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**THE DEVELOPMENT OF NIHILISM THROUGHOUT THE HISTORY OF
PHILOSOPHY (FROM SOPHISTS TO PLATO)**

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of writing this article about the development of Nihilism throughout the history of philosophy is that this philosophical idea has spread like a pandemic disease. This phenomenon can also be observed in our society, especially among young people. The most likely explanation is that young people are faced with many problems in order to gain an understanding of themselves and the outside world. There is no history of Nihilism in our philosophy, the Islamic philosophy, because the responsibility of our philosophers has been to reflect upon the Wisdom of God. The concept of Nihilism which is associated with unbelief and irresponsibility towards everything has never been relevant during the time of our great philosophers, because religious beliefs have always existed in our native land. However, Nihilism can be traced back to before Socrates in Western philosophy and the reason behind the rapid spread of this idea in modern and postmodern world can be discovered. Industry can be considered as the most important factor with which nihilistic culture of the Western world is trying to spread throughout other countries. In different sections of this paper, the topic is discussed in terms of research, history, met history and assessment of damage. The main finding of this study was raising the issue and addressing it, and not finding a solution for Nihilism.

Key words: Liberation, Absolute moral values, Anguish, Despair, Religion, Nihilism
INTRODUCTION

Nihilism is important because nowadays its signs can be easily detected and recognized everywhere. This phenomenon can be observed in individuals' everyday conversation and also in other aspects of life such as political, social and economic issues. Nihilism is like a dangerous and destructive virus and attacks all beliefs and values.

Consequently, it is a matter of necessity to fully understand all its aspects including its point of origin and development and to discover how the mind is attracted to such an idea. The approach to this study is to identify Nihilism and its historical origin and to find out which philosophers tried to solve this problem. Were they of any help in finding a solution to this problem or facilitated its rapid spread? Ultimately, the fundamental question raised in this article is that whether Islamic philosophy is able to deal with this problem or not? In this article the philosophers before Socrates are briefly discussed and the topic, which became relevant as a result of industrial and technological advancement, is discussed in detail. In today's world all borders and boundaries dividing the nations and countries have no meaning as a result of mass media communication including the World Wide Web (AT). All ideologies, philosophical doctrines, cults and religions stand guard against each other and each one is seeking to disseminate its ideas and dismiss others. The West which is at the front of industry and with its system of Capitalism has exploited the resources of the Third World Countries in the past, is now faced with the problem of giving meaning to the lives of individuals in its every society. Since The West has not been

able to find a solution for Nihilism with its own ideology, its objective is to dominate other countries again by infecting them with this virus. Capitalism is not faced with a major obstacle in order to achieve its objective, because it uses a modern information technology. It seems that this ideological attack can only be prevented by the culture and originality that exist in developing countries.

Theoretical Research

Nihilism in Academic Circles of Iran

In our scientific and philosophical circles, Nihilism is defined as a movement which has emerged in western societies as a result of industrial and technological advancement. However, the presence of Nihilism is evident in all the written historical documents which have been obtained. This indicates that there is a clear evidence of this movement in all the eras of human civilization. In the history of our country, Hakim Omar Khayyam poems¹and some quotes from Eyn ol Ghozat at some stage of his life²clearly embodies this idea.

¹- And if the Wine you drink, the Lip you press,
End in the Nothing all Things end in – Yes –
Then fancy while Thou art, Thou art but what
Thou shalt be – Nothing – Thou shalt not be less

²- We are caught up in a whirling vortex of a futile life
with no beginning.

Nihilism and How the Mind is Attracted to Such an Idea

When the operating system of the human mind performs an evaluation of moral values and social realities, it faces a broad spectrum of perceptions of values and realities. If this system decides that values and realities do not have transcendental basis and it can disregard them, because of the endless power of negation of human nature it obtains absolute liberation and releases itself from moral restrictions. Subsequently, the mind finds itself liberated and wants to choose a path but suddenly faces the problem of which path to choose. Which unclear path should it follow and where does it lead to? What is the criterion for the correct choice? At this stage an individual normally is affected by self-deception³ and chooses a path. However, if he reflects on his choice for a moment a will experience a strong feeling of mental anguish and thinks about what he has to do. Why has he chosen this path? This inability of the mind and the lack of criterion for choosing is called Nihilism. A man who seeks the truth will feel alienated because of the inability of mankind to understand himself, the universe and the supernatural world and will not relate to these concepts. This will have disastrous

consequences in his mind including becoming weary of humanity and disgusted with it and also a feeling of absurdity towards life. He believes that the reason for this mentality is not being in a stable state of mind and not having a logical and rational mind. Today what is allegedly known as Nihilism in Western academic circles is the definition given by the philosophers of 19th and 20th centuries, especially Schopenhauer and Nietzsche who used this expression for the first time. A Nihilist is defined as a person who loses his faith in Gods⁴. With respect to this definition, there are two types of Nihilism; namely, active and passive. Active Nihilism is what has been mentioned above; a person disregards all values and realities when he is satisfied, happy and content with his research. Nietzsche in his book “Thus Spoke Zarathustra” states that: “When the herd’s faith in Gods was lost (passive Nihilism), the one God who sees everything as well as the evil deeds committed by man had no other choice but to die. Man could not tolerate to see such a witness alive (active Nihilism)”. Nietzsche refers to him as the most evil and wicked man⁵. As a result of passive Nihilism, individuals who have a

³ - Sartre, 2006, page 250

⁴ - Nietzsche, 2007, page 132

⁵ - Nietzsche, 2010, page 431

strong will to live and are happy and contented constantly experience Nietzsche's anguish, Sartre's nausea, Kierkegaard's despair and Heidegger's falling.

Islamic Philosophers and Nihilism

In our country, the three schools of philosophy which can be named as "Rational Theology" are: Avicenna's Peripatetic School of Philosophy, Shahab al – Din Suhrawardi's Illuminationist School of Philosophy and Mulla Sadra's Transcendent School of Philosophy. These three schools of philosophy examined the fundamental principles of our country's religion based on reason. In these three rational schools of philosophy there are no subjects related to Nihilism which can be pursued. According to the written historical documents related to these three schools, there was no importance attached to Nihilism in order that it can be taken into consideration by Islamic philosophers. Our philosophers wrote whatever they saw and witnessed. The current complex social needs can be satisfied by these three Islamic schools. The issues raised by our philosophers have served our country's religion which in previous years was done by Allameh Tabatabai and Ayatollah Motahari and had a considerable

effect. Today our great philosophers are continuing this process while remaining vigilant at all times.

a) Pre-Socratic Philosophers

The early Greek philosophers were called physical or natural philosophers. They sought natural explanations for phenomena and the material principle of things. Their philosophical basis was the physical world. Aristotle states that if they had metaphysical ideas, they were influenced by Greek mythology and Gods⁶. Some of them such as Heraclitus and Anaxagoras adopted metaphysical principles⁷, but their ideas cannot be fully examined. These philosophers explain their principles based on sense and reason and define all things by their quintessential substance of which the world was formed and which was the source of everything. According to historical documents, they had considerable influence on their subsequent philosophers and its effect can still be observed. An example of this effect is that the science of Biology and Empirical Philosophy and also different moral values based on this mentality have become of great importance. Any idea, powerful or

⁶- Copleston, 2010, page 44 (It should be noted that many of the great philosophers of Milesian and Eleatic school were influenced by Eastern religions.)

⁷- Russell, 2008, page 99

weak, continues to exist throughout history. The secret behind the existence of philosophical ideas such as the philosophy of Heraclitus can be discovered in the philosophy of Sophists and the Epicureans which deeply influenced them.

b) Sophists and First Principles of Nihilism

Sophists who faced the inability of their previous philosophers in understanding and explaining world's phenomena and the material principle of things started to contemplate and examine in a new way. (It should be emphasized that all the philosophers of the Age of Enlighten and modern and post-modern philosophers are deeply influenced by Sophists.) Sophists began by expressing skepticism about the validity of human knowledge which was what René Descartes intentionally did in order to establish the foundations of his philosophy. The belief of itinerant Sophist philosophers was based on this theory that the sense of each individual is the measure and source of knowledge. There is a famous quote from the well-known Sophist, Protagoras, which is very popular among the post-modern philosophers: "Man is the measure of all things, of the things that are how they are, and of the things that are not how they are

not."⁸ When Jean – François Leotard, a post-modern philosopher, states that "the world is faced with an irreparable rift in diving a unified meaning to itself"⁹ he considers Protagoras quote as the measure of knowledge. Another Sophism approach states that "Sense is the measure of knowledge and anything which does not create an impression is non-existent."¹⁰ This approach was widely adopted by Empirical philosophers; namely, Hume, Locke and Berkeley. With regard to this approach, Hume states that the existence of physical and spiritual essence cannot be acknowledged and he sometimes denies them altogether.

Protagoras also states that all moral values of the society are relative; they are not of transcendental origin and absolute. With respect to this statement, Friedrich Nietzsche, the 19th century philosopher, concludes that: "God is dead and values are not absolute and nor are they of transcendental origin. They are all man-made and like humans themselves have undergone an evolutionary process."¹¹

When Protagoras concluded that it is impossible for mankind to acquire knowledge about truth and the meaning of the world, he

⁸ - Copleston, 2008, page 99

⁹ - Flynn, 2012, page 185

¹⁰ - Lavine, 2008, page 234

¹¹ - Will Durant, 2008, page 312

focused on an approach that assesses the truth in everything in terms of the success of their practical application. He said that the main focus should be on what works for an individual in a society and is effective in furthering his aims; hence, people should be educated to adopt this approach. In our era and the post-modern world this idea is expressed more clearly by Bergson and his views on Pragmatism who say that there is no truth to be discovered; however, truths can be created in order to live¹².

Thomas Hobbes was significantly influenced by Protagoras' idea that all values are relative and they are obtained by social contract. This considerable influence is clearly shown in this quote from Hobbes: "Man is a wolf to man."¹³ Protagoras states that: "Concerning the gods, I have no means of knowing whether they exist or not, nor what sort they may be, because of the obscurity of the subject, and the brevity of human life."¹⁴ It can be understood from Protagoras's quotes that he was basically in a state of perplexity about whether to consider an absolute truth for the world or not. With regard to this he translated his idea and concluded that everyone should believe in

gods¹⁵. The philosophy of Existentialism also shares this idea. Søren Kierkegaard who is considered to be the Father of Existentialism disregards metaphysics and rejects Aquinas and Descartes' Aristotelian justifications for Christianity. One of his influential ideas is the notion popularly known as "leap of faith". This idea might give people the opportunity to get at the Truth¹⁶. It can be named as a type of mystical faith and escape from Nihilism; however it is not known whether it has the principles of Mysticism.

Gorgias and Hippias can be considered as two other famous Sophists. Hippias expressed his dissatisfaction with human law and stated that people should adopt natural law again and apply it to their lives¹⁷. Jean-Jacques Rousseau was influenced by this idea who believed that: "Going back to nature should be the main priority in people's lives, because nature is pure."¹⁸

Gorgias' idea is more similar to Hume's than others because he states that: "Nothing can be known because basically nothing exists."¹⁹ It was mentioned above that Hume denies the existence of physical essence which can be

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¹³ - Foroughi, 2007, page 317

¹⁴ - Copleston, 2009, page 107

¹⁵ - Some philosophers such as Copleston are of the opinion that Protagoras pretended to believe in gods.

¹⁶ - Flynn, 2012, page 59

¹⁷ - Copleston, 2009, page 111

¹⁸ - Russell, 2011, page 404

¹⁹ - Copleston, 2009, page 144

considered as a Sophist's idea but rather extreme. It can also be said that Gorgias' idea influenced Nietzsche's concept of "will to power" and William James' concept of "will to believe".

c) Socratic Period

The Sophists were always criticized by Socrates. Sophists expressed skepticism about the validity of human knowledge and Socrates confronted them with a methodology that in our literature we refer to it as a so-called Sufism methodology.

The oracle at Delphi pronounced Socrates as the wisest of all people²⁰ since he was the only individual aware of his own ignorance, and this paradoxical wisdom was considered as his advantage over the Athenians. Nevertheless, he was determined to reveal a great truth²¹. One of the quotes from Socrates is: "The only true wisdom is in knowing you know nothing." With respect to this quote, it is obvious that by admitting to his own ignorance Socrates wanted others to become aware of their own ignorance.

It is understood by Socrates' quotes that he had the motive to discover the truth; however,

²⁰- Socrates did not claim to have knowledge and adopted the method of critiquing other people's ideas. The most useful result of this method is that mankind will arrive at simple ignorance from double ignorance. Hopefully life would reach its desired destination by faith.

²¹- Sophist's World, 2009, page 127

it was a causal chain of infinite contingent begins which Socrates and his student, Plato, were not able to solve. Socrates can be considered as a mystic who wanted to share his spiritual apprehension of knowledge with the Athenians. Socrates came to feel that he had a "Divine mission" and with regard to this mission he states that: "If I cannot explain my purpose in words, I will explain it by my actions."²² Socrates wanted to prove that moral values are general and eternal by his dialectic method known as Socratic Method or method of "elenchus", and his philosophical midwife practice²³. It is understood by Socrates' quotes that he intended to explain the concept of truth to the Athenians, but how much success he had in achieving this has to be evaluated. He gives general definitions by using his inductive reasoning method, and only states that he has exposed the fallacies in the Sophists' arguments. Socrates himself was also aware of the problematic nature of his claim about discovering the Truth and whenever he was asked about the immortality of the soul, his answer was that life after death is possible. Moreover, he would state that the "welfare of my soul" is at the head of all of my affairs²⁴.

²² - Flynn, 2012, page 2

²³ - Copleston, 2009, page 131

²⁴ - Flynn, 2012, page 14

For the purposes of this study, Socrates is discussed with regard to two points which are going to be the introduction to the following discussions. First, Socrates was in pursuit of the Truth with the intention of discovering it and believed that morality is general and eternal by taking the undiscovered truth into consideration. Second, Socrates is considered as a paradigm and model of thinking in Iran's academic books.

Socrates is sometimes referred to as a prophet and his method as preaching. Socrates did not write philosophical texts, and his philosophy is entirely based on writings by his students, especially Plato who portrayed Socrates in his dialogues. He taught Plato his dialectic method of inquiry. The Socratic Method was a method of persuasion that he wanted to show as the only acceptable method. Perhaps if an individual told Socrates that his words could not convince him, he would say "I will prove it to you by my actions." Socrates' death by drinking a mixture containing poison was the result of his method. May be this Protagoras' saying, which states that: "There is nothing better in this world than new theories"²⁵, was worse than poison and he endeavored to promote his idea by his action.

The Socratic Method which became a criterion for others after his death was widely adopted by Plato and led to the basis of his eternal ideas²⁶, i.e. "Theory of Forms", which was the foundation of his philosophy. Plato, just as Socrates, was in pursuit of the Truth; hence, the "Allegory of the Cave" was presented by him in order that others could realize the Truth. Plato was only concerned with remaining devoted to Socrates and to explain his behavior and his moral actions. Plato introduces the Socratic method of moral education as the Truth with regard to ontology and epistemology which without eternal ideas would have no meaning. Eternal ideas are a tautology which Plato presents in the Allegory of the Cave. All Plato's research was within the realm of the mind and if it included the real world it would have raised unresolved issues.

It can be convincing to say that Socrates had a type of intuition, albeit an incomplete one; however, this cannot be said about Plato. This made Nietzsche very cynical inasmuch as he states that: "and there is no original text in the history of mankind which has not been interpreted, and all textual sources of religion and human sciences, etc. are interpretations".

²⁵ - Copleston, 2009, page 105

²⁶ - Copleston, 2009, page 215

Ultimately this impelled him to deny that there is any Truth in this world.

Unlike Plato who was completely devoted to his teacher, Aristotle did not remain devoted to Plato²⁷ inasmuch as he challenged Plato's basic philosophical principle i.e. Theory of Forms. In this regard, Frederick Copestone states that: "With regard to Theory of Forms, there is no need to assume Plato or Aristotle as fools; however, it is better to say that Aristotle has not done justice to this theory in order that they can maintain their dignity."²⁸ It has to be said that Aristotle unlike Sophists, Socrates and Plato changed the methods of contemplation and evaluation²⁹ and concluded that "existence is an entity". He had realized that the Truth which Socrates and Plato spoke of could not be learned by the dialectic method. Aristotle's ingenuity was that he considered the Truths reality, the truth which Socrates and Plato allegedly wanted to discover, and Sophists had agnostic views about realizing its nature. He states that: "Reality is the only truth."

²⁷ - From Russell's point of view Aristotle used to perform two major tasks. One, he used to think and two, he used to critique Plato – Russell, 2009, page 212

²⁸ - Copleston, 2009, 427

²⁹ - It should be considered that Aristotle only replaced Plato's forms with his own hylomorphic forms. He replaced Plato's forms with about forty four stationary stimuli.

He started to establish a new system with regard to the aforementioned statement and thereafter it was adopted by Iran's philosophers and became as a dominant paradigm for reasoning. Aristotle considered the "essence" as an entity and searched for it in reality, and Iranian philosophers followed suit in relation to many of their ideas. Aristotle proved God to be the ultimate cause of the universe in his statements and Islamic philosophers generalized this idea and also proved God to be the causative agent³⁰. God was propounded as an idea which is the purpose of the world and also its creator. Furthermore, Anselm and Aquinas added God being the causative agent to Aristotle's ultimate cause and accorded it with the four Gospels.

These arguments became the unresolved issues of the middle Ages and with regard to generalities arose disagreement among philosophers and their opinions³¹. Eventually,

³⁰ - By adopting new interpretation, Descartes also proved God to be the causative agent much later than the Islamic philosophers.

³¹ - Three groups were formed in this regard; namely, proponents of principles, proponents of meaning and proponents of external existence of generalities. Roscellinus and Abelard were members of the first two groups, and Saint Anselm Archbishop of Canterbury was the member of the third group. This issue is known as the generality of natural philosophy among Iranian philosophers, and even one of the

Francis Bacon stated the death of the idea and his subsequent philosophers were led towards considering religious subjectivism.

With regard to what is mentioned above, it can be concluded that Sophists, Socrates and Plato all discussed the Truth. Although they did not talk about the Truth with certainty, there was not much distortion of the Truth in their statements. They considered the Truth as an essence which must be discovered and observed by dialectical intuition. In chapter seven of his book "The Republic", Plato states that: "Observe the light of the Truth." This statement indicates that Plato talks about an essence which has to be observed.

However, the fundamental problem with Aristotle's idea is that he considered the Truth as an existing entity. Nowadays this statement which says: "God Almighty is a reality that has an existing entity" is established in the minds of many people including the youth. The author of this article claims that the aforementioned statement is the reason behind the idea of Nihilism entering the people's minds. Al-Kind included this idea in religious teachings by saying that "Truth has actuality"³². With respect to what is said the

greatest philosophers believes that he has witnessed the generality of natural philosophy.

³²- Fakhri, 2008, page 30

main reasons for subjectivism in the West can be found in the same subject³³.

The history of western philosophy shows that many groups have denied the God that Aristotle introduces as the first stimulus and purpose of the world and gives reason for its existence. Regarding this fact, it would be appropriate to quote Nietzsche's words from his book "The Gay Science" which is as follows:

A madman, who lit a lantern in the bright morning hours, ran to the marketplace and cried incessantly: "I am looking for God! I am looking for God!" Many people who did not believe in God were standing together and they shouted and laughed. The madman with his lantern said: "I will tell you was God can be found. We have killed him. We have spilled the blood of that which was holiest and mightiest of all that the world has yet possessed."³⁴

In his book "Thus Spoke Zarathustra", Nietzsche concludes that the subjective God is dead and says: When Ahriman whispers in Zarathustra's ear that even God has his own

³³- According to these Aristotelian propositions God becomes an entity which has to be found among other entities using "The Topics" reasoning. Later on, this issue led Hegel towards this statement that "this entity has become alienated from its foundation (spirit) and must find itself in the dialectic reasoning process.

³⁴- Nietzsche, 1998, page 277

special hell and that hell is his love for man, he whispers again: “God is dead because of his compassion for man”³⁵.

Hence, it is concluded that when the dominant paradigm of subsequent western and Greek philosophers is distorted as well as the God they discovered with this paradigm, it will be imprinted on their minds that Nietzsche has dealed this God dead. Therefore, not only the God of Christianity is dead, but also any thinker who has proven the existence of God by using Aristotle’s statements must declare that God dead in the modern and post-modern world. Christianity paid a heavy price in order to accord the Aristotelian God with the God of the Bible and it changed into a completely sentimental and emotional religion by the attacks from the scholars of the Age of Enlighten.

Tragedy occurs where the Aristotelian God is still defended and accorded with the God of the monotheistic religions. However, wherever the monotheistic religions are dominant it has to be emphasized that God is the Truth and the essence, and attributes of God can only be considered in relation to his creatures. This is something which has been said hundreds of times in this country’s Mysticism. When God is referred to as the

absolute Truth, it is a matter of faith and not something which is considered as an entity that its existence has to be proven. This essence is neither provable nor irrefutable. Sometimes people capture it by revelations and they can only provide interpretations of this essence.

Hegel states that any idea in the mind i.e. the so-called rational subject must be real. Hegel’s idea is the same as the Aristotelian propositions which is expressed differently. An idea that has chosen religion as a truth and the cause of its existence suddenly is in pursuit of the truth in reality. In “The Gay Science” Nietzsche states: “Half of your life is passed and every moment of it has been with pain and error. Do you still want to search? What are you searching for? Why? I am looking for the reason of the reason.”³⁶

The pursuers of the Truth in Iran’s Islamic philosophy consider God as a rational thought by using the religious verses. When they are faced with the idea of a God as an entity in reality, they start to search in order to consider this God as a rational thought as well. Eventually, with regard to the reason given by the philosophers in order to prove the existing entity³⁷, mystics ask: What is the

³⁵ - Nietzsche, 2010, page 161

³⁶ - Nietzsche, 1998, page 54

³⁷ - In his great piece of work, Fusus al-Hikam, Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi has endeavoured to relate the

reason for this reason? This question indicates that in their minds they challenge the idea of the True God by considering the idea of God as an entity. Indeed, in the last stage of mysticism all mystics say that: "The sun came out because of the Sun."

CONCLUSION

The aforementioned discussions reveal that the systems of ideas are similar in the West and they maintain a historical continuity. At some point an idea is formed and at another it develops and reaches its peak, but it could also reach an impasse; however, it indicates the dynamics of human thought. If we do not agree with the ideas and reject them, the ideas will seem to say that: "We have made every endeavor to be accepted."

This process of thought and transcending also exists in our philosophy. It was initiated by Al-Kindi and developed by Mulla Sadra. Today, in our country, Iran, this process of transcending has reached a point that it does not consist of any element of doubt. This is not known by many individuals, inasmuch as many young people are unaware of the dynamics of human thought.

Western philosophers have had different approaches towards Nihilism, and their

mystical foundations to the Topics reasoning; however, the degree of his success in this matter is something that is beyond the scope of this paper.

discussions indicate that all mankind has been grappling with this issue. When man can not realize his own origin and also the origin and end of the universe by his research and understands his inability to acquire knowledge, he succumbs to Nihilism. This is extremely dangerous for Mankind. He forgets to exist without having a compelling reason and a firm support for his system of ideas, and it would be impossible for him to live in such a way in order to provide any guarantee for the survival of the human race. It should be noted that the ideas of the Sophists and their system of thought which was mentioned above contain many contradictions. Any idea both logically and empirically can be distorted and rejected. The world in which the Sophists conceived their ideas is very similar to our world and our country is part of this world and has accorded with the Sophists' ideas, and undoubtedly we will be no exception to the above rule. Sophists and their followers of subsequent periods raised some questions with their ideas. These ideas were relentlessly pursued in subsequent periods and today they exist in a larger scale in all human societies. In our time, they can be observed in Hume's views that express doubt about acquiring knowledge about the world and believes it to be myth; furthermore, he denies

the world to be the Truth and claims that it does not have a transcendental foundation. One of the similarities between Sophists' world and our world is that when ancient Greece was making progress, its people became familiar with other civilizations. When their greatest philosopher, Protagoras, was faced with the culture and civilization and also ideas and traditions of countries such as ancient Iran, Egypt and India, he became aware that they contain many contradictions. This impelled him to decide that there is no measure for general knowledge and that values are relative. With the industrialization of the Western society, Hume and Nietzsche were strongly influenced by Protagoras' ideas. Today, with the use of the internet and the mass media which has transformed the world into a global village, individuals can have access to any system of ideas within the shortest amount of time. What guarantee can be given for the protection of an Iranian youth in confronting these different cultures? Will his system of ideas which consists of a great religious and historical heritage remain unchanged in confronting a culture that is completely in contrast with his own? The answer to this question is no. Although the majority of young people say their daily prayers and engage in religious practices,

some questions are raised within their system of ideas. Some of these questions are: Basically, is there a God? Is it correct to live in accordance with religious principles? Why do I exist? Why must I exist? Basically, is there a necessity?

Young people live this way while preserving their religious life. Their ultimate desire is to achieve material prosperity and they believe that by finding suitable employment and reliable source of income they live life to the fullest! However, this would be the worst possible way to live, because if they achieve their objective, they will experience a sense of futility every day. They will consider their own merit to be greater than others and their only concern will be to remain in their current positions. It is interesting to know that they do not even want to put themselves in danger in order to maintain this position. They try to comfort themselves as much as possible to believe they have values by preparing the grounds for endangering others. They pretend to live a religious life, but the existence of Nihilism is quite obvious and they are deeply troubled by it. If they fail to achieve material prosperity and reach their goals in which being good is considered as a personal enjoyment, it will result in social anomalies and becoming skeptical of religious values

and even insulting them. Ultimately, these individuals will become delinquent persons of the society. These are all in contrast with the ideas of our religion for which we started the Revolution and shed much blood.

These were some points which were made about the reality of the lives of the majority of the Iranian youth. They are the dangerous and destructive virus of Nihilism which attacks the minds of the young people of this country and if their minds are not treated, it will lead to their intellectual death.

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