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THE POSITION OF REVELATION IN THE CLAMP OF DEISM AND SHIRK

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Abstract

Deists do not accept the idea of God's intervention in the world, but they argue that reason has infinite authority. Those who adopt the idea of deism adopt the idea that God did not intervene in the world after the first creation. Since revelation, religion, and prophethood are regarded as God's intervention in the world, prophethood in particular is considered impossible in terms of its possibility and necessity. It is known that there is an Indian belief group called Berāhime, which adopts ideas in the same vein as the idea of deism. The followers of this belief objected to the idea of prophethood from a rational point of view. According to them, if there was such a thing as prophethood, God would have created this idea in the minds. In addition, according to the Berāhime, reason and revelation are in contradiction, and worship is absurd and meaningless. On the other hand, there is no aspect of the concept of the miracle that looks at the truth. When we look at the specific characteristics of these two schools, it is understood that both of them are fed from the same source. The human model that these and similar schools of thought want to build desires a lifestyle that has nothing to do with worship and in which God does not control and question them. This lifestyle undoubtedly brings to mind the pre-Islamic "Jahiliyya Period" understanding of shirk. Because the polytheists also believed in the existence of Allah and recognized Him as a holy and supreme Creator. The fact that a community that believes in Allah rejects or objects to institutions such as prophets and revelation is important in terms of the subject under consideration. The polytheists, while believing in God, wished that God would not interfere with them, especially in matters such as worship. This shows that the polytheists adopted a deistic lifestyle whether they realized it or not. In our opinion, there is a parallelism between the idea of Deism and the idea of shirk. The dangers of the idea of Deism, which attracts the attention of some people today, reveal the importance of the subject. The aim of this study is to show that Deism and Berāhimah serve similar purposes and ultimately encourage people to live a largely worldly life of shirk.

Keywords: Kalām, Revelation, Deism, Shirk, Berāhimah.

DEİZM VE ŐİRK KISKACINDA VAHYİN KONUMU

Özet

Deistler, Tanrı'nın âleme müdâhil olması fikrini kabul etmemenin yanında aklın sonsuz bir yetkiye sahip olduğunu savunmaktadır. Deizm düşüncesini benimseyenler, Tanrı'nın ilk yaratmadan sonra bir daha âleme müdâhil olmadığı fikrini benimser. Vahiy, din ve peygamberlik, Tanrı'nın âleme müdahalesi şeklinde telakki edildiği için bilhassa nübüvvet, imkânı ve gerekliliği açısından imkânsız kabul edilmektedir. Deizm düşüncesiyle aynı minvalde fikirleri benimseyen Hint çıkışlı Berāhime isimli bir inanç grubunun mevcudiyeti bilinmektedir. Bu inancı benimseyenler, nübüvvet fikrine akli açıdan itirazlarda bulunmuştur. Onlara göre şayet nübüvvet diye bir şey olsaydı, Allah bu düşünceyi mutlaka akıllarda yaratırdı. Bununla birlikte Berāhime'ye göre akıl ve vahiy tenakuz halindedir, ibadetler saçma ve anlamsızdır. Öte yandan mucizenin hakikate bakan yönü söz konusu değildir. Bu iki ekolün kendilerine özgü özelliklerine bakıldığında her ikisinin de aynı kaynaktan beslendiği anlaşılmaktadır. Bu ve benzeri fikir akımlarının inşa etmek istediği insan modeli, ibadetle ilgisi olmayan, Tanrı'nın, kendilerini kontrol altına alıp sorgulamadığı bir hayat tarzını arzulamaktadır. Bu hayat tarzı, şüphe yok ki İslâm öncesi "Cahiliyye Dönemi" şirk anlayışını akıllara getirmektedir. Çünkü Müşrikler de Allah'ın var olduğuna inanıyor ve O'nun kutsal ve yüce bir yaratıcı olduğunu kabul ediyordu. Allah'a iman eden bir topluluğun

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peygamber ve vahiy gibi kurumları reddetmesi veya itirazda bulunması, ele alınan konu açısından önem arz etmektedir. Müşrikler, Allah'a iman etmekle birlikte Allah'ın özellikle ibadet gibi konularda kendilerine müdahale etmemesini arzuluyordu. Bu durum müşriklerin, farkında olsunlar veya olmasınlar deistik bir hayat tarzını benimsediklerini göstermektedir. Kanaatimizce Deizm düşüncesiyle şirk düşüncesi arasında, hafife alınmayacak bir paralellik vardır. Günümüzde bazı insanların ilgisini çeken Deizm düşüncesinin doğuracağı tehlikeler konunun önemini ortaya koymaktadır. Bu çalışmada amaç, Deizm ve Berâhime'nin benzer amaçlara hizmet ettiğini ve neticede insanları büyük ölçüde dünyaya dönük bir şirk yaşayışına özendirdiğini ortaya koymaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kelâm, Vahiy, Deizm, Şirk, Berâhime.

Introduction

Throughout history, besides accepting the existence of God, there have been those who claim that He does not intervene in the world in any way and that there is no messenger or messenger that provides communication between God and man. This way of thinking is called "Deism". One of the primary objections raised by the concept of Deism is to challenge the role of prophethood in divine religions. Deists generally view prophethood as unnecessary and impossible.

In the course of history the school of thought known as Berâhimea opposed prophethood for various reasons. Deism, which emerged in Europe in the recent age, also made similar claims. When the objections of Deism and Berahime are taken into consideration, it is seen that the philosophy of life they want to create has important similarities with the belief of shirk. Similarly, according to the beliefs of the polytheists of the Jahiliyyah period, Allah is the Creator of the heavens and the earth, omnipotent, all-seeing, all-knowing. However, they did not favor the idea of Allah sending a messenger or a message to them, moreover, they strongly opposed it. Because if the idea of a messenger were to be accepted, it would also be necessary to accept that God could send them certain commands and prohibitions through messengers, and thus "God would have intervened in the world". However, the polytheists themselves made the idols they worshipped and shaped them as they wished. Thus, in a sense, they were creating their own Gods In this context, it can be argued that the belief in shirk constructs an anthropocentric conception of God. This an external message from God, while believing in Him, would have disturbed the comfort of the polytheists, so to speak, and upset the system they had established, from which they had acquired material income.

Deism and polytheism do not have the same character. The dynamics and the main backbone of both are built on different grounds. When the lifestyles of deists and polytheists are analyzed, it is seen that these two phenomena are not very far from each other. One accepts the existence of God but renders Him dysfunctional, while the other accepts the existence of God but places the task of determining the nature of the God-human relationship on man. Therefore, both the deist and the polytheist have no place for God, or more accurately, for God's intervention in their daily lives. As a result, both understandings open the door to a secular life and show a tendency to remove the phenomenon of revelation and prophethood from human life.

There have been no works directly related to the similarity between Shirk and Deism and the attitude of these two systems towards the phenomenon of revelation, but there have been studies that indirectly raise the issue. Fatih Çelikel's article titled "The Relationship between Divine Justice and the Cancellation of the Actions of Unbelievers in the Context of the Reasons Leading to Deism", Mustafa Bozkurt and Mehmet Kuyucu's study titled "Criticism of the Basic

Claims of Deism in the Context of God-Human Relationship" and Hakan Peker's article titled "A Critical View of the Concept of Deism in Terms of the Problem of Definition" are examples of these studies. On the other hand, Yaşar Nuri Öztürk's book "Religion Masked God Enmity Shirk and Deism" and Hüseyin Kemal Gürger's "Claims and Explanations Against the Questions of Atheism and Deism" are examples of books written in this field. It can also be said that there are many encyclopedia articles and theses written in this sense. However, no study with the similarities between Deism and polytheism together. In this study, the similarity of Deism and polytheism in practical life and their attitude towards the phenomenon of revelation will be discussed. Revelation is a concept that expresses the relationship between God and man. On the other hand, it is known that the institution of prophethood has an important place in the occurrence of this phenomenon. Therefore, the meanings of the words nebi and prophethood are important for our study.

1. Prophet and Prophethood Concepts

The words "nebi" and "prophethood" are concepts derived from the root "n-b-e" and contain the same meanings. Therefore, it can be said that these two words derive from the same root.¹ The concept of "n-b-e" contains the meanings of "giving news, going from one place to another" in the dictionary, but according to some rhetoricians, it also includes the meaning of "high and honorable place".² The reason for the existing difference of opinion is that the concept of nabi is derived from the root "نبا" according to some linguists and from the root "نبوة" or "نباوة" according to others. If it is assumed that this concept comes from the root "نبا", it is said to have the meaning of "giving news, going from one place to another place", and if it is derived from the root "نبوة", it is said to have the meaning of "high and honourable place".³

A Prophet is "a person whom Allah has chosen from among mankind and sent to a community or to all mankind by revelation of commandments and prohibitions, without giving a new book and Shari'ah."⁴ In this sense, it would be appropriate to explain the word prophethood as "the messenger duty fulfilled by the prophet".⁵ In this sense, it would be appropriate to explain the word prophethood as "the messenger duty fulfilled by the prophet". Rāğib al-İsfahānī explains the word prophethood as "the task of ambassadorship between Allah and the intellectuals".⁶ In the Qur'an, this concept is used only to refer to prophets, but it is

¹ Salih Sabri Yavuz, *İslâm Düşüncesinde Nübüvvet* (İstanbul: Pınar Yayınları, 2012), 10; Orhan Aktepe, *Peygamberliğin Hz. Muhammed (s.a.v.) ile Sona Ermesi* (Erzincan: Doğu Kitabevi, 2000), 24.

² Ebu'l-Fadl Muhammed b. Mükerrremi İbn Manzûr, *Lisânü'l-Arab* (Kahire: Dârü'l-Meârif, ts.), 4315-4316; Kâdî Abdülcebbar, *el-Muğnî fi ebvâbi't-tevhîd ve'l-adl* (Kahire, ts.), 15/14; Mehmet Baktır, "Câhız'ın Nübüvvet Anlayışı" 10/2 (ts.), 257-268; Orhan Şener Koloğlu, *Cübbâiler'in Kelâm Sistemi* (İstanbul: İSAM Yayınları, 2011), 455.

³ İbn Manzûr, *Lisânü'l-Arab*, 4315; Rāğib İsfahânî (İstanbul: Pınar Yayınları, 2012), "el-Müfredât el-Fâzi'l-Kur'an", 481.

⁴ Nüreddin Sâbûnî, *el-Bidâye fi Usûli'd-Dîn (Mâtüridiyye Akâidi)* (İstanbul: İFAV Yayınları, 2014), 200; Yavuz, *Nübüvvet*, 2012, 14; Yusuf Şevki Yavuz, "Nübüvvet", *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi* (İstanbul: TDV Yayınları, 2007), 33/279-285.

⁵ Topaloğlu ve Çelebi Bekir ve İlyas, *Kelâm Terimleri Sözlüğü* (İstanbul: İSAM Yayınları, 2015), 251.

⁶ İsfahânî, "el-Müfredât el-Fâzi'l-Kur'an", 482; Ebu'l-Muîn Meymun b. Muhammed Nesefî, *Tabsiratü'l-Edille Fi Usûli-Dîn* (Ankara: TDV Yayınları, 2003), 2/1; Orhan Aktepe, *Ebu Nuaym el-İsfahânî'nin Nübüvvet Anlayışı* (Erzincan: Doğu Kitabevi, 2012), 46.

also possible to come across those who state that it is used in the sense of "high authority".⁷ To cite a verse on the subject;

"And certainly We gave the Children of Israel the Book, sovereignty and prophethood, and We provided them with good and clean food, and We made them superior to the worlds (in their times)" (Câsiye, 45/16)

The verse in question declares that prophethood is a high rank. However, it is understood from the verse that the institution of prophethood has received special attention in the Qur'an. In addition, prophethood has an important position among the principles of faith in Islam and has been assimilated as one of the three main principles called "Usûl al-Salâse".⁸

2. Movements Denying Prophethood: Berâhime and Deism

2.1. Berâhime

Berâhime, which in Sanskrit means "to be strong, to grow, to roar, to call loudly, to say, to speak", has been transferred to Arabic from this language. The Arabic equivalent of the concept of "b-r-h" is "evidence, proof,⁹ explaining the evidence, whitening, a period of time".¹⁰ The word "Brahma" from the root "b-r-h" means "supreme truth and holy power". In classical theological sources, however, this concept is mostly expressed as an Indian movement that denies prophethood. However, when the subject is further analysed, it is seen that the issue contains some ambiguities. In particular, there are numerous works that give various information about the origin of the Berâhimah. The reason this system of thought found a place in Islamic sources is that it rejects prophethood from different points.¹¹

2.1.2. Objections to Prophethood

Berâhimah has been the subject of some of the Islamic sources in terms of its rejection of the institution of prophethood. Many works have been written on this issue. It is possible to list some of these works as follows: Qādî 'Abd al-Jabbâr's *al-Mughnî fi wawâb al-tawhîd-i wa'l-âdl*, Baqillânî's *Kitâb al-tamhîd*, Shahrîstânî's *al-Milal wa'n-nihâl*, Mâturîdî's *Kitâb al-tawhîd*, and 'Abd al-Rahman al-Badawî's *Min Tarihi al-ilhad*. In these books, the explanations of the Berâhimah and similar movements regarding prophethood are given in detail. It would be appropriate to mention some of these objections.

2.1.2.1. Sufficiency of Reason

The most important talent that Allah has bestowed upon His servants is reason. Through the intellect, man can know Allah, His messages, His blessings, good and evil. If the prophet came with messages and knowledge known through the intellect, it is illogical to accept his invitation.¹² Indeed, reason considers it unnecessary to respond to this invitation. However, if his messages contradict the intellect, then it is irrational to rely on these judgments. Because

⁷ Yavuz, *Nübüvvet*, 2012, 14; Yavuz, "Nübüvvet", 2007, 33/279-285; Aktepe, *Peygamberliğin Hz. Muhammed (s.a.v.) ile Sona Ermesi*, 23.

⁸ Bekir ve İlyas, *Sözlük*, 330.

⁹ Cürcânî Seyyid Şerif, *Mu'cemü't-Ta'rifât* (Kahire: Dârü'l-Fazile, ty.), 40.

¹⁰ İbn Manzûr, *Lisânü'l-Arab*, 270; İsfahânî, "el-Müfredât el-Fâzi'l-Kur'an", 45.

¹¹ Mikail İpek, *Mu'tezile'nin Nübüvvet Savunması* (Erzincan: Erzincan Binali Yıldırım Üniversitesi, 2020), 73-78.

¹² Abdilkerim b. Ahmed Şehristânî, *el-Milal ve'n-Nihâl* (Beyrut: Dârü'l-Kitâbü'l-İlmiyye, 1992), 706-707.

the information he brings is irrational.¹³ Apart from the Berāhimah, the Ibāhiyya, the Sumāniyya,¹⁴ Abū Bakr al-Rāzī (d. 313/925)¹⁵, Ibn al-Rāwandī (d. 301/913)¹⁶, and Abū 'Isā al-Warrāq (d. 247/861)¹⁷ made this objection to the intellect.

2.1.2.2. Mode of Worship

Another aspect of the Berāhimah's rejection of prophethood is related to the way religious practices are performed. The members of the Berāhimah stated that prophethood is similar to accepting two actions as if there is a difference between them when there is no difference between them in terms of their execution. The Prophet introduced some commands and prohibitions that were logically considered bad. For example, "praying, performing ghusl ablution, stoning the devil, circling around a house (Ka'ba) that cannot hear or see, and traveling back and forth between the hills of Safa and Marwa, which have no benefit or harm". All of the aforementioned acts of worship are illogical. "There is no difference between going round the Ka'bah and going round any house or place. Likewise, there is no difference between the hills of Safa and Marwa and Hira and Abu Kubays."¹⁸ On the other hand, kissing Hajar al-Aswad (the black stone)¹⁹, performing waqf in Arafat²⁰, stoning the devil, wearing ihram, and saying the telbiya prayer²¹ are actions that reason considers rābiq. Reason indicates that there is a creator of the universe who has everything under his sovereignty. The Creator, who is righteous, certainly does not command people to do unlawful acts.²² Ibn al-Rāwandī also made similar objections, except for the Berāhime.²³

2.1.2.3. Miracle

Deists also objected to the institution of prophethood through the miracle channel and thus rejected the possibility of prophethood. The Berāhimah claimed that a miracle was intellectually impossible. The people who came to the fore with the claim of prophethood put forward proofs such as the scepter becoming a snake, the sea splitting in two using the scepter and the female camel coming out of the rock. Such acts and deeds are contrary to the rules of reason.²⁴

¹³ Abdülcebbâr, *el-Muğni*, 15/109-110; Muhammed b. Tayyib Bâkillânî, *Kitâbu Temhîdi'l-Evâil ve't-Telhîsi'd-Delâil* (Beyrut: Mektebetü's-Sekâfiyye, 1957), 121; Şehristânî, *el-Milel ve'n-Nihâl*, 3/706-707.

¹⁴ Hasan Onat, "İbâhiyye" (İstanbul: TDV Yayınları, 1999), 19/252-254; Bekir ve İlyas, *Sözlük*, 141; Nüreddin Sâbûnî, *el-Bidâye Fî Usûli'd-Diyâne (Mâtüridiyye Akâidi)*, çev. Bekir Topaloğlu (İstanbul: İFAV Yayınları, 2014), 190; Ebu'l-Berekât Neseî, *el-İ'timâd, fi'l-i'tikâd* (Kahire: Mektebetü'l-Ezheriyye, 2011), 241-242; Ebu'l-Yusr Pezdevî, *Usûlü'd-Dîn (Ehl-i Sünnet Akâidi)*, çev. Şerafettin Gölcük (İstanbul: Kayıhan Yayınları, 2013), 138.

¹⁵ Ebû Bekir Râzî, *Tıbbü'r-Rûhânî* (Kahire: Mektebetü'n-Nahzati'l-Mısıriyye, 1978), 31-32; Abdurrahman Bedevî, *Min Târîhi'l-İlhâd fi'l-İslâm* (Beyrut: Dirâsetü'l-İslâmiyye, 1980), 165-170.

¹⁶ Bedevî, *Târîh*, 88.

¹⁷ Ebû Mansûr Muhammed b. Muhammed Mâtüridî, *Kitâbü't-Tevhîd* (Ankara: TDV Yayınları, 2018), 289.

¹⁸ Bâkillânî, *Kitâbu Temhîdi'l-Evâil ve't-Telhîsi'd-Delâil*, 120.

¹⁹ Şehristânî, *el-Milel ve'n-Nihâl*, 3/709.

²⁰ Abdülcebbâr, *el-Muğni*, 15/117-124.

²¹ Şehristânî, *el-Milel ve'n-Nihâl*, 3/709.

²² Bâkillânî, *Kitâbu Temhîdi'l-Evâil ve't-Telhîsi'd-Delâil*, 120.

²³ Bedevî, *Târîh*, 89.

²⁴ Bâkillânî, *Kitâbu Temhîdi'l-Evâil ve't-Telhîsi'd-Delâil*, 112.

As can be seen, the Berāhima put forward ideas of denial about both worship and miracles and argued that the phenomenon of prophethood and revelation was impossible and unnecessary. According to them, for an action to be recognized as worship, it must be compatible with the principles of reason. Therefore, actions that displease people, bore them, and cause them hardship cannot be worships. If revelation has brought such a message, this message cannot have come from Allah. For Allah does not command absurd things. As a result, when the nature of revelation was doubtful, the existence of a prophet was not welcomed by the Berāhimeen, but rejected. According to them, there is no need for a prophet. The intellect and morality, which take their source from the intellect, are sufficient for human beings to exhibit correct behavior. On the other hand, they seem to have rejected the miracles that the prophets possessed and thus proved their bi'set. Since the most important quality of the prophets was miracles, they tried to refute miracles and argued that such acts were contrary to the Sunnah and therefore irrational.

2.2. Deism

Deism is referred to as "deisme" in French, "deismus" in German, "deism" in English, and "rubūbiyye"²⁵ in Arabic.²⁶ Deism asserts that the world continues to exist in a God-centred manner.²⁷ Deism, which is referred to in the literature as "creationism"²⁸, accepts the existence of God, unlike Atheism, which does not accept the existence of God. However, it rejects the saints and the dominance of religions. With this approach, it is a theologically textured approach that can be conceived separately from Theism.²⁹

Deism is a concept of Latin origin and is formed from the word "Deus" meaning "God". The Latin meaning of the word is "belief in the existence of God".³⁰ On the other hand, it has been stated that Theism, which is accepted as a Greek word, is derived from the Greek word "theos" meaning "God". When the word in question was used in Western languages to reflect the meaning of divinity, Deism was given a different meaning from Theism with some changes to acquire a unique philosophical stance.³¹ In other words, Deism, which was used in the same sense as Theism in the early periods, appears as a theological perspective that is used in differently from Theism, especially in the late 17th century and the entire 18th century, is evaluated differently from traditional perceptions of religion, and adopts a rational idea of God.³² It can be said that this distinction is deliberately made by deists. Many researchers have argued that defining Deism is a very difficult task. However, if we make an inclusive definition: "Deism can be defined as a theological understanding that started in the late 17th and 18th centuries in France and England with the effort to keep Christianity, which was widely accepted in France and England and especially in Europe of that period, in the balance of reason and revelation, and later made intellectual attacks on the traditional understanding of religion and

²⁵ Serdar Mutçalı, *Arapça-Türkçe Sözlük* (İstanbul: Dağarcık Yayınları, 1995), 304.

²⁶ Muhammed Altaytaş, *Çağdaş İnkârcılık* (İstanbul: Ensar Yayıncılık, 2007), 209.

²⁷ İvan Frolov, *Felsefe Sözlüğü*, çev. Aziz Çalışlar (İstanbul: Cem Yayınları, 1991), 100.

²⁸ Altaytaş, *İnkâr*, 32.

²⁹ Yaşar Nuri Öztürk, *Deizm* (İstanbul: Yeni Boyut Yay, 2018), 13; Altaytaş, *İnkâr*, 32-33.

³⁰ Erol Çetin, *İnancın İman Hayatına Yansımaları Anlamında Deizm Eleştirisi* (İstanbul: Hiper Yayınları, 2018), 17-18.

³¹ Çetin, *Deizm Eleştirisi*, 17.

³² M. Emre Dorman, *Deizm ve Eleştirisi* (İstanbul: Marmara Üniversitesi, 2009), 1.

Christianity, defending the nonnecessity of revelation and religion, and seeing reason as the only authority in religion."³³

Deism has two basic principles. The first of these is the acceptance that God does not intervene in the world, and the second is the excessive interest in science and reason. There are thinkers who trace the origin of Deism back to Aristotle. One of the most important reasons for this is undoubtedly Aristotle's idea of the "first mover".³⁴ Aristotle stated that God is not the creator of the universe, but only its first author. In this respect, according to Deists, since there is no creation, prophecy, revelation should not be accepted either.³⁵

Deists argue that the source of morality is nature and reason. Therefore, divine religions are unnecessary. From this point of view, the view of "natural religion",³⁶ which is considered valid by Deism, has been dominant. When man is viewed a part of the universe, the aspects of God's intervention in the universe that concern man are revelations sent by him to human beings. For example, God intervenes in man, who is regarded as a part of the universe, by sending messengers to him. Thus, man must be careful to obey the judgments brought by the Prophet from God. In conclusion, it can be said that the objections of deists are directed against prophethood and revelation on the axis of religions. Considering the general principles adopted by Deism, it can be easily said that it has almost the same character as Berāhimah. In both systems of thought, the phenomena of prophethood and revelation adopted by divine religions are rejected rationally.

3. The Position of Revelation in the Perspective of Berāhime, Deism and Shirk

3.1. Prophethood, Revelation and Religion

Deism, which is based on the assumption that the God does not intervene in the functioning of the universe, has accepted sacraments such as prophethood and religion as null and void. Emerging in 17th century Europe, the doctrine of Deism criticized Christian beliefs such as the Trinity, original sin and the incarnation as dogmatic.³⁷ He also ignored the "New Testament"³⁸, the "Old Testament"³⁹ and the concept of miracle⁴⁰, which occupies an important position in these sacred texts.

The followers of deism have stated that there are contradictory statements in the Qur'an that are contrary to rational principles. The reason for this statement, in our opinion, is that deists have not sufficiently comprehended the Islamic faith and the Qur'an.⁴¹ When the general content of Islamic sources is from a general perspective, it is observed that such criticisms have been made before, and Islamic scholars have skilfully responded to such criticisms. For

³³ Mehmet S. Aydın, *Din Felsefesi* (Ankara: Selçuk Yayınları, 1996), 173-189; Dorman, *Deizm ve Eleştirisi*, 1.

³⁴ Çetin, *Deizm Eleştirisi*, 18; Dorman, *Deizm ve Eleştirisi*, 26.

³⁵ Osman Karagaç, "İyi ve Kötünün Akılla Bilinmesi", *Akıl Kitabı* 7, ed. Turgut Akyüz (İstanbul: Ravza Yayınları, 2021), 85.

³⁶ Aliye Çınar, *Deizm ve Ateizm Üzerine* (İstanbul: Köprü Yayınları, 2018), 133-144.

³⁷ Çetin, *Deizm Eleştirisi*, 37-38.

³⁸ Thomas Paine, *Akıl Çağı (The Age of Reason)*, çev. Şükrü Alpagut (İstanbul: Say Yayınları, 2017), 34-42.

³⁹ Paine, *Akıl Çağı*, 26-34.

⁴⁰ Paine, *Akıl Çağı*, 82-90; Çetin, *Deizm Eleştirisi*, 38.

⁴¹ Çetin, *Deizm Eleştirisi*, 50.

example, the "Berāhime"⁴², which is generally accepted to be of Indian origin despite the debates about its origin⁴³, and the "Sumeniyya"⁴⁴ groups, which are also fed by "Buddhism" and "Shamanism", accept prophethood and revelation.

In addition, it can be said that people such as Abū Isā al-Warrāq (d. 247/861)⁴⁵, Ibn al-Rāwandī (d. 301/913)⁴⁶, and Abū Bakr al-Rāzī (d. 313/925)⁴⁷, who came to the fore with their ideas containing ilhād⁴⁸, served the same purpose. At this point, it is useful to open a special parenthesis for Ibn al-Rāwandī. Because the works he wrote and the ideas he put forward prove that he was a deist in the full sense of the period he lived in. In his "*Kitāb al-imāma*", he directed some refutations to the Companions, to prophethood in his "*Kitāb al-zumurrud*" and to the Qur'ān in his "*Kitāb al-damīq*". Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār of the Mu'tazila skillfully responded to the objections by stating that he was a heretic who rejected prophethood and revelation.⁴⁹

3.2. Miracle

When we look at the doctrine of deism in general, it is seen that the idea that God created the world perfectly and then did not intervene in it again is dominant. The reason why God does not intervene in the universe a second time is that He created it perfectly. Deism states that God determined some rules during the creation of the universe and that these rules operate according to the cause and effect relationship. For instance, all events and phenomena occurring in the universe are under the control of "determinism".⁵⁰

Determinism is expressed as "the idea that nature is subject to causal laws and that nothing in the universe is uncaused".⁵¹ This view does not accept any void in the universe. In other words, there is nothing without a cause.⁵² At this point, the doctrine of "miracle", especially in divine religions, comes to mind. The most important characteristic of a miracle is not that it is ordinary, but that it is contrary to nature. For this reason, Deists reject miracles as incompatible with determinism and God's intervention in the world.⁵³ Matthew Tindal, considering the Greek proverb "Miracles are for fools and wisdom is for the wise", stated that religion does not need miracles. According to his system of thought, there are no miracles in Christianity, and even if there are miracles, they are probably created by being influenced by pagan culture or some mythological approaches.⁵⁴ As can be seen, the doctrine of Deism

⁴² Abdülcebbâr, *el-Muğnî*, 15/21; Neseфі, *Tabsıra*, 2/5; Ebû Hâmid Gazzâlî, Kemal Işık, *İtikad'da Orta Yol (el-İktidâd fi'l-İ'tikâd)* (Ankara: AÜİFD, 1971), 143-188.

⁴³ Orhan Şener Koloğlu, "Kelâm ve Mezhepler Tarihi Literatüründe Berâhime" 13/1 (2004), 161-175.

⁴⁴ Neseфі, *el-İ'timâd*, 241-242; Sâbûnî, *el-Bidâye*, 2014, 99; Pezdevî, *Usûlü'd-Dîn (Ehl-i Sünnet Akâidi)*, 138.

⁴⁵ Mâtürîdî, *Tevhîd*, 273; İbrahim Arslan, "İmam Mâtürîdî'nin Deist Eleştirilere Karşı Nübüvvet Savunusu", *Kelâm Araştırmaları Dergisi* 12/2 (2014), 36.

⁴⁶ Bedevî, *Târih*, 88.

⁴⁷ Râzî, *Tıbbü'r-Rûhânî*, 31-32; Ebû Hâtîm Ahmed b. Hamdân b. Ahmed Râzî, *A'lâmü'n-Nübüvve* (Lübnan: Dârü's-Sâkî, 2003), 15-20; Mahmud Kaya, "Ebû Bekir er-Râzî ile Ebû Hâtîm er-Râzî Arasında Geçen Tartışma", *İslâm Tetkikleri Dergisi* 9 (1995), 53-55.

⁴⁸ İbn Manzûr, *Lisânü'l-Arab*, 4005-4006; Bekir ve İlyas, *Sözlük*, 149.

⁴⁹ Kâdî Abdülcebbâr, *el-Muğnî fi ebvâbi't-tevhîd ve'l-adl* (Kahire, ts.), 16/387-393.

⁵⁰ Dorman, *Deizm ve Eleştirisi*, 257.

⁵¹ Çetin, *Deizm Eleştirisi*, 69.

⁵² Caner Taslaman, *Modern Bilim, Felsefe ve Tanrı* (İstanbul: İstanbul Yayınları, 2008), 73.

⁵³ Paine, *Akıl Çağı*, 82-90; Thomas Woolston, *A Discourse on the Miracles of Our Saviour: In View of the Present Controversy Between Infidels and Apostates* (London, 1927), 4-6.

⁵⁴ Matthew Tindal, *Christianity As Old As Creation* (London, 1731), 172.

completely rejects the notion of miracle. Since a miracle is an event contrary to the Sunnah, it cannot be explained by cause and effect. For this reason, the acceptance of the belief in miracle is contrary to the order that God created in the first place, and in a sense, it opens the door to God's intervention in the world. Deists, by rejecting miracles and God's intervention in the world, basically ignore God's attributes such as knowledge, will and power.

3.3. Secularism and Positivism

When the basic principles of Positivism and Secularism are carefully analysed, it can be said that they are heavily influenced by Deism. In the simplest terms, Positivism can be defined as "a philosophical movement that considers valid knowledge to consist of the knowledge of facts and considers metaphysics and religious knowledge invalid".⁵⁵ In a different definition, Positivism is movement that claims that the only source of true knowledge is the natural sciences (empirical sciences) and does not accept the value of philosophical judgment in knowing"⁵⁶. The idea of positivism states that what is accepted as true and valid can only be acquired through science and scientific methods. The only way to do this is through observations, experience, and experiments.⁵⁷

As can be seen, just like Deism, Positivism also emphasized reason and science. By adopting such an attitude, they, in a sense like Deism, denied the possibility of knowledge about religion and metaphysics. Comte does not accept the knowledge containing religion and metaphysics as reliable since its truth is not certain and its causes are not clearly known.⁵⁸ When the historical process is taken into account, it is understood that Positivism's assumptions about science and reason are heavily influenced by Deism.

Secularism is defined as "the monopolization of education and similar mechanisms by science rather than religion". In a different explanation, Secularism is defined as "keeping world affairs away from the influence of the church".⁵⁹ When these definitions are reviewed, it can be easily seen that secularism does not include metaphysical knowledge in its world. Secularism is at peace with the world or worldliness is at the forefront. All religions require their members to believe in certain principles and to fulfill certain rituals and practices. However, since secularism is about worldliness, such obligations are not accepted and a life without any responsibility towards God is desired. If it is considered around the idea that the God never intervenes in the functioning of the world, it can be stated that the idea of Secularism is in a sense "Practical Deism". As a matter of fact, both doctrines and systems want God not to intervene in human life in any way. For this reason, phenomenon such as revelation, religion, and prophecy, which guide human behavior and beliefs, are not accepted. This situation reveals the predominance of secular thought in Deism.

3.4. Similar Aspects of Shirk and Deism

There is a great deal of similarity between the understanding of life that the idea of deism wants to impose on human beings and the life of the Arabs during the jahiliyya period. The

⁵⁵ İlhan Kutluer, "Pozitivizm", *İslâm Ansiklopedisi* (İstanbul: TDV Yayınları, 2007), 34/335.

⁵⁶ Frolov, *Felsefe Sözlüğü*, 389.

⁵⁷ I. S. Narski, "Pozitivizm'in Ortaya Çıkışı ve Gelişimi", çev. Olcay Geridönmez, *Evrensel Basım Yayın, Bilim ve Düşünce Kitap Serisi 3; Pozitivizm* (İstanbul: Doğu Basın Yayıncılık, 2013), 64-65.

⁵⁸ Macit Gökberk, *Felsefe Tarihi* (İstanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, 1998), 467-468.

⁵⁹ Jonathan Crowther (Editör), *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 1062.

polytheist Arabs accepted the concept of a God who created everything and was holy. However, they did not pay attention to any of the news transmitted from God and desired a lifestyle centered on denial. In the Qur'an, people are commanded to contemplate God by using their intellect. (Bakara 2/13, 171.; Âl-i İmrân 3/7) The polytheists ignored these divine commands and adopted a lifestyle that aimed for the benefits of the worldly life.

In terms of Deism's relation to the idea of Secularism, it can be said that there are many common points between the lifestyle adopted by the Arab polytheists and the idea of Deism. As a matter of fact, Secularism aspires to an entirely worldly life. However, Secularism accepts the miracles created by Allah as ordinary events. As a matter of fact, the life philosophy of the polytheists and the lifestyle that emerged from the relationship between Deism and Secularism and the way people living today perceive life are similar in many ways.⁶⁰

The way of life of the Jahiliyya Arabs and Deism are not only similar in terms of secularism. It is seen that the Arabs of this period also adopted the idea of Deism in the theological sense in some respects. As in past societies, the Arabs also had a known and existing perception of God. In the belief of the polytheists, God is the one who created the heavens, the moon, the sun and the earth, made them subservient to human beings, sent down the rain from the sky and made the earth green. The fact that the polytheists agreed on the existence and creativeness of God is expressed in different verses of the Qur'an. The main issue they rejected was the Prophethood of the Prophet Muhammad.⁶¹

"O Muhammad! We know that what they say upsets you. In fact, they do not believe you. But they (those wrongdoers) stubbornly deny the signs of Allah." (En'âm 6/33) The verse clearly states that there is no accusation or denial against the Prophet. This is because the Meccan Arabs had always emphasized that the Prophet had a character that embodied the qualities of truthfulness and trustworthiness. The polytheists, in fact, did not want to accept the fact that the Prophet Muhammad was a prophet of God by receiving news from God.⁶²

One of the most important assumptions that makes deistic thought unique is that God does not intervene in the world. Because the deist individual does not want God to intervene in himself. Of course, this idea has a theoretical dimension based on Aristotelian philosophy. However, this does not change the result. After all, God does not intervene in the world and this principle is determined by man. A similar tendency can be seen in the idea of shirk. Although the polytheists believe in the existence of God, they accept human beings as subjects as the determining factor regarding the nature of the God-human relationship. As a matter of fact, the idols they made with their own hands and worshipped were Gods and sometimes the means to the God. In the end, there was an anthropocentric orientation in the God-human relationship. This reveals the practical similarity between the idea of Deism and the belief in shirk. In order not to be misunderstood, we should make it clear that we are not claiming that Deism and shirk are the same thing. What is meant is that there are some similarities between these systems of thought, especially in the practical dimension. In other words, the bond that deists and polytheists establish with God is the product of anthropocentric thinking. In other words, it is

⁶⁰ Altaytaş, *İnkâr*, 33-39.

⁶¹ Halil İbrahim Erdoğan, "Deizm ve Tabii Din Bağlamında Bir Analiz", *Uluslararası Sosyal Arařtırmalar Dergisi* 11/57 (2018), 789-804.

⁶² Erdoğan, "Deizm ve Tabii Din Bağlamında Bir Analiz", 789-804.

the human being who sets the rules in this relationship. As such, man has developed rules to protect his freedom and interests. God does not intervene in the world, and even if He does, it is within the framework of the rules determined by man.

In conclusion, it can be said that in both Deism, Berāhimah, and Shirk, human beings desire to be in a position of freedom and non-interference in their own actions. The most important pillar of the God-human relationship is the institution of revelation and prophethood. Because God communicates with human beings through prophets. In this way, God sends certain messages to human beings and commands them to fulfill the requirements of these messages. In the understanding of shirk, the subject of communication in the God-human relationship is man. This is because idols are made by humans and God's commands are determined not by God, but in a sense, by humans. Because idols are accepted as intermediaries between God and humans. Therefore, there is no need for a revelation and a prophet in this system. Moreover, if the idea of a prophet is accepted, the subject in the God-human relationship will be God, not man. This is far from being an option preferred by polytheists who have adopted a secular understanding of life and meet their religious and economic needs in this way.

The movements of Deism and Berāhimah, although not built on the same ground, reveal similar characteristics with the belief in shirk. In the same way, they deem it unnecessary to include the concepts of revelation and prophethood in the relationship between God and man and even between the God and the universe in the context of miracles. They argue that there is no need for messages that are to come from God, that God has already given man reason, and that this reason is sufficient for man to choose the right and be moral.

Systems of thought, movements, and schools of thought are constructed to guide people's lives. In other words, the purpose of the establishment of thought systems is to exist in the practical life of people. When the projection of deism and shirk beliefs in the practical life of human beings is imagined, it will be seen that two very similar human types or lifestyles come to the fore. In both of them, God's being a subject in the God-human relationship or God's intervention in human beings is rejected.

In deism, reason is placed in the place vacated by prophethood, whereas in shirk, the human being himself is present instead. Here, there is a view in which man is the subject but idols are accepted as intermediaries. Therefore, in both systems, a lifestyle in which man adopts an understanding of freedom independent of God and does not desire God to intervene in man comes to the fore. In our opinion, this phenomenon is not only between Deism and shirk, but also a common feature of other denialist movements. For example, Atheism exhibits the same attitude by not accepting the idea of God, Deism by retiring God and rejecting the second intervention after the first creation, and Agnosticism by asserting the unknowability of God. Although each of these systems adopts different views and is founded on different grounds, the lifestyles of atheists, deists, agnostics, and polytheists in practical life and their approaches to the phenomenon of revelation are similar.

Conclusion

Deism is a system of thought that sees God's intervention in the world as unnecessary and values science, reason, and morality. Deists reject the existence of institutions such as religion, revelation, and prophethood due to God's non-intervention in the world. According to them, miracles that are contrary to God's laws are not accepted because of the cause and effect relationship that exists in the universe. Deists accept God as a supreme, transcendent creator. He is a good being who created all the worlds. -But He cannot intervene in the universe or in human beings in any way.

Islamic sources state that the Berāhime and Sumeniyya, who are considered to be of Indian origin, rejected prophethood, glorified reason, and exhibited attitudes characterized by deism. However, it is seen that individuals such as Abū Bakr al-Rāzī, Ibn al-Rāwandī and Abū Isā al-Warrāq, who are considered to be mulhid, also exhibited such an attitude. The aforementioned schools and individuals came to the fore in different periods but all of them served a common purpose and led the same way of life. Their sole aim was to keep God in a position of non-intervention in the world, thus disregarding religion, revelation, and ultimately; prophethood.

Deism, which is quite different from the phenomenon of shirk in the theoretical sense, reveals the same result as the idea of shirk in practice. Because in the belief system of shirk, the existence of God is accepted, prophethood and religious institutions are absolutely rejected, and a comfortable life philosophy that does not accept responsibility is adopted. Especially the ignorant Arabs did not want to receive any news, orders, and prohibitions from God besides believing in Him. In our opinion, the doctrine of shirk and the understanding of deism, especially in the context of revelation and religion, are the travelers of the same destination in practical terms, if not in theoretical terms.

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