of many studies and researches in Iran, is not well known outside Iran. At this point, it is worth mentioning the article written in English about Maktab-e Tafkik, titled “Only the Imam Knows Best: The Maktab-e Tafkik’s Attack on the Legitimacy of Philosophy in Iran.” The study in question touches upon some fundamental points defended by the Tafkik School and rightly points out that this school emerged in opposition to the philosophy of Mulla Sadra. This study aims to briefly compare two different understandings and introduce the Tafkik School through this comparison. In contrast, our study aims to examine this school’s criticisms and claims regarding Islamic philosophy independently of sectarian concerns, adhering as much as possible to rational principles, and to question the consistency of these criticisms. Therefore, in this study, there will be determinations about the school’s views on philosophy and, from time to time, criticisms of these views.

1. The Basic Claim of the Maktab-e Tafkik

Maktab-e Tafkik is the school that emerged with the claim of separating the path and method of the Qur’an, philosophy and Sufism, which are the three paths in the history of humanity’s contemplation, thought and cognition. This school aims to purify the Qur’anic knowledge, to understand the secret of these marvels and knowledge, and to avoid ta’wil (interpretation), confusion with the thoughts of sects, and the ideas of exegesis and their application. In this way, this school claims that the truth of revelation and the foundations of authentic knowledge will be preserved, and that authentic knowledge will not be tainted by people’s opinions.¹³

Different names are used for this school, such as the Maktab-e Khorasan, Maktab-e Tafkik, or Maktab-e Ahl al-Bayt. According to Saydan, the use of these names does not in itself imply a distinction. In any case, the aim is to separate the humanly produced knowledge from the divine knowledge and to protect the Maktab-e Ahl al-Bayt and its knowledge from any philosophical and Sufi mixture. Saydan claims that the history of this school coincides with the time of the Prophet’s arrival. This is because, according to him, the Prophet did not repeat the philosophical-sufistic ideas of his predecessors, but proclaimed a different truth.¹⁴

It must be stated that the discourses emphasized by Hakimi, particularly “defining the boundaries of religious knowledge” and the claim of “a pure religion,” refer to a vague domain. To categorize human thought as “human-made” and then completely reject or devalue it not only ignores the richness of intellectual activities but also oversimplifies the complexities inherent in the process of understanding the Qur’an. Furthermore, the attempt by both Hakimi and Saydan to devalue the human knowledge through the comparison they draw between the Qur’an and other knowledge appears to be disconnected from reality.

2. The Problem of the Legitimacy of Islamic Philosophy According to the Maktab-e Tafkik

Maktab-e Tafkik, which claims to separate philosophy from religion, justifies its claim by explaining that philosophy is a knowledge that came to the Islamic world from outside. According to this school, philosophy, which has nothing to do with Islam, has no legitimate ground in religious knowledge. This is a normative claim, not just descriptive. For example, Hakimi states that philosophical issues were incorporated into Islamic principles through the Islamic philosophers al-Kindi, al-Farabi, and Avicenna, and that the foundation of this philosophy was Greek and the system of thought was Peripatetic. According to Hakimi, instead of taking the Qur’an as a basis, philosophers spent a lot of intellectual effort on the Greek philosophical system.¹⁵

Hakimi, who thinks that time should not be wasted in the name of truth with any knowledge whose essence is not revelation, sees this as “an empty endeavor” and asks: “Why did the great thinkers create knowledge in which human ideas were mixed instead of a pure school of revelation? Why didn’t

¹³ Hakimi, *Maktab-e Tafkik*, 1383, 46-47.

¹⁴ Sayid Jafar Saydan, *Ma’refat-e Vahyāni: Majmū’a-ye Maqālāt, Dars-gozāreshā, Goft u Gūhā va Monāzarāt*, ed. Moḥammad Biyābāni Eskūyi (Qom: Intishārāt-e Dalīl-e Mā, 1395), 2/495-496.

¹⁵ Hakimi, *Maktab-e Tafkik*, 1383, 384.

they establish a pure Qur'anic school outside of all human knowledge that cannot be compared to the Qur'an?" After these questions, Ḥakīmī asked why a different approach could not be considered to separate these knowledge that "muddy the revelation" and stated that they had undertaken this task. According to him, identifying and separating the "knowledge of pure revelation" that are mixed with the humanities is not only a scholarly and academic task, but also the way of the "innocents".¹⁶

As is clear from Ḥakīmī's statements, the Tafkīk School is a school that emerged with the claim of separating philosophy from religion. However, the followers of Tafkīk are not content with merely claiming to separate philosophy from religion. They criticize philosophy ontologically for being foreign to the Islamic world and epistemologically for the inability to reach truth through philosophical knowledge. In addition to claiming that philosophy is a foreign knowledge to the Islamic world, the school also tries to show that philosophy is a problematic knowledge in itself. Thus, the school both aims to eliminate the legitimate connection of philosophy with Islam and implies that truth cannot be achieved through philosophy that has no connection with Islam.

2.1. The Case of Mirza Mahdī Isfahānī (d. 1946)

Isfahānī, who is considered the most important representative and founder of the Maktab-e Tafkīk, is also the person who put forward the strictest approach towards philosophy and philosophers. One of the witnesses to Isfahānī's attitude towards philosophy was Shaykh Muslim Melekūtī. Melekūtī states that before Isfahānī, there were great masters of philosophy in Mashhad¹⁷ and philosophy was glorious, but Isfahānī changed this situation and adopted a harsh attitude towards philosophy in his lectures.¹⁸

Moreover, the editorial work *Eḥyāgar-e Ḥowze-ye Khorāsān* reports that Isfahānī's thoughts were completely opposed to philosophy and mysticism. According to the work, among his students were some who had studied philosophy and had turned away from it after Isfahānī's arrival in Mashhad. For example, Muḥtabā Qazvīnī and Hāshim Qazvīnī were like this. Isfahānī is reported to have introduced philosophical topics during his lectures, informing students familiar with philosophy that he was acquainted with the subject matter, not blindly rejecting it, and requesting their guidance where his understanding was lacking. He then rejected these issues with various narrations and verses.¹⁹

When Isfahānī came to Mashhad from Najaf as a distinguished student of Nāinī, he taught fiqh and usul in his first period of teaching. After he became famous in Mashhad, Isfahānī started a new period of teaching called "subjects of ma'ārīf" at the Perīzād Madrasa at night. This course was in fact kalām and aimed to reject the claims of philosophy and Sufism. Thus, the foundations of an anti-philosophy and anti-Sufism school were laid in Mashhad.²⁰

Isfahānī made his opposition to the philosophy not only in his lectures but also in his works. First of all, Isfahānī states that many refutations were written against the people of philosophy and Sufism and that there are too many Qur'anic verses, narrations, prayers, and sermons to count in opposition to these groups. According to him, this is why people avoided these two groups from the time of the "innocents" until his century. Likewise, the people of these two groups also shunned the believers. That is why these two groups (philosophers and Sufis) have concealed their true beliefs among the believers.²¹

At this point, it should be noted that Isfahānī refers to the philosophy and the mysticism as "human knowledge" and calls them "old knowledge" ('ilm-e qadīm). He calls the knowledge of

¹⁶ Ḥakīmī, *Maktab-e Tafkīk*, 1383, 68-69.

¹⁷ For example, during that period, there were well-known philosophy teachers in the region, such as Ḥakīm Shahidi and Sheikh Asadullah Arif Yazdī, in Mashhad. Ḥakīmī, *Maktab-e Tafkīk*, 1383, 249, 219-220.

¹⁸ Razawī, *Mirzā Mahdī Esfahānī, az Maktab-e Solūki-ye Sāmīrā tā Maktab-e Ma'ārīf-e Khorāsān*, 131-132.

¹⁹ Ḥasan Ṭālibiyān Sharīf vd., *Eḥyāgar-e Ḥowze-ye Khorāsān* (Tehrān: Nashr-e Āfāq, 1394), 284-286.

²⁰ Sayyid Ali Khāmanayī, *Gozāreshī az Sābeqe-ye Tārīkhī va Avzā'-e Konūnī-ye Ḥowze-ye Elmiyye-ye Mashhad* (Mashhad: Kongere-ye Jahānī-ye Ḥazrat-e Rezā, 1365), 3031.

²¹ Mirzā Mahdī Esfahānī, *Tarjome-ye Abwāb al-Hudā*, çev. Hüseyn Mofīd (Tehrān: Entešārāt-e Monīr, 1389), 150.

revelation “new knowledge” (‘ilm-e jadīd).²² According to him, the purpose of revelation is to abolish these knowledge (‘ilm-e qadīm). He claims that “the Qur’ān was sent by God to eliminate the principles, subjects and results of human knowledge, to uproot them and to end their relationship with religion until the Day of Judgment.” According to him, the most effective path to guidance lies in abstaining from these human knowledge and purifying religious knowledge from their influence, thereby returning to a “pure religion.”²³ This is because, in his view, the Qur’ān is contrary to human knowledge and information, and has been sent to expose their heresies.²⁴ In addition, the Qur’ān was sent as a “challenger” to human knowledge as well as being in opposition to them.²⁵

His statements on this subject in *Misbāḥ al-Hudā’* are as follows:

“This is clear to those who have received knowledge from the holy universe of the companions and our jurists: The divine knowledge and knowledge that came with the Prophet is to demolish the principles of the ancient knowledge of mankind, to remove intellectual issues and controversial issues, and to guide the people of this world to the world of light by completing the minds and confirming them through the divine “light of knowledge”.”²⁶

It is possible that the reason why the Maktab-e Tafkik, and Isfahānī in particular, took such a strict stance on the humanities is related to this school's view of revelation. In other words, according to them, the revelation brought by the prophets alone is sufficient for human well-being and there is no need for human knowledge. Other knowledge have no function in this regard. Therefore there is no need to learn them.²⁷

Isfahānī's division of knowledge into old and new does not only express temporality; it also implies that there is nothing in common between these two types of knowledge. The old knowledge are human knowledge produced with the limited knowledge of people in the past. When Islam emerged, Islam called them old. New knowledge, on the other hand, are the Islamic knowledge that emerged with Islam.²⁸

These statements of Isfahānī, which represent a rather extreme point, have also been criticized. For example Muhammad Mūsawī says that the claim that there is no need for humanities “stems from an unwarranted bigotry”. According to him, there is no sharī‘ah evidence that the Qur’ān is against human knowledge and that it came down to abolish them. The need for humanities is not a sign of lack or weakness in religion. God has left to the responsibility of human beings what they can reach with their intellect and their ability to understand. But he guided them when their reason was insufficient.²⁹ Moreover, Mūsawī opposes Isfahānī's statement that the Qur’ān is “new” and other knowledge are “old” and states that all knowledge that are in agreement with sharī‘a, truth, and demonstrative method are new, not old. The knowledge that contradict them are “old” regardless of time.³⁰

However, it should be noted that Isfahānī does not only oppose human knowledge; he goes one step further and calls all reasoning, imagination, and conceptions that are attempted to understand religion as darkness. He sees reasoning as the greatest veil over knowledge. According to him, the way out of this is to abandon contemplation. Everyone who is a scholar of “Burhan” has fallen into error and

²² Esfahānī, *Abwāb al-Hudā’*, 113-114.

²³ Esfahānī, *Tarjome-ye Abwāb al-Hudā’*, 100; Moḥammad Riḍā Buḥārī, “Barresi-ye Enteqād-e Maktab-e Tafkik be Kārgerd-e Ma’refat-e Falsafi dar Dīn”, *Ketāb-e Naqd* 65-66 (1391), 107-108.

²⁴ Mīrzā Mahdī Esfahānī, *Ma’ārif al-Qur’ān* (Qom: Mo’assasese-ye Ma’ārif-e Ahl-e Beyt, 2019), 1/258.

²⁵ Esfahānī, *Abwāb al-Hudā’*, 110.

²⁶ Mīrzā Mahdī Esfahānī, *Misbāḥ al-Hudā’*, ed. Mo’assasese-ye Ma’ārif-e Ahl-e Beyt (Qom: Mo’assasese-ye Ma’ārif-e Ahl-e Beyt, 2019), 467-468.

²⁷ Khodāyār Khānī, “Eshāre-i be Didgāh-e Maktab-e Tafkik dar Bāb-e Ma’ārif-e Bashārī”, *Ketāb-e Māh-e Falsafe* 75 (1392), 61.

²⁸ Moḥammadrezā Ershādī Neyā, “Mabānī-ye Fahm-e Dīnī az Negāh-e Maktab-e Tafkik”, *Pajūheshhā-ye Qur’ānī* 21-22 (1379), 243-244.

²⁹ Moḥammad Mūsawī, *Āyīn ū Andīshe: Barresi-ye Mabānī va Didgāhhā-ye Maktab-e Tafkik* (Tehrān: Entešārāt-e Ḥekmat, 1382), 74-75.

³⁰ Mūsawī, *Āyīn ū Andīshe*, 76.

heedlessness. According to him, the way and condition of knowing religious knowledge is to abandon all human knowledge. This is because all human knowledge are old knowledge and the Qur'ān came down as a new knowledge in the face of them. He states that shari'ah and innate knowledge are sufficient, that there is no need for human learning. According to him, the teachers of philosophy are "tricksters" and use their "cunning" to convince students of philosophical matters.³¹

The main reason for Isfahānī's opposition to philosophy is that it come from non-Islamic sources. He uses various quotations to prove that these knowledge date back to Ancient Greece. According to his quotations, Greek wisdom and philosophy emerged after Noah, and Sufism and the view of wahdat al-wujūd, the basis of Sufism, began to develop in the period before the birth of the Messiah.³²

Isfahānī's method against those who engage in philosophy is to first establish friendly relations with them and go to their homes. Then he asks them: "If the Prophet and the 'innocents' came to you now and asked you, 'Are you leaving our word aside and following philosophy? How do you answer them?'" Thus, he drove them away from learning and spreading philosophy.³³

Isfahānī thinks that this was the way of the salaf and claims that the ulema, muhaddiths, and jurists were all guided by the light of God and did not follow the discourses of philosophy and mysticism. According to him, these people avoided these two forms of human knowledge in their books and discourses. This is because the people of philosophy and Sufism believed in the perpetuity of the universe, denied corporeal resurrection, and pursued beliefs such as the unity of existence. The community of scholars stated that they had left Islam.³⁴

Mūsawī reacts to Isfahānī's statements about philosophy and philosophers. He is surprised that Isfahānī is so strict against philosophy and philosophers and uses the following expressions:

"I don't know what philosophy and philosophers have done to him that he spares nothing in his deep-rooted opposition to them, even calling them followers of Satan, brothers of the Jews, and even polytheists! By what right does he consider al-Fārābī, Avicenna, Shaykh al-Ishrāq, Ḥāje Tūsi, Mir Dāmād, Şadru'l-Mutaallihīn, Ākhund Nūrī, Hakīm Sabzawārī, Aqā Muḥammadrīzā Qumshehī, Mīrzā Mahdī Ashtiyānī, Allāme Tabātabāi and later philosophers on the same level, and considers them polytheists and followers of Satan?"³⁵

As a result, Isfahānī transformed the region of Mashhad into an anti-philosophical structure.³⁶ He not only rejected philosophy but also openly declared his hostility to it and claimed that revelation was sent to eliminate humanistic knowledge. His aim was to destroy philosophy, which were of Greek origin and accepted among some Muslims, to emphasize the "falsehood" of these knowledge, to unmask their knowledge, and to make their disbelief manifest. He has largely succeeded in his goal.³⁷ Regarding Isfahānī's influence on philosophical thought in the region after his arrival in Mashhad, Dr. Mahdī Khāirī Yazdī makes the following statements: "Mīrzā killed philosophy in Mashhad, buried it and covered its grave!"³⁸

It should be noted that Isfahānī's characterization of philosophy as "satanic" and philosophers as "polytheists" seems to be a reflection of his intolerance of freedom of thought and critical approach. In conclusion, it does not seem possible to agree with his accusations and statements against philosophy and philosophers.

³¹ Mūsawī, *Āyīn ū Andīshe*, 45-46.

³² Esfahānī, *Abwāb al-Hudā*, 116-117.

³³ `Alī Akbar Kawsarī, *Shenākhtnāme-ye Faqīh-e Ahl-e Beyt Āyatullāh Mīrzā Mehdī Esfahānī*, ed. Mo'assase-ye Ma'ārif-e Ahl-e Beyt (Qom: Nashr-e Ma'ārif-e Ahl-e Beyt, 1396), 492.

³⁴ Esfahānī, *Tarjome-ye Abwāb al-Hudā*, 174.

³⁵ Mūsawī, *Āyīn ū Andīshe*, 309-310.

³⁶ Moḥammad Mūsawī, "Maktabī ke Towfiq-e 'Tafkīk' Nayāft!", *Sorūsh-e Andīshe* 5 (1382), 243.

³⁷ Kawsarī, *Shenākhtnāme-ye Faqīh-e Ahl-e Beyt Āyatullāh Mīrzā Mehdī Esfahānī*, 249.

³⁸ Sharīf vd., *Eḥyāgar-e Ḥowze-ye Khorāsān*, 321-322.

2.2. The Case of Shaykh Mujtaba Qazvīnī (d. 1966)

Maktab-e Tafkik's attitude of not recognizing Islamic philosophy as legitimate is not limited to Isfahānī. Another example of this is Shaykh Mujtabā Qazvīnī, who has a background in philosophy.³⁹ First of all, like Isfahānī, he touches upon the extensions of Islamic philosophy and mysticism in Ancient Greece. He explains that through these extensions, human scientists created a path based on conjecture and invention, which continues to this day. According to him, this is why Allah sent the Prophet to all people and these knowledge. That is because these knowledge do not lead one to the goal. With these knowledge, people cannot return to their original nature and know Allah. Qazvīnī places the Qur'ān precisely in opposition to human endeavors and, like Isfahānī, dismisses human endeavors as worthless. According to him, "He regards the Qur'ān as a guiding light, contrasting human ignorance and imagination with divine knowledge, presenting it as a 'new knowledge' in opposition to the 'ancient knowledge.'"⁴⁰

Qazvīnī's opposition to philosophy and mysticism and his belief that they cannot contain the truth can be explained on two grounds. The first of these is the disputes among the philosophical knowledge and those who deal with them. According to him, if one conscientiously reflects on what the philosophers claim, he will see that these claims, which are far from certainty and assurance, are nothing more than conjecture, guesswork, and intuition. At this point, Qazvīnī, without citing any source, attributes to Aristotle the saying, "There is no absolute way in theology, so accept what is ultimately most appropriate."⁴¹ Therefore, he sees the disagreements among philosophers as evidence that they have not attained certainty. According to him, the thoughts of philosophers are conjecture and guesswork. They do not bring knowledge and happiness to other people.⁴²

According to Qazvīnī, there is no evidence that Plato and Aristotle attained perfection and bliss through philosophy. On the contrary, it is clear that they are not perfected. This is because these philosophers left only a few words behind, and these words caused controversy, disputes and problems among their followers. Qazvīnī states that disputation and certainty cannot exist at the same time. In other words, the claim of two truths for every subject implies that it is false. A thing is either true or false. There is no third possibility. However, while some philosophers call something true, others call the same thing false. According to him, these claims are not in accordance with human nature, but are based on the form of demonstration. This is contrary to the truth of human nature.⁴³

The second reason is his belief that the path of philosophy is a special path and is of no use to most people. According to him, if this path is taken as a basis, most people will be deprived of the path of knowledge; People imitate some thinkers or are perplexed by their inability to make a judgment on various problems of philosophy. Qazvīnī's conclusion after these considerations is as follows: "According to the judgment of the rational mind, this path is not satisfactory for the discovery of truths and the attainment of human perfection. Its benefit - if there is any benefit - is very small and for very limited people."⁴⁴

When we look at these reasons put forward by Qazvīnī, we see that they cannot be a justification for ignoring a knowledge altogether. First of all, the fact that there is disagreement in a knowledge or among its followers cannot be a proof that the knowledge is wrong in its entirety. This is because the existence of disagreements in all knowledge, including Islamic knowledge, is a fact. Therefore, this does not only apply to philosophy. His second justification is more plausible. For, not all knowledge can be

³⁹ Ḥakīmī, *Maktab-e Tafkik*, 1383, 243-244.

⁴⁰ Mojtabā Kāzvīnī, *Bayān al-Furqān* (Qazvin: Intishārāt-e Dalīl-e Mā, 1393), 459-460.

⁴¹ Kāzvīnī, *Bayān al-Furqān*, 332.

⁴² Kāzvīnī, *Bayān al-Furqān*, 332.

⁴³ Kāzvīnī, *Bayān al-Furqān*, 342-387.

⁴⁴ Mojtabā Kāzvīnī, *Bayān al-Furqān fi Tawḥīd al-Qur'ān* (Mashhad: Mashhad-e Moqaddas, 1389), 1/36-37.

expected to suit the nature of every human being. But this is not a reason to reject philosophy. It is like an admission that only some people understand philosophy..

2.3.The Case of Sayyid Ja'far Saydān (b. 1934)

Sayyid Ja'far Saydān was one of the figures who exemplified the disagreements of philosophy as a justification for the fallacy of philosophy and made efforts in this regard. In this context, he mentions various groups claiming to reach the truth. The first of these groups are the materialists. Materialists say that the only way to reach the truth is through sense and experience. According to him, the errors of the senses are self-evident, certain and universally accepted. That is why feeling needs a measure other than itself. In addition, the universal principles in various knowledge such as geometry, calculus and physics are accepted by every wise person. However, not every individual feels these universal principles individually and cannot investigate them with the senses.⁴⁵

Saydān says that the second group are the Sufis. According to the Sufis, most of the truth of existence cannot be understood except by means of discovery and insight, and therefore the people of the intellect are incapable and ignorant in most matters. Reaching these truths is beyond the intellect. According to Saydān, this group's view is also misguided and incomplete. Occasional attainment of a truth by means of discovery and insight cannot be the measure and way of attaining the truth. For, first of all, the discovery of each individual is different and opposite from the other. Therefore, another criterion for distinguishing right from wrong is needed. Secondly, what is discovered through observation may be the effect of spiritual exercises and a prelude to mystical unveilings, rather than a direct apprehension of ultimate truth.⁴⁶

The third group is the philosophers. According to him, this group respects only what is rational and does not accept what is not based on reason. This group, like the others, does not accept sharia and revelation as a criterion of truth. In other words, the philosopher does not look at the compatibility of his intellectual conclusions with the Shari'ah. Saydān states that one of the problems of the philosophical method is the unhesitating acceptance of every path that the intellect takes. However, according to him, the fact that philosophers falsify each other shows that the data of the intellect in every matter is not certain, but limited. Therefore, reason is not a sufficient and perfect criterion.⁴⁷

Saydān also thinks that Islamic philosophy is problematic in terms of method and subject matter. The problem in terms of methodology is that philosophers ignore revelation and the knowledge of revelation. The philosopher relies only on his own reason, and this is a wrong method. For, according to him, when the intellect encounters revelation, it judges that it should be utilized. The second problem is that the issues and views are put forward by philosophers. In other words, most of the proofs and evidences in philosophical matters are based on philosophy, which is itself the subject of doubt. According to him, the philosophers' contradictions, refutations, and falsifications against each other testify to the lack of certainty in their reasoning.⁴⁸ Therefore, if the conclusion reached were the truth, there should be no disagreement and the conclusions should be self-evident. As a result, the intellect's ability to attain the truth is limited and it cannot be expected to reach the truth in all matters.⁴⁹

In another work, Saydān states that most of the conclusions reached by philosophy and Sufism are incompatible with the holy Shari'a. According to him, the way to reach the truth is "reflecting upon revelation". He relates that rationally self-evident perceptions are very few. For this reason, the intellect knows that grasping the truth of things is quite difficult and that the limit of recognizing things at the stage of cognition is far away. Therefore, the intellect that encounters revelation judges that revelation is the best guide for recognizing truths. But it is not the intellect itself that causes human beings to

⁴⁵ Sayid Jāfer Saydān, *Ma'ref-e Vahyānī: Majmū'a-ye Maqālāt, Dars-gozāreshā, Goft u Gūhā va Monāzarāt*, ed. Moḥammad Biyābānī Eskūyī (Qom: Intishārāt-e Dalīl-e Mā, 1395), 1/49-50.

⁴⁶ Saydān, *Ma'ref-e Vahyānī*, 1/50.

⁴⁷ Saydān, *Ma'ref-e Vahyānī*, 1/51-52.

⁴⁸ Saydān, *Ma'ref-e Vahyānī*, 1/19-20.

⁴⁹ Sayid Jāfer Saydān, "Maktab-e Tafkīk Chī Mi Gūyad?", *Safīr-e Nūr* 1 (1384), 70.

mistakes in the use of reason, but the method applied to it. This is because, according to him, the intellect is protected from error by its very essence.⁵⁰

Saydān says that a comparison between jurists and philosophers regarding disagreements in a knowledge is incorrect. This comparison is as follows: “The disagreement of philosophers on issues does not imply that this method is not correct, just as the disagreement of jurists does not imply that this method is wrong.” Saydān says that it is not correct to compare the method of philosophy and the method of fiqh and explains this as follows: First, philosophers claim to be certain about “truth” and to reach the truth. But jurisprudence does not claim truth, and the disagreement between them does not contradict what they claim. The rulings of the jurists on many issues consist in bringing assurance on faith. In the second, the fuqaha rely on certainty, which is the Qur’ān, the Sunnah and the injunctions of the “innocents”. Therefore, if they make a mistake in their deduction, they should be excused. It is because, according to him, there is no other way but these. But philosophers, on the other hand, claim truth, and what they say must be certain because it is connected to aqeedah and knowledge. Therefore, if it harbors the slightest doubt, it is necessary to turn away from it.⁵¹

But how to reach the truth? After expressing the limitations of the above-mentioned schools, Saydān claims that in order to reach the truth about existence, in addition to relying on reason, one must recognize its limitations and rely on belief in God, the Prophet's prophethood, and the School of Revelation, which is fixed by the “natural intellect”. After revelation, the hadiths of the Prophet and his followers are sufficient for the truth.⁵²

Therefore, Saydān, like most of the other followers of Tafkik, claims that certainty in knowledge can only be achieved through revelation and the “innocents”. In response to this claim of Saydān, Dīnānī criticizes the approach that emphasizes this dhāhiri/literal understanding based on fiqh and narrations. According to him, the fact that something is dhāhir and that it is pure, as the Tafkiks claim, are two different things. In other words, just as knowledge such as philosophy and mysticism are not pure, neither is fiqh. In the same way that fiqh is pure because it is based on the dhāhir, philosophy is pure because it is based on the esoteric. Moreover, if focusing on the surface of something were to lead one to pure Islam, the Akhbārīs, whom the School of Tafkik did not accept, would be expected to reach pure Islam. But the followers of Tafkik recognize their method as wrong.⁵³

Saydān's presentation of the disagreements among philosophers as evidence of the inability to reach the truth ignores the fact that philosophy is a dynamic and constantly evolving process. Philosophical discussions are essential for the deepening of thought and the presentation of different perspectives. Saydān argues that the senses, mysticism and intellect alone are insufficient to reach the truth and points to revelation as the only way out; But this is a dogmatic approach that ignores the potential of the human mind and other ways of acquiring knowledge. In conclusion, it is possible to say that Saydān's criticism points to a superficial and prejudiced approach that lacks a deep understanding of philosophy.

2.4. The Case of Muḥammad Riḍā Ḥakīmī (d. 2021)

Ḥakīmī, the most prominent representative of the School of Tafkik today, takes a deeper look at the approaches of other Tafkik adherents to the controversies in philosophy and tries to question the legitimacy of philosophy in this context. Ḥakīmī says that philosophers up to Mullā Ṣadrā insistently defended the nobility of essence and accused those who claimed otherwise of going beyond reason. After Mullā Ṣadrā, the nobility of existence was defended, and this time, denying the nobility of

⁵⁰ Sayid Jāfer Saydān, *ad-Diraru'n-Nabawiyya fi Naqd al-Ārā' al-Falsafiyya bā Sharḥ az Sayyid `Alī Mūsawī Daryābārī* (Mashhad: Velāyat, 1391), 35-37.

⁵¹ Saydān, “Maktab-e Tafkik Chī Mi Gūyad?”, 71.

⁵² Saydān, *Ma'ref-e Vaḥyānī*, 1/52.

⁵³ Dīnānī, *İslām Dünyasında Felsefi Düşüncenin Serüveni*, 3/310.

existence was equated with going beyond reason. According to him, this shows that the thought of philosophers is not based on rationality and knowledge, but on imitation.⁵⁴

Ḥakīmī concludes that true knowledge cannot be obtained from any philosophy, school, or art, citing as evidence the inadequacy or falsification of knowledge on many subjects despite the long period and efforts of human history. According to him, there is of course significant knowledge in these knowledge. But there is no way to reach the truth.⁵⁵

Ḥakīmī quotes some philosophers who are authorities in Islamic philosophy in order to support his claim about the controversies and to prove that the foundations of philosophy are “other than mere reason”. For example, a statement at the beginning of Naṣīraddīn Ṭūsī's commentary on *al-Ishārāt*, which Ḥakīmī quotes, reads as follows: “Philosophical matters are mixed with intellectual data and imaginary conclusions. That is why there has never been a consensus throughout human history.”⁵⁶ Again Ḥakīmī quotes Dīnānī as saying of Mullā Ṣadrā, “In most of the issues, Mullā Ṣadrā relies both on profound observations and heartfelt insights and seeks help from logical proofs. But can these two methods be relied upon mutually and equally in the coherent system of philosophy?” According to Ḥakīmī, the answer to Dīnānī's question is negative. He argues that Mullā Ṣadrā's philosophy is solely based on personal mystical insights, therefore making the claim of a coherent system employing both reason and intuition dubious.⁵⁷

Ramazānī objects to Ḥakīmī's quotation about Ṭūsī. According to him, Ḥakīmī's statement is similar to a distinguished jurist saying: “Ijtihad and acquiring knowledge or deduction is a very difficult task. There is a possibility of making big mistakes in fiqh. Therefore, sometimes in the path of ijtihad in fiqh, evidence that is not valid is mistakenly substituted for valid evidence. Ijtihad requires certain premises and conditions, and if a person learns all the premises and conditions, he can obtain the correct Ijtihad. Otherwise he will make a mistake.” According to Ramazānī, if one does not examine the wording thoroughly and concludes on the basis of some sentences that “this jurist has admitted that all jurisprudence is wrong,” and likewise if one concludes that “his reliable proofs have been replaced by unreliable ones and that all jurists are always in disagreement,” this is not a correct conclusion. Ramazānī likens Ḥakīmī's situation to this.⁵⁸

Ḥakīmī takes his remarks to an extreme and claims that the inherent thinking of the ordinary people is closer to the truth than that of philosophers. He considers Dīnānī, who criticizes him for this opinion,⁵⁹ unjust and quotes Mullā Ṣadrā to prove his point: “From what we have said, it is clear that the existence of Paradise, Hell and the states of the Hereafter, as understood and imagined by the ordinary people, is true, corresponds to reality, and it is obligatory to believe in them with certainty.”⁶⁰

Ḥakīmī states that Dīnānī, who criticized him, either did not see or ignored Mullā Ṣadrā's statements and that such people know philosophy as intellection and intellection as specific to philosophy. He says that although great Islamic philosophers such as Tabātabā'ī expressed the incompatibility of philosophy and religion, people like Dīnānī ignored and avoided them. Ḥakīmī takes Dīnānī's statement, “Man is a seeker of truth and reality according to his own nature and inherent nature...” as a confirmation for himself, and says that Dīnānī has also come out of the heedlessness of avoiding the importance of inherent nature in absolute terms.⁶¹

In order to prove his opinion, Ḥakīmī quoted philosophers and tried to prove that there is no absolute knowledge in philosophy with the confessions of philosophers. However, it should be noted

⁵⁴ Moḥammad Riḍā Ḥakīmī, *Aql-e Sorx*, ed. Moḥammad Kāẓem Ḥeydarī - Moḥammad Esfandi-yārī (Qom: Intishārāt-i Dalīl-i Mā, 1391), 36.

⁵⁵ Moḥammad Riḍā Ḥakīmī, *Kalām-e Jāvedāne* (Qom: Intishārāt-i Dalīl-i Mā, 1392), 93-94.

⁵⁶ Moḥammad Riḍā Ḥakīmī, *Marām-e Jāvedāne* (Qom: Intishārāt-i Dalīl-i Mā, 1386), 125-127.

⁵⁷ Ḥakīmī, *Marām-e Jāvedāne*, 125-127.

⁵⁸ Ḥasan Ramazānī, “Naqd va Barresī-ye Nesbathā-ye Moḥammad Riḍā Ḥakīmī be Faylasūfān”, *Nazar va Naqd* 22 (1396), 134.

⁵⁹ Dīnānī, *İslām Dünyasında Felsefi Düşüncenin Serüveni*, 3/305-306.

⁶⁰ Moḥammad Riḍā Ḥakīmī, *Ma'ād-e Jismānī dar Hekmat-e Mota'āliye* (Qom: Intishārāt-i Dalīl-i Mā, 1388), 322-323.

⁶¹ Ḥakīmī, *Ma'ād-e Jismānī dar Hekmat-e Mota'āliye*, 323-324.

that it does not seem realistic to prove with a few quotations that a knowledge as a whole is inadequate in reaching the truth and therefore a futile endeavor. Moreover, even if Ḥakīmī is right in his claim, it does not seem reasonable for all philosophers to spend their lives pursuing something that they know they will not achieve anything in the end.

2.5. Some Answers to the Claims of the Maktab-e Tafkik

There have been various criticisms of the Maktab-e Tafkik's claims and opposition to philosophy. One of the critics of their claims is Sayyid Hasan Islāmī. He argues that the majority of the Maktab-e Tafkik doctrines lack rational justification and amount to sophistry (*mugalata*). He then proceeds to outline their arguments, categorizing them into five distinct types of sophistical reasoning. These sophisms, in brief, are as follows:

1- The first is a sophism of "origin." This involves attributing the validity or invalidity of an idea solely based on its geographical, personal, or historical source. Maktab-e Tafkik's frequent assertions that philosophy and Sufism are derived from Greek, Indian, or Gnostic origins exemplify this type of sophism.⁶² For example, Ḥakīmī claims that these philosophies, which are not rooted in Islam, amount to an injustice inflicted upon the human soul.⁶³

2- The second sophism involves judging an idea based on the intentions or characteristics of its proponents. Isfahānī's statement exemplifies this: "For anyone familiar with the Caliphs' policies, the reason for the translation of philosophical works and the spread of Hellenistic mysticism is as clear as day. The aim of this policy was to suppress the knowledge of the Ahl al-Bayt and alienate people from them." This line of reasoning attacks the perceived motivations behind the dissemination of philosophical and mystical ideas rather than addressing the ideas themselves.⁶⁴

3- The third sophism is akin to the "straw man fallacy." This involves misrepresenting an opponent's argument to make it easier to refute. Like a warrior choosing to fight a straw-filled dummy rather than a real opponent, even a "victory" is meaningless. For instance, the Tafkik School, in critiquing hermeneutics, states: "Is the Quran like the Torah, that some would resort to hermeneutics to conceal its inconsistencies?" Someone unfamiliar with hermeneutics, upon hearing this, might form an inaccurate understanding of it and, consequently, incorrectly conclude that the Torah is a book riddled with inconsistencies.⁶⁵

4- The fourth sophism can be characterized as "poisoning the well." This tactic aims to preemptively discredit any criticism by framing the discussion in a way that discourages dissent. It is akin to creating an environment where no one dares to point out that "the emperor has no clothes." For example, proponents of the Tafkik School employ phrases like, "They should know that we are not the proponents of this idea; if they reflect carefully and abandon certain preconceptions, they will clearly understand that the Quran, the Ahl al-Bayt, pure Quranic knowledge, and innocents... are its true proponents; not us." This rhetoric effectively silences opponents who fear being perceived as contradicting the Quran or its adherents.⁶⁶

5- The fifth sophism involves "incomplete quotation." This occurs when someone selectively extracts portions of a text to support their own viewpoint, often misrepresenting the original author's intent by removing the quote from its proper context. The Tafkik School, and Ḥakīmī in particular, frequently employ this tactic, extracting isolated statements from philosophers to argue against the attainment of truth through philosophy, and even mischaracterizing Tabātabā'ī as belonging to their school of thought.⁶⁷

⁶² Sayyid Hasan Islāmī, *Rū'yā-ye Khulūs: Bāzkhānī-ye Maktab-e Tafkik* (Qom: Mo'assasese-ye Büstān-e Ketāb, 1387), 296-298.

⁶³ Ḥakīmī, *Marām-e Jāvedāne*, 124-125.

⁶⁴ Islāmī, *Rū'yā-ye Khulūs: Bāzkhānī-ye Maktab-e Tafkik*, 298-302.

⁶⁵ Islāmī, *Rū'yā-ye Khulūs: Bāzkhānī-ye Maktab-e Tafkik*, 302-304.

⁶⁶ Islāmī, *Rū'yā-ye Khulūs: Bāzkhānī-ye Maktab-e Tafkik*, 304-307.

⁶⁷ Islāmī, *Rū'yā-ye Khulūs: Bāzkhānī-ye Maktab-e Tafkik*, 307-312.

Thus, by analyzing these various forms of sophism, Islamī attempts to demonstrate that the Tafkīk School's criticisms and arguments against philosophy largely lack a sound scholarly basis and frequently devolve into rhetorical fallacies.

Mūsawī also reacts to the Tafkīk scholars' approach to philosophy and philosophers. Musawī states that the disagreements among philosophers, which they cite as evidence for the falsity of philosophy, arise from the nature of the knowledge, and the existence of disagreement cannot prove the falsity of that knowledge. According to him, the same applies to revelation. In other words, "Why have Muslims been the most miserable countries all these years when the Qur'ān promises happiness in this world and the hereafter? The same is true for morality. If reason says that justice is good and cruelty is bad, why is it that cruelty among people never ends?" Therefore, according to him, there is disagreement among all knowledge. If disagreement leads to falsehood, then there should be no knowledge at all.⁶⁸

As a result, it can be seen that the most important criticism or rejection of philosophy by the Maktab-e Tafkīk is the disagreements among philosophers themselves. According to them, where there is truth, there should be no disagreement. However, this understanding is problematic in several respects. First, the disagreements among philosophers are not a contradiction, but rather different expressions of the systems established on the basis of existence. Contradiction is not the same as difference.

Second, from the statements of the Maktab-e Tafkīk in this regard, it is clear that the school equated intellectual disagreements with social disagreements and attributed a completely negative meaning to disagreement. For example, the differences of opinion among Islamic philosophers regarding the essence of existence and the essence of substance are not a social division but an intellectual one. Disagreements in thought are vital for the continuation of thought. The end of disagreements marks the end of thought.⁶⁹ In other words, if there were no disagreements in opinions and there was only one truth that people agreed on, there would be no opinion, only belief. Therefore, disagreement is related to the structure of thought and is dynamic. In our opinion, this is related to the fact that human beings always play an active role in the path of truth, and in this sense it is valuable.

Thirdly, even if the Tafkīk School's claims were accepted, and even if disagreements were considered wholly negative and philosophy its primary cause, as Mahdī Jāmī notes,⁷⁰ the Tafkīk School's own doctrines have not resolved disagreements but rather engendered new ones.

Fourthly, in the face of the Maktab-e Tafkīk's assertion that truth is unattainable through philosophy or any human knowledge, that engagement with these disciplines is futile, and that revelation was sent to abolish them, what is their "offer" to us?

The answer to this question comes from Karīm Fayzā Tabrīzī, who advocates the idea of Tafkīk. His statements are as follows:

"Surely, if one day the thought of the Maktab-e Tafkīk becomes the common thought of all the people on earth, then people will put aside the rotten beliefs and follow the truth. This thought will save them from circumambulating themselves. The message of Tafkīk is that we should not replace the secondary with the primary... The assertion that "Many problems in the contemporary world stem from the dominance of philosophies that have historically and socially engendered inequality, leading to various deviations that have resulted in humanity's fatigued, laborious, and blind plunge into the boundless realm of technology" is not a vacuous statement."⁷¹

This answer seems problematic to us. Considering the foundational principles of the school, particularly the views of Isfahānī, does it truly seem feasible that by disregarding the entirety of

⁶⁸ Mūsawī, *Āyīn ū Andīshe*, 85-87.

⁶⁹ Von Aster, "Felsefe ve İstanbul Üniversitesi'nde Felsefe Tedrisatı", *Türkiye'de Bir Felsefe Gelenek-i Kurmaya Çalışmak*, ed. Recep Alpyağıl (İstanbul: İz Yayıncılık, 2012), 352.

⁷⁰ Mahdī Jāmī, "Maktab-e Tafkīk, Maktab-e Talfīq", *Cheshm Endāze-ye Andīshe* 90 (1394 1393), 116.

⁷¹ Karīm Fayzā Tabrīzī, "Az Tafkīk tā al-Ḥayāt", *Bayyināt* 39-40 (1382), 324.

humanity's accumulated knowledge throughout history, and relying solely on the Quran, Hadith, and the pronouncements of the "innocents," we can offer solutions to all human problems and questions across all times and contexts? It seems clear that the outcome is both negative and practically impossible. Moreover, in making this claim, Maktab-e Tafkik, contradicting itself, uses writing, speech and knowledge, which are the common property of humanity.

Conclusion

Maktab-e Tafkik's approach to philosophy is based on the claim to exclude human knowledge altogether in order to reach "pure religion". So, the first problem with this approach is the vagueness of the concepts of "pure religion" and "defining the boundaries of religious knowledge." But the claim of pure religion and defining the boundaries of religion is completely far from reality. Religious understandings are influenced by historical and cultural contexts, interpretive traditions and individual experiences.

Isfahānī's approach to philosophy as a "satanic" activity and his characterization of philosophers as "polytheists" can be regarded as an indicator of his intolerance of freedom of thought and critical approach. Such categorical characterizations ignore the contributions of philosophical thought to human history. His imposition of a single way to access knowledge means ignoring thousands of years of accumulated knowledge in human history

The followers of Tafkik have tried to show the disagreements among philosophers as evidence of the inability to reach the truth. This approach ignores the fact that philosophy is inherently a dynamic and constantly evolving process. Moreover, this school seems to have confused intellectual conflicts with social conflicts. But disagreements in thought are positive and dynamic. Discussions and criticisms between different philosophical views contribute to the deepening of thought and the emergence of new perspectives. Saydān's positioning of revelation as the only source of knowledge by rejecting reason, sensation and mystical experience is an example of a dogmatic approach. Ignoring the potential of the human mind and other ways of acquiring knowledge creates an intellectual vicious circle.

Ḥakīmī's use of small quotations from some philosophers to prove that philosophy is contradictory and inadequate is not convincing. To devalue an entire discipline based on the views of a few philosophers involves the error of generalization. Moreover, if we accept Ḥakīmī's claim, philosophers spent their lives in an endeavor in which they "knew they could achieve nothing". This claim is based on an unrealistic assumption that fails to understand the essence of the philosophical quest.

In its criticisms, Maktab-e Tafkik often made errors of logic and resorted to sophistry. Critiquing a philosophical school based on its geographical origins, the sources it draws upon, the perceived intentions of its adherents, or through fallacies such as quoting out of context, is incompatible with scholarly critique. Such approaches can be seen as an indication of an attempt to justify one's own ideas by distorting opposing views.

In conclusion, the Maktab-e Tafkik's criticism of philosophy is reductionist, dogmatic and inconsistent. These critiques, which categorically reject human knowledge, disregard the potential of human reason and other epistemic methods, and resort to logical fallacies, appear far from offering a thorough and equitable assessment of philosophy. Unable to resolve its internal contradictions, the Maktab-e Tafkik prioritized judgment over understanding of human knowledge, dismissing the philosophical legacy that shaped human history.

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