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# Selections from The reciprocal services between Islam and Iran

**Compiled by**  
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Idris Tijani Samaari  
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**Al-Mustafa International  
Translation and Publication Center**

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## **Publisher's Forward**

To begin and execute a research is like walking in the path of development and evolvement. When the seeds of the “questions” are planted, in the soil of the mind of the researcher, this phase initiates, and its end is culminated when the result and the outcome of knowledge and wisdom is gained.

Evidently, this end is a new chapter in itself, for growth, and announces beforehand this good news to humans. For the result of all those mental efforts will not only bring the blooming and flowering of talent and all kinds of Blessings to humans, but it also makes the mind of the researcher to ponder and shape new, more questions.

This will produce a great collection of growing plants and flowers for the seeking mind... Those “questions” are in fact, the seeds, which according to the necessities of Time and the strength of the researchers will grow and bloom by themselves. They will make Culture and Civilization to move forward.

In like manner, the increasing rate of transferring oneself from one place to another place and the decrease of the distances will make those seeds travel miles and miles, to faraway places, in order to install them inside the curious mind of other seekers. This will bring an amazing diversity and a novelty for another civilization...

It is true then, that the presence of knowledge and a good,

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capable management will help this project to develop itself and one has to admit indeed, that it has always played an important role...

Al-Mustafa International Publication and Translation Center, because of its global mission, and its special position among the Religious Schools and the colorful human diversity that it has developed inside itself, sees it as a moral duty to procure all the appropriate conditions for any research works, and takes its role in this matter, most seriously. To procure all kinds of necessary grounds, with an excellent management of all the existing possibilities and talents, and to care and protect all its researchers in religious fields; these are the most crucial responsibilities of the Department of Research in this International center.

We dearly hope that by being attentive to all these autonomous scientific movements, and by fortifying all the existing motives, we shall be able to witness the blooming of the Religious Culture in every part of this wide world!

We would also like to show our deepest gratitude and appreciation to the respected Islamic compiler, Late **Murtaza Mutahhari** and translators **Idris Tijani Samaari** and **Mina Bukar** in order for you, dear readers, to read and enjoy it!

**Al-Mustafa International  
Publication and Translation Center**

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## **Introduction**

A school of thought can be such that it encompasses all the dimensions of man's existence. The more comprehensive a school of thought or an ideology is; the more likely it is to withstand the test of time. Hence, it would be better able to penetrate different civilizations. The ability of an ideology to "move" so to speak is related to the proofs that it presents that substantiate its beliefs. An ideology that stands on firm ground is the one that will be able to produce a civilization which is able to protect itself from the onslaughts of hostile elements.

Throughout history, Islam has shown that it is able to incorporate different cultural elements and imbibe them with the Spirit that pervades its own tradition. It has done so without being indebted to these foreign cultures or traditions. Through the pivotal concepts of Unity and Justice that Islam ascribes to, it is able to utilize the potentials of these traditions for the advancement of its own lofty ideals. The civilization of Islam is based on Tawheed and this is not an entity that anyone of the various subcultures of the Muslim world own to the detriment of the other.

The Iranian Nation was one of these civilizations that had been absorbed into that of Islam. The Persians were already distinct in having established themselves in history as a nation possessing a rich cultural and spiritual legacy. This allowed them

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to find a significant and lofty position in the civilization of Islam.

Prior to the Islamic Revolution in Iran and even today however, there are people that use the ancient civilization of Iran as a means to alienate the Iranian Muslims from their religion. They promote Iranian Nationalism and other such empty ideologies. It was in reaction to this cultural degeneration that Martyr Murtada Mutahhari wrote his famous book "the Reciprocal Relations between Islam and Iran". It was the insight of thinkers such as him, along with other notable scholars especially the founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Imam Khomeini, which was able to annihilate these movements before they were able to infiltrate the Iranian nation. The only way we may give momentum to this movement started by such individuals is by establishing unity and promoting sincerity between Muslims.

What the esteemed reader holds before him is in effect the product of the International Center for Islamic Studies and the World Conference on Mutahhari's Thoughts. It has been translated by Maina Bukar and Idriss Tijjani. Parts of this book were previously translated and published by Ali Quli Qarai in the scholarly journal al- Tawhid The present translators made extensive use of those parts and would like to commend Mr. Qarai for his excellent work. We hope that this work will secure its place among the lovers of wisdom and truth.

Research Department of the International Center for Islamic Studies

## **About the Author**

Martyr Murtada Mutahhari was born in Fariman, in the province of Khurasan (Iran) in February of 1919. His father Shaykh Muhammad Husayn' was a religious scholar and a pious man who spiritually inspired the precocious Mutahhari. At the age of twelve, he joined the traditional Islamic School at Mashhad where he pursued his studies for five years. Then he proceeded to Qum, the famous theological Centre of Shia Muslims where for fifteen years he pursued his religious education under the supervision of Ayatullah Burujardi in jurisprudence and its principles (who had comprehensive knowledge of Islamic sciences and remarkable insight in socio-political issues), Imam Khumayni<sup>1</sup> in spirituality and principles of jurisprudence, 'Allamah Tabataba'i in Islamic philosophy, and Mirza 'Ali Agha Shirazi", amongst many other distinguished scholars.

In 1952 he migrated to and settled in Tehran, teaching traditional Islamic philosophical texts in Madrasah-i Marvi and modern Islamic philosophy in the Faculty of Theology at Tehran University. More importantly, he devoted his scholarly research to contemporary challenges to the Islamic faith, creating a rich and profound legacy of original exposition of the Islamic world-view which he presented through lectures,

1 "who was my first guide through his faith, piety and integrity"

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2 "an important part of my personality was shaped in those spiritual and other classes over twelve years"

3 "he was inspired by God in his exegesis of the holy Qur'an"

4 "whenever I recount the past, my biggest spiritual treasure is having won the company of this great man" articles, and books to Islamic associations of students, doctors, engineers, traders and in mosques and which covered issues ranging from Islamic philosophy, responses to communist arguments against religion, doctrinal matters like Divine unity and justice, predestination, Resurrection, commentary of the Qur'an and *Nahj alBalagha*, social issues like *hijab*, women's rights, economic issues like an Islamic economic system and banking without usury, and political topics like global Islamic movements and revolution in Iran.

Politically, he engaged in covert struggle against the Shah's tyranny and in 1963 was arrested along with Imam Khumayni. After the latter's exile to Turkey and later to Najaf, he maintained close contact with his mentor for fifteen years and guided the Islamic resistance movement, culminating in the victory of the revolution. Subsequently, he was nominated President of the Revolutionary Council, but his activities were intolerable for the followers of the materialistic schools whose deviation he actively opposed and exposed, who therefore decided to eliminate him. Eventually they assassinated this eminent scholar on May 1, 1979. His martyrdom was a great tragedy for the revolution and the Muslim *ummah*. When the sad news was conveyed to Imam Khumayni he could not control his tears (he held his beard and cried "Mutahhari Mutahhari! Mutahhari!"). In his condolence message he said: "In him I have lost a dear son. I am mourning the death of one who was the fruition of my life."

His bier was laid to rest in Qum in the precincts of the Holy Shrine of Fatima al-Ma'surna, the sister of the eighth Shia Imam, in Qum. May his soul rest in peace.

## **Preface**

### **In the Name of Allah**

The interaction and relationships between different nations has never been considered as much as it is today. Of the most fundamental issues are patriotism and nationalism; its factors of development and its boundaries.

In the last two to three decades, fewer than fifty nations came into existence or were nominated, mapped and demarcated. On the other hand, nations that did not disappear were divided into two or many parts. Each entity pursued a specified path with particular ideals, creeds and geographical peculiarities; thereby changing its status; ideologically and socially to one that is completely opposite to its previous one. All these developments and changes were accompanied with years of struggle, resistance, perseverance and numerous sacrifices. It has also taken in its path an unlimited amount of time, energy and potentialities.

Were nations that came into being during this period not formerly in existence? Were those that had been divided not an existing social unit? Similarly, are nations that changed their systems still the same even though they may have preserved most of their features like language, race, climatic conditions and geographical locations?

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Considering what has been mentioned, the main political, social and military issues as well as the interest and benefits of different nations are currently presented in a nationalistic form. Currently, nationalism and patriotism are the most sort after ideologies to such an extent that when social and political ideologies that were originally different to them establish a movement or there is an uprising they will also give their movement a nationalistic colour.

On the other hand, for us Iranians the issue of nationalism is a current one. In addition, our nation and country has not been attacked or transgressed, yet there is a difference and contradiction in the understanding of people about Iranian nationalism. Presently there are two contributing factors. The first one is the racial and ancestral factor that precedes Islam. The second one is the ideological, religious, cultural and social norms that goes back to the past fourteenth centuries since the advent of Islam.

Our national and genetic lineage originates from the Arian race. Our ideological background, cultural norms and social customs originate from Islam and not from the Arian race.

If racial and ancestral origins were to be given the role of defining and separating a nationality; then the path, method and the future of our nation in its present condition would have been something else. Were the origins of social customs and ideological system of the last fourteenth century to be given preference in defining a nation; our policy and future would have been something else altogether. If the Arian factor were to be taken as the main criteria in specifying Iranian nationality, then the final analysis & consequences would be a close relationship with the western world. This relationship and closeness by itself would have impact on our national policy and politics. The result will be the severing of ties with our neighbours and those Islamic countries that are not of Arian origin. Further on this will lead to and towards Europe and the West. In this sense the colonial west will be part and parcel of

us while the Muslim Arab will be a foreigner before us. On the other hand were we to take the ideological principles and social customs of the last fourteen century as the criteria in defining a nation we would have entirely difference policies and responsibilities. Then the Arab, Turk, Indian, Indonesian and Chinese Muslims will be a part and parcel of us while the non-Muslim westerners will be foreigners. Therefore the discussion about nationalism is not purely an academic discourse, it is a real discourse that is related to the behaviour, policy, destiny and the future of a socio-political unit that today is known to be Iran. Thus there is a place for its presentation and pursuance.

### **Short History and Past Record**

The concept of Nationalism in the world with its current shape and structure was founded and presented in the early part of the nineteenth century in Germany. Originally it is one of the effects that came into being as a result of the great French revolution in Europe. The great French revolution itself is a consequence of the rebellion against the old autocratic ideology that attached no importance to the masses and the general public. Since then freedom and equality became the original theme amongst philosophers, lecturers, authors and the general public.

Freedom and Equality; which the organizers of human rights propaganda claimed to have brought as a gift of salvation to mankind; in its essence doesn't recognize any boundary or nationality. It is from this perspective that the rays of the French revolution quickly surpassed French boundaries within the period of a decade and became widespread across Europe, having the most effect in Germany. In Germany, the political philosophers and writers were so fascinated with the ideas of being freedom seekers that they exclusively stood for and propagated it. Hence German philosophers were among the forerunners of those who spread this enthusiasm.

The Germans quickly realized that the freedom being claimed in the human rights propaganda in Germany was exclusive to the