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**A Comparative Study between the Attributes of Jesus in  
Christian Theology and Muhammadan Reality in Islamic  
Theosophy**

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**Abstract<sup>1</sup>**

In this paper, the attributes of Jesus as the second person of Trinity in Christianity and Muhammadan Reality in Islamic Theosophy were compared. The term “Muhammadan Reality” in Islamic Theosophy refers to transcendental and divine being of Muhammad rather than his human and historic existence. According to this research, both Jesus and Muhammadan Reality have divine attributes. They are lights of God, the Word or the Pen of God, the creators of the word, omniscience, omnipotent, omnibenevolent as well as the intermediaries between God and humans. In this study, it is demonstrated that what happened to Jesus in Christianity, it has also happened to Muhammad in Islamic theosophy with some differences. The influence of Greek philosophy, especially Platonic, in ascribing these attributes to Jesus in Christianity and Muhammad in Islamic theosophy is undeniable. There is a strong temptation among the scholars of both religions, Islam and Christianity, to extend Jesus and Muhammad to the level of divinity and godhead.

**Keywords:** Jesus, Muhammad, Logos, God, Christian theology, Islamic theosophy.

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1. An early version of this article originally appeared in the *Journal of Comparative Theology* with the title of “The meaning of logos in Christian Theology and in Islamic, A Comparison Study”, (summer 2010) in Farsi. The article was then revised and formulated by a new significant idea, expanded in data and sources, contained new results, and finally translated to English.

## Introduction

This article compares the attributes of Jesus and Muhammadan Reality in Christianity and Islamic Theosophy respectively. Jesusian Reality is a term that was coined by the author in comparison with Muhammadan Reality to refer to the divine existence of Jesus as a second person of Trinity possessing divine attributes like creator of the word, omniscience, omnipotent, omnibenevolent, and the intermediary between God and humans. On the other hand, there is a being in Islamic Theosophy called Muhammadan Reality. This term deals with transcendental and divine being of Muhammad (Islam's Prophet) not his human and historic being that lived 1400 years ago in this world as God's Prophet in Islam. These two realities have many similar features and attributes that are compared in the current study. In what follows, it is shown that what happened to Jesus in Christianity, also happened to Muhammad in Islamic theosophy with some differences. In my Philosophy, both of them were human beings that got divine essence and attributes by their followers.

### I. Jesus in Christian Theology

Jesus in Christian theology has two personalities: First, Jesus as the second person of Trinity is who has divine essence and is God's son, firstborn, the light of God, the revealing His glory, the creator of the word and to sum up, he is God. The second personality of Jesus is as a human being. God took place in Jesus's body in His embodiment. He was born from Mary, lived in this world, trained the apostles and people, suffered, and was crucified. "Jesusian Reality" deals with the first character of Jesus in comparison with Muhammadan Reality in Islamic theosophy.

#### 1. The Attributes of Jesus in Christian Theology

##### 1-1. God's Word (Logos)

Jesus has been described by some attributes in Christian theology that the first and most important one is God's Word. John has mentioned in his Book:

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men" (John: 1-4).

The "Word" has been derived from Latina "verbum" which is derived from Greek word "Logos". "Logos" is derived from "legein" which means speech, word, and reason. Webster Dictionary defines Logos as: 1) reason that in ancient Greek philosophy is the controlling principle in the universe and 2) the divine wisdom that manifests himself in the creation, government and redemption of the world and often is identified with the second person of the Trinity. "Logos" is a Greek word that its origin is "Lego" which means "I say". This word has been used in classic period in wide range of meanings like: word, speech, reason,

divine reason, etc. (Edwards, 2018). In Routledge Encyclopedia, it is mentioned that “logos” referred to the legend in dawn of Greek culture (Stead, 1998).

In order to understand the meaning of “Word”, it is necessary to study the history of ancient Greek philosophy. The history of Logos in ancient Greek goes back to Heraclitus, Plato, and Stoics. In Heraclitus' philosophy, Logos is the reason of the world or universal and general law which governs the whole Being. The world is running by his commands who is revealed in everything (Lebreton, 1910).

Neo-platonic philosophers believe in completely transcendental and immaterial God who does not act in the world directly. He acts in the world via some of his forces. Logos deals with God's active force in the world. He became the place of Plato's Forms, God's reason and mind. Although, Greek philosophers used the “Logos” in the meaning of word, speech, thought and legend initially, they used it in the meaning of nous and instead of it. This switch (i.e. replacing ‘nous’ with ‘Logos’) resulted in attributing the properties of nous to Logos. Therefore, Logos became a divine being that was the place of God’s knowledge and platonic forms, the mediator between God and material world as well as the creator and regulator of the world (Lebreton, 1910).

The historic background of logos also goes back to Jewish philosophy. Philo was a Jewish philosopher who presented a platonic interpretation of Torah and initiated the Greek Logos word in Jewish theology in the meanings of reason and word (Īlkhānī, 1380: 241).

Philo, like his contemporary Platonic philosophers, states that there is a long distance between God and cosmos. God is a pure, simple, and self-consistent being. His absolutely unique being is not similar to this-worldly beings. However, there is a problem in his philosophy. How can this transcendental God act in this material world? He must consider some beings as intermediary between God and the world. Philo sets up an abstract being which was God's reason and His first creature as the intermediary between God and the world. Differentiating between this reason which was God and human's, Philo used the word 'Logos' instead of 'nous' referring to human reason. Then, “Logos” got new attributes as an intermediary between God and the world, God's first creature, the creator of the world, and the place of God's knowledge (Austryn, 1947: 1/ 253).

This Greek philosophical background in line with the Jewish background affected Christian theology and the meaning of Logos in this religion. Clemens and Origenes were two Christian theologians who initiated Stoic and Platonic philosophy in the Christian theology and used their terms in explanation of God's relationship with the world. Origenes asserts that God is a pure, transcendent, and unexplainable being. He made Himself identifiable in Logos. Logos is a pre-eternal and eternal being like God. It is God's wisdom and power that manages and rules the world. He is a mediator between God and creatures. He believes that God's attributes and characteristics have been transmitted to Logos and he has got divine attributes with divinity being the most important one (Suliymanī Ardastānī, 1377: 96-97). Origenes states that the status of Logos as the second person of Trinity is lower than God (Father), and owing to this fact, he was condemned.

Augustine, the founder of contemporary Christianity, attributes divinity essence and nature to Logos and makes him God. He was affected strongly by Neo-Platonism. He claims that God has per-eternally the forms of beings and creatures in Himself. These forms are parts of God's essence. Accordingly, Logos which was the forms of beings in Plato's philosophy became a part of God's essence. First, God created everything in Logos (His son), then, Logos created everything in this world (Augustine, 2005: 103-104).

## 1-2. Coexistence with God

According to the Christian theology, Jesus is a self-existent being like God (Father). He has divine essence and is not a creature. A creature could not be self-existent and does not have divine essence. Then, Jesus is co-existence with God, the Son of Father, and he is God. Augustine says in *The Confessions*:

“Again I read there, that God the Word was born not of flesh nor of blood, nor of the will of man, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God. But that the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, I read not there. For I traced in those books that it was many and divers ways said, that the Son was in the form of the Father, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God, for that naturally He was the Same Substance”(Augustine, 2005: 104).

According to John, Jesus has life in himself like God. He has gained the divine essence from God.

For as the Father hath life in himself, so he hath given the Son also to have life in himself (John, 5: 26).

Although he has a divine essence, he was born from Father.

Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature (Colossians, 1: 15).

The formal Christian theologians do not like Jesus to be called as a creature due to some viruses in the Bible like:

And this is the record that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son (1 John 5: 11). He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath no life (1 John 5: 12).

According to Origen's teachings, Logos has been with the Father as *theos* (god) but not *ho theos* (God) from the beginning as it is understood from the Gospel (John 1.1). The creation began with this speech or word. Therefore, there is no need to suppose its existence before the creation as a distinct hypostasis (Edwards, 2018).

St. Augustine states the doctrine of the Trinity in these words:

“Thus there are the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and each is God, and at the same time all are one God; and each of them is a full substance, and at the same time all are one substance. The Father is neither the Son nor the Holy Spirit; the Son is neither the Father nor the Holy Spirit; the Holy Spirit is neither the Father nor the Son. But the Father is the Father

uniquely; the Son is the Son uniquely; and the Holy Spirit is the Holy Spirit uniquely” (Martinich, 1978: 169-170).

### **1-3. Pre-eternal and Eternal Being**

Another important attribute of Jesus (Jesusian Reality) is pre-eternality. Of course, every pre-eternal being is also eternal. As the Bible describes Jesus, he is a pre-eternal and eternal being:

“Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen” (1 Timothy 1: 17).

“But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans, 7: 23).

“And he is before all, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he may hold the primacy” (Colossians, 1: 17-18).

Origen was the first theologian who mentioned that every three persons of Trinity are eternal not only in nature but also in their hypostatic character (Edwards, 2018).

This attribute of Jesusian Reality is related to the issue of his divine essence. If he had no pre-eternal life, he would be a creature and contingent being created at determined time and not be a necessary being like God. The debate of pre-eternal being of Jesus reached its apogee with Arius's (256-336 A.D.) remarks. He claims that Jesus was the first created being but was not God or divine. This claim was condemned in 325 by the Council of Nicaea and the pre-eternal and divine being of Jesus was confirmed. They intended a meaning over than 'pre-existence', because Arius accepted the pre-existence of Jesus and confirmed the existence of Jesus before Mary, but he asserts that Jesus was God's first created spirit (Muhammadian, 1380: 514).

Jesus has an unchangeable being like God.

And: Thou in the beginning, O Lord, didst found the earth: and the works of thy hands are the heavens. They shall perish, but thou shalt continue: and they shall all grow old as a garment. And as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: but thou art the selfsame, and thy years shall not fail. (Hebrews, 1: 10-12).

Jesus is the first and the last being.

And when I had seen him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying: Fear not. I am the First and the Last, and alive, and was dead, and behold I am living for ever and ever, and have the keys of death and of hell (The Apocalypse of St. John the Apostle, 1: 17-18).

### **1-4. The Creator of the World and God's Vicegerent**

Christians believe that the world has been created by Jesus (Jesusian Reality). Although there is God (Father), He did not directly create the world. The Gospel ascribes the creation of the world to the Christ:

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made” (John: 1-3).

This also has been mentioned in other verses:

For in him were all things created in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones, or dominations, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him and in him (Colossians 1: 16).

In these days hath spoken to us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the world (Hebrews 1: 2).

According to verses of Gospel, Jesus does God's duties like managing and ruling the world. God does not directly act in the world. Accordingly, He could be called God's vicegerent.

Then Jesus answered, and said to them: Amen, amen, I say unto you, the Son cannot do anything of himself, but what he seeth the Father doing: for what things soever he doth, these the Son also doth in like manner. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things which himself doth: and greater works than these will he shew him, that you may wonder. For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and giveth life: so the Son also giveth life to whom he will. For neither doth the Father judge any man, but hath given all judgment to the Son. That all men may honour the Son, as they honour the Father. He who honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father, who hath sent him. Amen, amen I say unto you, that he who heareth my word, and believeth him that sent me, hath life everlasting; and cometh not into judgment, but is passed from death to life. (John, 1: 19-24)

### **1-5. Omniscience, Omnipotent, and absolute Judge**

Jesus like God knows everything. He is omniscience and all-knowing.

Be not you therefore like to them, for your Father knows what is needful for you, before you ask him. (Matthew, 6: 8)

He also is omnipotent, all-powerful, and can do every possible thing.

I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, says the Lord God, who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty. (The Apocalypse of St. John the Apostle, 1: 8)

As Luke has written, God has given the managing of the world to the Son.

All things are delivered to me by my Father; and no one knows who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and to whom the Son will reveal him. (Luke, 10: 22)

He is the wisdom of God and God has given his power to His Son.

but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God (1 Corinthians 1: 24).

And he hath given him power to do judgment, because he is the Son of man (John, 5: 27). For neither doth the Father judge any man, but hath given all judgment to the Son (John, 5: 22).

Who [Jesus Christ] is on the right hand of God, swallowing down death, that we might be made heirs of life everlasting; being gone into heaven, the angels and powers and virtues being made subject to him (The First Epistle of St. Peter, 3: 22).

### **1-6. God's Self-Manifestation**

Another attribute of Jesus (Jesusian reality) in the Christian theology is God's proper self-manifestation. There are some verses in the Gospel describing Jesus as the unique proper revelation of God who displays God's attributes which are not recognized for people.

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we saw his glory, the glory as it were of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. John beareth witness of him, and cries out, saying: This was he of whom I spoke: He that shall come after me, is preferred before me: because he was before me. And of his fullness we all have received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses; grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him (John, 1: 14-18).

Not only Jesus is God's proper manifestation, but also he is the one that God is in him.

Because in him, it hath well pleased the Father, that all fullness should dwell (Colossians, 1: 19). For in him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead corporeally (Colossians, 2: 9).

His manifestation and glory is forever. Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sake that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory (2 Timothy 2: 10).

For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endures to all generations (Psalms 100: 5).

Jesus represents real manifestation of God in the first level of being. He encompasses all the laws and relations which are later articulated in the phenomenal universe. He is Father's all-ruling providence which makes the Father known to all. He makes God known. In fact, he is God incarnate. Since he is God, Jesus is able to reveal God— not simply disclose truths about God, but make him known personally (McGrath, 2018, pp. 72-73).

### 1-7. the Intermediary of God's Grace

Jesus as the second person and Son of Father is an intermediary between God (Father) and the creatures, who reaches God's grace to them.

And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus (1Timothy 1: 14).

Christian scholars argue that even though the Logos was presented in the all prophets of Old Testament, he took place and embodied in Jesus at the end (McGrath, 2017: 564).

The attributes of Jesus have been mentioned in the "Tome of Leo" in this way:

Christ was born God of God, Almighty of Almighty, co-eternal of eternal; not later in time, not inferior in power, not different in glory, not divided in essence. The same only-begotten, eternal Son of the eternal Father was born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary (C.f. McGrath, 2018, p.75).

## 2. The Relationship Between Two Natures of Jesus

According to Christian creeds, Jesus is a perfect god and human. Based on the "doctrine of the two natures of Christ", which was set out by the Council of Chalcedon in 451, Jesus Christ was "perfect in divinity and humanity, truly God and truly human" (McGrath, 2018: 70).

Now, the problem is how to explain the relationship between these two different natures. The Relationship between Jesus as a human and Jesusian Reality as the second person of Trinity is explained through embodiment. Jesusian Reality as the Lord of the world embodied and took place in human Jesus. A divine essence occurred in a human being. He walked, saw, spoke, helped, and guided people by this human body.

This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief (1Timothy 1: 15).

One of the famous analogies that describe the relationship between Jesus and God is the analogy of the sun and its ray. The ray springs from the sun, and we feel its heat and see its light. The ray is not the sun itself but it is what makes the sun known. This analogy first stated by Philo, a Jewish philosopher, and then was used by Tertullian of Carthage.

## II. Muhammadan Reality in Islamic Theosophy

### 1. Terminology

"Muhammadan Reality" or "the Reality of Muhammad" (al-ḥaqīqat al-Muhammadiyah) is one of the most important concepts in the Islamic theosophy especially in the theosophy of Ibn 'Arabī, one of the greatest Islamic theosophists.



From Islamic Theosophists' point of view, especially in Ibn 'Arabī, all prophets are embodiments of the Perfect Man. But the Islam's Prophet, Muhammad, has a special status among them. He has two kinds of beings. Before he comes to this material world as a human being and prophet, he has been a cosmic being<sup>1</sup> and had a transcendental abstract being in the second level after God.

The main reason for this Muhammad's transcendental being is a famous Tradition (Hadith) in Islamic sources in which Prophet Muhammad says about himself: "I was a prophet even while Adam was between clay and water" (Aḥsā'ī, 1405: 4/ 121).

Muhammadan Reality is God's administrator who created the world. "God Himself has put administration of His own possession in the hands of Man as His vicegerent" (Izutsu, 1984: 235). And Man owes this high status to the fact that he is the only existent in the whole world of being in whom all the attributes and Names of God are manifested (Ibid.).

## 2. Muhammadan Reality and the Doctrine of Logos

As previously mentioned, Logos has different meanings such as: reason, word, speech, divine reason, etc. In Islamic theosophy, Muhammadan Reality has been named the Light, the Reason, the First Intellect, the Pen, the Word, God's breath, and the Soul of the world. All of these names are the names of Logos in history of philosophy and religion. Muhammadan Reality has the status of the First Intellect in Platonic cosmology. He is God's first direct creature. He is an intermediary existence which God has created the all world and creatures by him. So, he is Logos in Islamic theosophy as Izutsu calls Ibn 'Arabī's doctrine of Perfect Man, "the doctrine of the logos" (Izutsu, 1984: 236). Perfect Man is another name and another aspect of Muhammadan Reality.

Muhammadan Reality has been created from God's substance. I mean the light. God describes his substance in the Holy Quran as the Light: "God is the Light of heavens and earth" (The Quran, Light (al-Nūr): 35).

On the other hand, according to Islamic theosophy, Muhammadan Reality also is called 'Muhammadan light' and his light is the first thing that God created. The Prophet Muhammad describes himself in a famous tradition as follows: "The first thing that God created was my light" (Majlisī, 1403, 1, p. 97).

This shows the unity of Muhammadan Reality with God in their substance.

As stated earlier, "Logos" is a Greek word which means "word". Jesusian Reality was the divine word. The same is true about Muhamadan Reality in Islamic theosophy. God takes an oath to the Pen in Quran:

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1. This term has been used by Izutsu in his book "Sofism and Taoism" for referring to nonhuman being of Muhammad as God's first creature which corresponds the platonic First Intellect. But I prefer use the term "Transcendental being" instead of it because I think "cosmic" does not refer to nonmaterial, abstract and superior attributes of this being above all angels and light beings.

“Nun. By the pen! By all they write!” (The Quran, Nun: 1).

According to Shiite sources and Traditions (Ahādīth), this pen was a pen from light. “Pen” and “light” are other names of Muhammadan Reality (Hurr-i ‘Āmilī, 1409, 17, p. 330; Mulla Sadrā, 1370, p.155). Justifying the attribution of the name “Pen” to Muhammadan Reality, some scholars have said that it is because of launching of creation by Muhammadan Reality. The idea of all creatures such as: cosmos, heavens, earth, animals, plants, .etc. has been written by the Pen at the beginning of creation (Sabziwārī, 1370: 256-257).

### 3. The Attributes of Muhammadan Reality in Islamic Theosophy

#### 3-1. Al-Ḥaqq Al-Khalq

The term “al-ḥaqq al-khalq” consists of two attributes: al-ḥaqq which means literally truth and reality<sup>1</sup> and is one of God's names in Islam. And al-khalq means a created existent and the world. These two words refer to two aspects of the Muhammadan Reality in Islamic theosophy. On one hand, he is a creature of God (Allah). On the other hand, he is an existent with divine aspects and attributes.

Qayṣarī, an Islamic theosophist, has written in his book:

“You understood the philosophy of the origin of Adam's body. I mean his exterior face, and you understood the origin of Adam's spirit, I mean his interior face. He is al-Ḥaqq al-Khalq. And you understood his status and he is a comprehensive being owing to which he deserved God's vicegerent. Then, Adam is al-Ḥaqq because of his raising the world and due to his qualification to divine attributes and he is al-Khalq because of his being servant [to God] and his vassal [to God]” (Qayṣarī, 1375: 405).

In Islamic theosophy, “Adam” refers to the Perfect Man who has gained all perfect attributes of God and reveals all aspect of God's being. He is God's perfect creature. Muhammadan Reality is the first instance of perfect Man. Other prophets from Adam to Jesus also are perfect men but not in the level of Muhammad and Muhammadan Reality.

#### 3-1-1. Al-Ḥaqq

As stated, the literal meaning of al-Ḥaqq is truth and reality, which is one of the Allah's names. Muhammadan Reality in Islamic theosophy is called “al-Ḥaqq” because of his revealing divine attributes and names. He is a creature that has gained divine aspects and does divine deeds in the world. In Islamic theosophical cosmology, God is an uncreated and self-existent being. He is the main and ultimate origin of being and existence. All existents except God have obtained their existence from Him directly or indirectly. At the second level of being, after God, the Reality of Muhammad takes place. He has been created directly by God. He has all attributes of God except self-existent and necessity of

1. These were two meanings of Logos in ancient Greece.

being. He is not God (Allah) and does not have divine essence but has divine attributes and features like omniscience, omnipotent, the creator of the world with all of his beings like humans, heaven, earth, sun, moon, plants, animals and all other creatures and beings. Unlike the Christians, Islamic theosophists do not claim that Muhammadan Reality is a god and he has divine essence but hold that he is Rabb (who runs the world and raises the creatures). Rabb is one of the names of Allah. These attributes of Muhammadan Reality in Islamic theosophy are the same as attributes of Logos in Greek philosophy and Christian theology.

Therefore, The Muhammadan Reality is the Islamic theosophical Logos. It is necessary to mention that other branches of Islamic sciences like Islamic Kalām do not count these attributes for Muhammad and do not believe in his transcendental being. On their philosophy, Muhammad just was a human and prophet.

### 3-1-2. Al-Khalq (First Existent)

“Al-Khalq” is an Arabic word which means both creation and creature. This attribute shows that Muhammadan Reality is a creature. He does not have divine essence and same entity as Allah (Islam's God). He is not God but he is God's first creature, who was created directly by God (Allah). In other words, He is God's first descending in the form of creature and as a contingent existent.

Ibn ‘Arabī, the most significant Islamic Theosophist, says:

“Habā’ (dust) was the beginning of creation (the reality of Habā’ is extended existence) and the first existent in it was the Reality of Muhammad, since he is God’s vicegerent in the world and the whole being is in his control. When God wanted to create the world, a reality came out from his holy will which is called Habā’ and no existent has the ability of accepting Habā’ but the Reality of Muhammad which is called “reason”. Then, the Reality of Muhammad is the beginning of the creation of the world and the first existent” (Ibn ‘Arabī, 1/ 118).

There are many Traditions (Ahādīth) in Islamic sources which describe Muhammad as the first creature of Allah. Imam Ali said, “There just was Allah and nothing was with Him, and then, the first thing He created was the light of Muhammad, His friend”. (Majlisī, 1403: 54/ 197). Jābir ibn Yazīd has narrated a Hadith from Imam Bāqir stating,

“Jābir! The first thing that Allah created was Muhammad and his family, who are in right direction and direct [people] to the right way” (Kuliynī, 1/ 513).

In another Hadith from Prophet Muhammad, he says, “The first thing that Allah created was my light”. Although in many other Traditions (Ahādīth), the first creature of God has been named as “reason, light, will, qalam (pen), substance, spirit”, most of Islamic scholars believe that these are different names of Muhammadan Reality (Mullā Sadrā, 1364: 4/ 133-134; Kāshānī, 1377: 223-229; Sabziwārī, 1370: 255-260).

Another term in Islamic theosophy which helps us in understanding the meaning of al-Ḥaqq is “Perfect Man”. They match “Perfect Man” with Prophet Muhammad. “Perfect Man” is a man who has brought all of his talents and abilities into existence and in addition to his contingent aspect as a human, has got divine (Ḥaqqī) aspects. Perfect Man reaches a position that all attributes of Allah are realized in him and does divine acts. He would be omniscience, omnipotent, and omnibenevolent. He can run and control the world. He can be unified with God and get into God's region (Suq’i Rubūbī). On one hand, Perfect Man has a contingent aspect (Jahati Imkānī), but on the other hand he can get necessity aspect (Jahati wujūbī) by creating and manifesting God's names and attributes in himself. At this time, it would be correct to predict the name of 'Rabb' (one of Allah's names in Islam which means who runs the world and grows creatures up) to him and using it for him.

When Perfect Man reaches this status and manifests all attributes of God, theosophists, by shifting the point of regard, say that God (Allah) reaches His perfect self-manifestation in a Perfect Man. Perfect Man is God's most perfect self-manifestation.

Izutsu says:

The Perfect Man, in this respect, is the Absolute<sup>1</sup>, while being at the same time a creature... Man is Absolute because of his essential comprehensiveness or because, as Ibn ‘Arabī says, God put into Adam, the human species, all of its attributes, whether active or passive (Izutsu, 1984: 238).

As Izutsu writes, by corresponding the Perfect Man with Muhammad, he becomes the intermediate nature between God and the world. “He is a ‘servant’ and is ‘passive’ vis-à-vis the Absolute, but he is a ‘lord’ and is ‘active’ vis-à-vis the world” (Izutsu, 1984: 238).

### **3-2. The Place of Revealing God's Comprehensive Name and His Attributes**

The Reality of Muhammad or Perfect Man, in Islamic theosophy, has a unique status which no existent and being can reach. Moreover, it is the status of manifesting God's comprehensive name, Allah. God has many names and attributes in Islam which the first and most significant one is Allah. This name is comprehensive that contains all aspects, features, and attributes of God's existence. Other names and attributes of God like Live, Wise, Greater, Creator, Omnipotent, Omniscience, Merciful, Hearing, and Knowing just exhibit one side and special aspect of His existence. But Allah introduces God in His whole and perfect existence. Now, the Reality of Muhammad and Perfect Man is the only being in all universe that can reveal and exhibit the name of Allah, because he is

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1. By this world, he means God. It is one of God's names in Islamic theosophy which refers to His pure essence before getting any determination and getting any name and attribute. Names and attributes start by a kind of determination at the essence of the thing.

the only existent who has (Muhammadan Reality essentially has all attributes of God) or has obtained (Perfect Man has gained all attributes of God in an evolutionary process from humanity to divinity<sup>1</sup>) all attributes of Allah.

From Islamic theosophy's point of view, the world and all existents have been created by manifesting one of God's names and attributes. For example, all prophets were created by manifesting God's guide name (Hādī) and Satan was created by revealing God's misleading name (Muḍill). Therefore, all existents and beings in the world are the places in which God has manifested Himself (Maẓhar). Now, the difference between Muhammadan Reality (Perfect Man) and other existents in the world is that he is the comprehensive self-manifesting of God but others just are manifestation of one aspect of God's existence. The Reality of Muhammad is the place in which God's comprehensive name (Allah) has been manifested but other creatures are the places in which other special names of God have been manifested. In conclusion, the Reality of Muhammad is a comprehensive being that includes all creatures and beings from the beginning to the end. In other words, the universe with all beings has been created by him. He is one existent that has gathered all existents in himself. All things we see separately in the world exist in Muhammadan Reality in one being (Ibn Turki, 1360: 180).

The Reality of Muhammad includes the scientific ideas of the beings. He is the place of God's knowledge. Qayṣarī says about this point:

“There is a form (ṣūrat) for every name of God's names in His knowledge, which is called quiddity (māhiyya<sup>2</sup>) or al-'Iin-u al-thābit. And, there is an exteriority for all of them [in the external world] which are called revelations and objective beings. And, those names are lords<sup>3</sup> (Arbāb) of those revelations, and the revelations are their oratorical servants<sup>4</sup> (Marbub). And, you understood that the Reality of Muhammad is the form of the divinity comprehensive name, and he is lord of it and all names gain grace and assistance from him. Then, know that this Reality is the one who raises the whole forms of knowledge” (Qayṣarī, 1375: 128).

### 3-3. God's Vicegerent

Muhammadan Reality is God's vicegerent in this world. He is an earthly vicegerent of heavenly God. One of the contemporary theosophists states this point as follows,

God's hidden one entity or God's essence is hidden in a way that does not have any name and definition and is called 'the hidden phoenix' ('Anqā' Mughrab) in

1. Notice that I do not mean by “divinity” here that Perfect Man have divine essence and becomes God. But I mean he just get divine attributes (Haqqi aspects).

2. It is an Arabic word which means “what it is”.

3. Archetypes

4. Or vassal. Marbūb means a being which is controlled, raised and nourished by another being (rabb) which is a god or archetype.

term of theosophists. Therefore, it never is recognized by any knower and worshiped by a worshipper. Because of that, the great Prophet has said, “We did not recognize you correctly and did not worship you as you deserve”. There is a need to a vicegerent for this hidden entity which governs instead of him and shows his names and reflects his light (Khomeini, 1373: 13).

A vicegerent must have the attributes and abilities of his sovereign and be the closest man to him in all features. A smart king always chooses a smart deputy for his kingdom. Then, God's vicegerent must have His attributes by which He governs the world. Since Muhammadan Reality reveals Allah comprehensive name, he has all attributes of God. Accordingly, he is God's vicegerent and the one who rules the world.

Qayṣarī in interpretation of Ibn ‘Arabī says,

“Therefore, for this Adam was vicegerent”, he means that Adam for his comprehensive entity became God's vicegerent in the world. “If he (i.e. Adam) was not apparent in form of whom he governs (which he is God), in what he is vicegerent of (i.e. the universe)”, he means if he did not have God's attributes and was not qualified by His perfections and if he could not run the world, “he was not a vicegerent” (Qayṣarī, 1375: 401).

### 3-4. God's Greatest Self-Manifestation

In terms of “oneness of Being” theory, Islamic theosophists believe that there just is one existence in the cosmos and it is God's existence and other existents have not real existence but they are God's self-manifestations and self-revelations. As a result, every being is a revelation of the different aspects of God's existence and displays God's perfections and excellences on its level. God reveals Himself in every being in its level. Hence, the limitations of every being's quantity prevent God from revealing Himself perfectly. But among existents in the cosmos, it just is the Reality of Muhammad that can reveal God in His level perfectly and completely with all attributes, names, perfections, and excellences. No aspect of God's existential aspects could be hidden in manifestation of Muhammadan Reality. According to this, the Reality of Muhammad is God's greatest self-manifestation in which God shows Himself perfectly. Muhammadan Reality is like a mirror in which God sees Himself. (Qayṣarī, 1375: 326)

### 3-5. God's Providence and the Creator of the World

Islamic theosophists believe that all levels of being, all hidden or apparent universes are determinations of God's will and its manifestations. Every being and existent in the world has a determined nature which has been created by a special determined will of God. When God wills and determines his providence to create a being, then that being is created.

Therefore, theosophists state that the Providence is God's first creature by which all other creatures are created. Imam Sādiq says, “God created the

Providence by Himself, and then He created things by the Providence” (Khomeini, 1360: 31).

Ibn ‘Arabī stated this point by this beautiful expression,

“The Being appeared by 'Bism-i Allah-i Al-Rahmān-i Al-Rahīm [In the name of God, the Lord of Mercy, the Giver of Mercy]' and the Will is the strong rope which takes place between divine heaven and the created earth. And every one who reaches this status, his horizon becomes identified with the horizon if the Will and the beginning and the end of creation are in his hands. Certainly, the Reality of Muhammad and Ali are God's vicegerents on the ideas of quantities (A’yān-i māhīyyāt) and the status of Absolute Oneness” (Ibn ‘Arabī, 2/110).

There are many Traditions (Ahādīth) implying that the world has been created by the Reality of Muhammad or the Light of Muhammad. For example, Imam Ali in a long Tradition (Hadīth) says that the first existent that God created was the light of his friend, Muhammad, and then, one hundred twenty four thousands prophets were created from the light of Muhammad, and then, throne (Cursī), heaven, brede (luḥ), pen (qalam), angels, the sun, the moon, stars, the day and the night, the sky and the earth, and what are in them, were created from his light (Majlisī, 1403: 54/ 198-202).

### 3-6. The Administrator of the World and the Mediator of God's Grace

Islamic Theosophists mention that Perfect Man is the spirit of the universe and the universe is his body. As a spirit administrates his body, Perfect Man administrates the universe. As Perfect Man is the manifestation of God's comprehensive name and God's vicegerent, he has one face toward God and another face toward the world. He receives the grace from God and gives it to the creatures. This is the meaning of what theosophists say that Perfect Man is the secret of the Being and the spirit of the world. He is the intermediary of God's Grace.

The verse “And He has made subservient for you the night and the day and the sun and the moon, and the stars are made subservient by His commandment; most surely there are signs in this for a people who ponder” (Al-Nah: 12) implies the administration of Perfect Man in the world (Kāshānī, 1360: 120).

Ibn ‘Arabī declares, “The world totally is the separation of Adam. And Adam is the comprehensive book. Therefore, he is like the spirit for the body. Perfect Man is the spirit of the universe and the universe is his body” (Ibn ‘Arabī, 2/ 67).

Jami, one of the great Islamic theosophists, talks about the Reality of Muhammad and his role as the intermediary of grace, “He is God's servant and the lord into the world. And therefore, God made him and his offspring His vicegerent” (Jāmī, 1370, p. 3).

### 3-7. God's Prophet

In Islamic theosophy, there are two kinds of prophethood: The universal prophethood (or the genesis prophethood) and Restricted prophethood (religious prophethood). The universal or absolute prophethood is a pre-eternal and eternal prophethood. It is the knowledge of the prophet, who has reached this position, about the aptitude of all creatures and giving them their rights and raising them into their perfection. This kind of prophethood is related to genesis of creatures and their beings. But the second kind of prophethood is related to law and religion as a set of laws. A prophet as God's messenger brings His laws for humans.

During the history, all prophets had the second kind of prophethood. They were God's messengers and brought His laws for their people. But among them, he just was Muhammad who had both kinds of prophethood. Muhammad was the last prophet of God in this world, and as Muslims believe, he brought Islam as the last religion for his people and even all people in the world. But The Reality of Muhammad has had the first kind of prophethood. He brought all creatures into existence and gave them being and has been raising them to their perfection. He has brought up and trained beings from the beginning to now and will do that to the end. This is the meaning of his attribute as “the Greatest Lord (trainer)” (al-Rabb-i al-‘uzmā). This Tradition (Hadīth) from Prophet Muhammad refers to this kind of his prophethood, “The first thing that God created was my Light and I was a prophet while Adam was between water and clay” (Kāshānī, 1360: 186).

From Islamic Theosophists' point of view, especially in Ibn ‘Arabī's view, as Izutsu says, all prophets are embodiments of the Perfect Man or the Reality of Muhammad (Izutsu, 1984, p. 236). Muhammadan Reality is the origin of all prophets. In fact, this is the Reality of Muhammad that has come into the forms of prophets from Adam to Jesus in this world during the history in terms of the differences exist in societies and geographies. And the last self-manifestation of that Reality in this world was the Prophet Muhammad in which he revealed the whole of what is in that pre-eternal Reality.

Qayṣarī declares:

“The self-manifestation of that Reality with his all perfects was not possible at first. Then, that Reality manifested himself in special forms which all of them were appropriate to the people of that time... and those forms were the forms of prophets” (Qayṣarī, 1375: 128).

#### **4. The Relationship between Muhammadan Reality and Muhammad**

What is the relationship between Muhammad as a human and prophet in this world and the Reality of Muhammad as a pre-eternal, abstract and transcendental being? According to one of the theosophical explanations, their relationship is like the relationship between a universal reality and its particulars. The Reality of Muhammad as a universal thing is the First Intellect. However, when this Reality belongs to a human form and gets this worldly form, he gets a difference with his universal entity as the First Intellect. This difference is not like two disparate



things, but it is like the difference between a universal thing and its particulars (Yathribī, 1374: 331).

The second explanation of this relationship is based on the difference between the reality or original of something and its dilute or weak existence, like the difference between the light of the sun and the light of candle. According to this justification, Muhammad is dilute and weak existence of Muhammadan Reality. The Reality of Muhammad which is the first transcendental abstract creation of God, who created other things in the Being, wears the form of human and creates human beings from Adam to Muhammad after falling into the material world and his manifestation in form of animals, plants, and metals. Therefore, Muhammad as a human is created by descending Muhammadan Reality into the material world. Since Muhammad was trained by his reality, he did not need a human trainer. He is self-depending. Finally, this human being of Muhammad will conjoin First Intellect (Muhammadan Reality) and unite him in the arc of ascent. And, at the end, according to the principle that “the ends come back to the beginnings”, they will gather together and appear in a unique being. (Āshtīyānī, 1373: 159-160)

### **III. The Comparison of the Attributes of Jesus and Muhammadan Reality**

At the end of this paper, the similarities and differences of both Realities, Jesusian and Muhammadan, are presented.

#### **1. Similarities**

The properties of Jesus or Jesusian Reality in Christian theology are very similar to those of Muhammadan Reality in Islamic theosophy.

##### **1-1. Secondary Level**

Both of them take place in the second level of the Being and cosmos after God. Muhammadan Reality was the first thing that God created in the world. According to Christian creeds, Jesusian Reality (Jesus as second person of Trinity), although he is not a creature, he was born from Father. As a result, if someone wants to determine their level in the whole of the Being, they are in the second level after God above all other beings.

Both of them were Logos, God's reason, God's speech, and God's light. They were God's proper self-manifestation and glory in the world. No one could realize God without them.

Moreover, they take place as an intermediary being between God and other beings in the world. They reach God's grace to other creatures.

Both were God's providence and vicegerent in the world that God has put all things in their hands.

The Reality of Jesus was the Word and the Reality of Muhammad was the Pen by which the words are written.

### **1-2. Divine Attributes**

Both Realities have divine attributes. They are described by those attributes that God is described. Their main divine attributes were omniscience, omnipotent, immaterial, pre-eternal, eternal and everlasting, the creator of the world and all things in it, cosmic designer, and king of cosmos.

Muhammadan Reality was manifesting God's comprehensive and supreme name (Allah). He was the locus of manifestation of God's names and attributes. Jesusian Reality also was the unique proper revelation of God who displayed God's attributes which were not recognized for people.

### **1-3. Perfect Present of Logos**

According to Christianity, the Logos presented in the all prophets of Old Testament, but he took place and embodied in Jesus (McGrath, 2017: 564). Based on Islamic theosophy, The Reality of Muhammad (which I call Islamic Logos) manifested in all prophets from Adam to Jesus and Muhammad, but his taking place in Muhammad was the perfect manifestation of the Reality of Muhammad.

## **2. Difference**

Although Both Jesus and Muhammadan Reality have divine attributes, the main difference between them was in their essence and Nature. According to Christian theology, Jesus (or Jesus Reality in my term), in addition to divine attributes, had divine essence and nature. In fact, the reason that he has divine attributes in Christianity is his being God. But according to Islamic theosophy, the Reality of Muhammad was not God and, therefore, he did not have godly essence like Jesus. He was God's first creature. God manifested Himself in the Reality of Muhammad. This is the reason that he has divine attributes. Jesus is not a creature but Muhammadan Reality is.

This point makes another difference between them that, even though Jesus and Muhammadan Reality were the best and perfect revelation of God, the reason of this perfect manifestation in Jesus is his godhead and godly essence. He is the Son of the Father; therefore, he is the best revelation of Father God. But the Reality of Muhammad because of his divinity attributes and revelation of God's attributes in perfect way is God's best revelation.

## **Conclusion**

The following conclusions can be drawn from the present study:

1. As demonstrated, the attributes of Jesus or Jesusian Reality were so similar to those of Muhammadan Reality except that Jesus has godly essence and Muhammadan Reality does not have. Jesus is God but the Reality of Muhammad is not a god and does not have divine essence even though he has godly

attributes. Both of them have divine attributes like the creator of the world, omniscience, omnipotent, the intermediary being between God, and creatures of the world.

2. According to the attributes that have been ascribed to Muhammadan Reality in Islamic theosophy we can conclude that he is Islamic Logos, like Jesus which is Logos in Christian theology.

3. As a philosopher, not a believer, not a Muslim or Christian, I think there is a strong temptation among the scholars of both religions, Islam and Christianity, to extend their religions features (i.e. Jesus and Muhammad) to the level of divinity and godhead. Christian theologians extended Jesus to the rank of the second God which is co-existent with the first God (Father). Ibn 'Arabī and other Muslim theosophists extended Muhammad to the rank of Lordship (Rubūbiyya). They could not reach him out to the state of God because this belief of Christians in being Jesus godhead has been condemned in the Holy Quran. Then, they could not extend Muhammad to the state of God but they reached him out to the rank of godly attributes like lordship (Rabb).

3. The influence and effect of Greek philosophy, especially Platonic, on the idea of Logos and Jesusian Reality in Christianity and on Muhammadan Reality in Islamic theosophy is clear. The ancient Greek philosophy helped Christian theologians and Islamic theosophists to make an ontological system for some religious verses and texts.

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