



Religion Is Not History

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Abstract

Starting with an intra-religious comparison between Islam and Christianity, this paper tries to discuss transreligiously. Expounding the difference between religion and Faith, I have tried to put forth a new theory set under “The Divine Brush”, to articulate God’s tradition, constantly being consistent with its earthly time, arriving to mankind through Faith; the Faith which is redefined as being other than religion, alike to the title, which religion is also not that of history. Moreover, the concept of Messiah is discussed through which, the start of a new religion, historically, is illustrated. The Divine Nature is propounded in the mirror of other religious embodiments of Faith, and the distortion of religions is discussed when the True religion, defined as the religion of any Prophet at His own time, was dead right after His death. The geographical advents of religions are surveyed and discussed whether they have anything to do with reincarnation and the incarnation of God.

Subject Areas

Culture

Keywords

Religion and Beliefs, Historical Revelation, History of Beliefs, Ongoing Religiosity, Divine Theory

1. Introduction

The difference between religion and history is the difference between God’s creed and man’s writ; it is the difference between Scripture and inscription. Religion exists only when the light of God is shown, and everything else is merely an interpretation of the Truth as it is assumed to exist. Conceptually expressing religion here, conveys its pure sense, without denoting a specific religion per se. This is an endeavor to, before all, draw a distinctive line between religion and history, shedding light on both sides and clarifying why religion is not history, to

impart this comprehension that there is always another synthesis of a third kind. Especially today in a science-engaged era, one should avoid making an idol of his/her doctrinal beliefs. By observing Biblical and Quranic verses, I try to expound new ideas, namely the notions of “Messiah”, “God’s Nature”, “Religious History”, and of course, “The Theory of Divine Brush”. Regarding history, man has always lived under the law; the law of nature which lies under the Divine, and with or without man’s knowledge about this, he/she will act in accordance with that law. I will unpack the biblical acts, through which, history and religion will be dealt with as separate realms.

To the eyes of believers, what is written and said, if comes out as religious, will be considered Truth. This should always be alarming to notice that, if what is available as religious, is hundred percent originally coming from the source of the Truth, for no one desires to eat rotten or fake food! Is there quality control over legitimization of the religious facts? Is it history that approves and puts forth the proof of religious veracity, or is the Truthful fact self-approving by bonding with the soul? There are claims that history is not a full body of facts, so there are surveys into the religious chronicles to explore the Truth; the manner in which this brief remark is to have it heard and not draw on. The opinions of those who documented our history, make up the majority of it, rather than actual events [1], let alone religious facts.

2. An Islamic vs Christian Exemplar

While the early Islamic historiography has enjoyed a religiously non-pluralistic society, Christianity faced challenges from other religions, most famously with Manichaeism, to drive its nail on the ground of absolute religious authority and political power. Saying this, the Christianity for having neither a political start nor a military campaign, in order to gum its realm, still bears a claim of holding facts to be dominating, which is again inversely applicable to Islam for firstly, overwhelming its target with sword and then, dominating its agenda in the vacuum of power created.

It is also known that pre modern global chronicles published under Islamic sponsorship, similar to Christian Europe before the eighteenth century, used a triangulation of dynastic claims, religion, and historical authority, to produce discourses to justify its legitimacy. The Islamic paradigms, on the other hand, show unique power relations and rhetorical frameworks that set them apart from European ones [2].

Yet, Mohammad, the founder of Islam, had different purposes for his adherents and opposers. If Muslims believe Him to be the Prophet, the non-Muslims do not. This is a historically based Prophethood presentation, wherein, Mohammad unlike the angel Gabriel, is a Human figure, while the very angel is accepted in both religions, Islam and Christianity, and works as a common Divine figure.

Working on the basis of history about religions will ineluctably lead to po-

lemicisms [3]. Therefore, the element of God as the source of religious cosmologies, epistemologies and ontologies, has become absurd in many aspects, even for the believers themselves. In the midst of famous scuffles, the very principle in which all religions have their roots is mysticism. The mystics, who seem to experience ultimate reality most directly among all followers of the world's religions, are distinguished by the depth of their understanding of the world's sacred ground and the intensity of their Love for what is most fully real [4]. The witness of creation, the political material architecture of Human culture, the motions of provision, the practices of spiritual formation and liturgical participation, and the fleeting effects that move Human bodies, are all examples of experience [5]. Although this is a perfectly acceptable manner of speaking, given that, it is recognized that religion is not some fundamental aspect of Human existence that has lain dormant until this particular historical moment to manifest [6], in the Western hemisphere, reformist Puritan natural philosophers like Boyle and Hooker attempted to reframe the theological power of experience in a less revolutionary and more conservative way [7].

When the carbon is oxidized, the result is definitely pollution; This is a model which if applied to religion, will also produce pollution as "Chaotic Forms" (CF), in which God still is the God, but so many denominations are set around Him, calling themselves religions and denying their ultimate common roots by practicing schismatical narrations which on one hand, specialize them irreversibly, and on the other hand, puts the seal of rejection on all other competing religions, forming historical religions respectively synthesized as such, while the bottom line is that, all of which are cuts from the same cloth. History is shaped by them, whereas their actions have formed chaos. History is a caricature in which a religious man holds the Word of Love with one hand and a sword with the other; he does not know the Word and slays others in the name of the latter. History, since it is paradoxical as well, cannot be religion, if the first thing expected from the Truth and the Truthful religion, is indeed harmony.

According to Mircea Eliade, people are fundamentally religious [8] and this religiosity inevitably produces a history of religion, a set of records that comes in different sizes, colors, forms and so forth. But as God is perpetually shining like the sun, there must be a direct way to Him, and here is where the concept of "Living God" (Jeremiah 10:10) is put forth. In fact, what or who could define religion better than God Himself?! And how God the brightest, could not be seen by religionists after all?! To find an answer to it, I assume that mankind is blind and the climate is extremely polluted. The minds are clouded and the hearts are fell from discerning, inasmuch as, if God rises publically and claims His goodness today, people will not know him, let alone believe in Him.

The social contexts have a significant but distinct role: they create a backdrop that is challenged and overcome, but only on the basis of which, the experiences and knowledge that these individuals possess, can be understood, and where a (said to be) direct communication with God is revealed as a more prominent

element [9]. When thoughts hardened to beliefs¹, the history is made; and it is when those, doctrines are written down as jurisprudence laws that all believers, and even those who do not believe, are harshly expected to be loyal and obedient to them. The historical records are full of religious wars, no matter when, where and which religion. Mankind has confused its own deemed God with the True one. In fact, if God is ever extant and always present, why would He even need to have His records written down?; unless for the purpose of setting a record only, to help people remember the unseen past, so as to fathom the presence of the unseen God. If God is a Living God, and as some believe that He is even present at any time on earth in flesh, why not get to know Him in the first place and ask Him directly for the sake of the current issues? If this is the case, how far could reality be from the Truth then (today)?

When it comes to personal experiences, one might feel his/her limbic structures induced, but when he/she goes to search for more, an ocean of misconceived ideas rises against him/her to find a way for further concretion through their historical adaptations in the name of Truth, so these ideas may survive. This abyss of religion is the bypass of True religion itself. Our perception of what constitutes and does not constitute “religion”, determines what is possible and what is not regarded as potential prospects for spiritual encounters [10]. And if “Religion” is equal to “History”, then the “Spirituality” is replaced by “Self Actualization” in the name of spirituality; a falsehood on the basis of assumptions rather than Truth itself. History prevails over the earth and the earth as a part of the entire creation of God, loses itself among the chaos of numerous beliefs and doubts; so, God becomes a foreigner to mankind.

The theory of survival, in practice or memory [11], shall be tested. As David Diga Hernandez once said, “An epistle is supposed to impart lessons that the reader may immediately apply to his/her own life. On the other hand, a historical book reveals Truths about God’s nature via the interactions it has with Humans”, needs to be taken cautiously, for history might be pregnant with the Truth, but who reads it and how he/she would perceive it, is the very core question to be answered. How can man with his/her limitations, fathom the Truth which is beyond time and space, so that, the unification of distinctive beliefs regarding theology, liturgy, worshipping structures, services and so on, is still light years afar from reach, while God is the One and Unique?

If history is religion, what happened to the ancient civilizations such as the Aztecs, while their religion was no longer being practiced; Was God then dead after the fall of that religion? If history is religion, why elements of tackled Truths in so many religions of old times, are today considered to be false, stupid and banal? If God changes in nature, so does his Truth; but if he does not change in nature, then this notion is wrong that, “a historical book reveals Truths about God’s nature via the interactions it has with Humans!”. Transversely, how come

¹This phrase is formed by borrowing the Edward Burnett Tylor’s words in his work, *Primitive Culture*, 1920. V. 01, p. 97; put by him as: ..., scribbled into a noun. Tylor, E. B. (2016). *Primitive Culture Volume I*, p. 97. Courier Dover Publications.

that such an alleged historical Truth, taken for granted as religion, is yet in conflict with itself through belief systems of the temporal time, let alone in the past and since the beginning?

3. Biblical Proclamation on History

Jesus attests to his Divine Nature, saying, *“Indeed, truly, I say to you, before there would be Abraham, I am”* (John 8:58), demonstrating Jesus’ preexistence. I take this notion as a condition for pre historical existence of Jesus, by whom, the very core of monotheistic Faith has been introduced to the world. Nevertheless, as an incarnation of God, Jesus must have been ahead of Adam too, denoting that God is non-historical, for He is beyond time. But the manner of man’s religious living, later concreted in books as theology, that originates from the Adamic source whom God first introduced to the world, can be understood in the confinements of history, from one time to another, while God’s Nature has stayed still. Even the religious events occurring throughout history, cannot be considered as religion. No matter how dramatic a religious experience may be, such as the account of Jesus in Gethsemane or on the Cross, it is not the tragedy that makes it religious; rather, the virtue for which the tragedy is born, is its religious meaning [12]. The Acts in the Bible, if reviewed through the prism of this principle, can be divided into three categories as such: “Ultimate Purpose” (UP), “Eternal Values” (EV) and “Historical Impacts” (HI). The Bible provides the exact background of this reasoning, where in Acts 1:6-9 it reads:

“6 Then, as they surrounded Him, they questioned, ‘Lord, are you going to restore the kingdom to Israel at this time?’ 7 He addressed them, saying, ‘You have no right to know the times or dates that the Father has established on His own power. 8 But when the Holy Spirit descends upon you, you will be endowed with power, and you will serve as My witnesses throughout Jerusalem, all of Judea and Samaria, and the entire world. 9 He was lifted up in front of them after saying this, and a cloud covered Him, so they could not see him”.

In the verses above, the Humans are not allowed to know the UP, which originates from and belongs to the Kingdom of God, but they have a timely and geographical right to practice their predestined HIs, where they receive the UP as the Holy Spirit, through which, they would practice their EVs. As bishop Mar Mari Emanuel once said in one of his sermons, “The value of a Human being, the Human rights and the purpose of a Human being is the right to be a Human. The right of being a Human, is to find the answer to this, that we need to go back to our origin. What is our origin? In its inception, Elohim created the earth and heavens. He is our purpose of existence”. There is visibly a clear difference between religion and history here.

To the prejudice of other religions, even a mild explanation of the incarnation of God and the Universe of Religions, runs the risk of absolutizing the status of the historical Jesus. Jesus should be viewed as one of many exceptional individuals who have appeared throughout religious history, rather than as a singular figure [13]. We may not confuse Him with historicity. Jesus is the Christ, whom

He needs not anything from the earth and mankind. He is who bestows life and salvation and it is us who make history, whether through working His will or our wills. Jesus is the incarnation of God whose essence is beyond our conception, so may His Word be fathomed by those who will his will.

4. Pragmatism in Historicity

History exists because of the people practicing their Values, believing them to be Eternal, and religions exist and or existed because people were positively certain of an Ultimate Purpose. Therefore, magnificent structures with religious uses are built throughout history as the proof of their devotion, in order to portray their Historical Impacts. One learns to comprehend and have confidence in God by being aware of his/her own spiritual needs, as well as those of others; and according to Leo Baeck, God is that which continuously provides man's moral behavior meaning and significance [14]. Whatever else, unnatural to Human essence, is perished or fallen from notice, which was not devotion embedded. People do not follow a current, rooted in history, because of political or authoritarian pressure, but because it matches their male nature. Thus, religions are versicolour, but all claim to be serving an Ultimate Purpose or God. According to Emmanuel Mounier, being a true person is a result of this belief that, man is in a state of ongoing building. Conversely, he/she realizes that the pursuit of a civilized way of life among people throughout man's history is a reality that aligns with the reality of being a true person [15]. History is the signature of religion, in the sense that, history cannot be thought, defined and debated without the concept of religion. As people are here to historically practice the religions, respectively, religions are there to present God as their source. The source that represents the Ultimate Purpose, is that of Unique One who has incarnated in the world many times and under several names and with multiple figures, such as Jesus, Buddha, Krishna, Báb and so forth. It is clear that religions have historically inset one after another and there are no two True religions to be introduced to mankind at the same time, overlapping with the other. This renders such that, as God is only One and Unique, so there is only one True religion at a time presented to the world. When St. Augustine was required to write in the Retractions, pointed out that although Christianity is a type of True religion, it should not be recognized as the only True religion [16]; he reasoned that this was because genuine religion existed before Christianity, having existed since the dawn of time.² Whereas this is True, True religions do not stop from rising historically, as far as Faith goes on continuously to prevail among men; so, Christianity is not the last religion, nor is Islam.

Worshiping the one True God, is what constitutes True religion [17]. The ge-

²"Nam res ipsa quae nunc christiana religio nuncupatur, erat apud antiquos, nec defuit ab initio generis Humani, quousque ipse Christus veniret in carne, unde vera religio jam erat coepit appellari christiana." Retractionum 1.13.3, PL 32, col. 603. "For what is now called the Christian religion existed of old and was never absent from the beginning of the Human race until Christ came in the flesh. Then true religion which already existed began to be called Christian." Augustine: Earlier Writings, p. 218.

ographical advent of each religion, no matter where, also stands for the incarnation of God in that specific region. So, histories as such, are heroic stories of such an ancient event, revolving around the birth and orpostnatal narrations of God, most specifically on Jesus Christ.

As with the direct connection of God with each True religion, the Prophets of each religion too, hold a direct link with God. Whether this establishment was through considering of political and social injustice (as with Amos), or through war and disaster (as with Isaiah), or through rapture (as with the Orphics), or through reflection (as with the authors of the Upanishads, the Greek philosophers, and Lao Tzo), or domestic affliction (as with Hosea), or through material theory (as with Confucius), or through psychological analyzes of the experience of tendency (as with Buddha), or through observation of the struggle between good and evil in nature (as with Zarathustra), all Prophets were imperturbably ensured that they were heralds of celestial Truth [12].

While Meliorism states that, it is the man's common work which makes the world a better place [18], Experientialism states that there is nothing rational in the world that could not be understood by man's intellect. In other words, man does what he/she learns. In this double didactic dyadic, the source of knowledge is an Ultimate Purpose which establishes religions in timely periods by some Humans. This is a revolutionary start around which, men take up that knowledge and learn everything through it. This knowledge of God is that of religion, not history; and those efforts by men are just history, not religion. It is the Human's intellect which receives the Divine knowledge and promulgates it among men. To explain this further, I need to bring up a new theory.

5. The Theory of Divine Brush (TDB)

When the history of religion started, is unknown; but tracking religions to furthest points in history, will tell that, it has started a millennium or even over ten thousand years ago [19] [20]. Just to focus on what we know from religious history, we hardly can go more aloof than Adam and Eve on earth, the point where the Biblical history is actually founded on its basis. It is only since then, that, we track the line of people in the religious history with some Prophets among them, some of which with their new religions, while mostly without holding such a revolutionary flag. Now it is easy to see the past, as it seems that it has always been railed as such, but the future does not look to be railed to mankind, and this is just because we cannot see the future; and what we cannot see, should not be perceived as it does not exist. For God who is basically out of the realm of time, there is no such a thing as past and future raised to Him. It is not God who needs people, but it is people who need God (Quran 35:15), so, God does not need what people do historically, but it is yet people who need God to practice His Truth in their lives in the form of religions for the purpose of salvation.

While Mohammad has come after Jesus and Moses, from Noah and Adam down to Him, this track of Prophets is much longer than these three major Prophets, with this exception that Jesus is believed to be the God's incarnation. It

is an ancient line drawn from past to future. But the question is that, if there is one God, why are there so many religions worldwide? As put shortly before, the religions are bound to time and place, and as time goes on, the current religion needs to be updated. This is still the Divine Truth as the hue, which needs to be added to the brush to establish and continue a religion, by the hand of a Human like Zarathustra or Moses, to create a religious trail on the plane of history; so not to make history, but to ordain religious history. By doing so, the ink (hue) facing friction with the natural life of mankind, will gradually lose its primary potential of Historical Impact, so God finds it necessary to dip the brush back again into the sea of His Divine knowledge, which in terms of time and place, it demands a new Messenger and therefore a new religion; new, but continuant and extender of the previous one.

Historically, it is a fact that religions consider no border, because religions are ideas too, while Divine. This justifies the worldwide dissemination of religions, to say, neither original places of religions nor the Prophets of, as founders, are counted as determining factors of where, when and how a religion should be spreading and which people they should meet. The religions concentered to the ethnic backgrounds of their first people, such as Zoroastrianism and Judaism, are bound to be marginalized, shrunk, isolated and finally die out, or at best, live on like a walking corpse which the religious corpus of, is already transferred to other belief systems. It is inevitable to consider the history as a secondary agent, for it is, not only bound to 1) time and 2) place, but to 3) specific group(s) of people as well; therefore, ethnicity would be counted as the 3rd Historical Agent of Religion (HAR).

Religious Transitionalism, is also accompanied by political and economic influences, which are historic expressions of a newly established religious culture. Accordingly, those are religions which bring change to historical contexts, not vice versa. Put simply, it is the Divine Brush which forms the unformed societies (according to God and His religious history) or it is the religion which reforms a once formed society (nonreligious and or not according to God's plan). Respectively, the examples of each can be attributed to a pagan and a monotheistic culture. When Islam was introduced to Meccans, they were pagans, so Mohammad brushed that society with a forming Divine Brush, but when Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament's prophecy, in Isaiah 53:5, he had already reformed the Jewish monotheistic society. Regarding a religious culture, many features and facets of, are ecumenical [21]. Ergo, the Divine Brush is not only painting a Straight Path, but also conforms the entire world to itself, setting morality codes to all mankind. The morality codes which are accepted by all mankind, will be eternal; and those partially accepted by some and rejected by others, are doomed to be modified and redefined. Examples for the first case, could be said to be the binary of honesty and lying; and for the second, the stoning punishment which although is basically Judaic, but it is not being practiced in Judaism anymore, and while it is a Jewish legacy in Islam, the latter religion still persists on implementing it.

The Divine Brush unreels the Divine Path, which is the very Straight Path, as

the Bible states, “*Put all of your confidence in the Lord and don't rely on yourself* (Proverbs 3:5). *Give yourself over to Lord in all that you do, and he will Straighten your Paths*” (Proverbs 3:6). Quran also puts it as such, “*Therefore, whoever God wants to guide, He opens his heart to accept Islam, and whoever He wants to lead astray, He narrows his heart as if he were to climb the sky with difficulty* (Quran 6:125). *Brings it and this is the Straight Path of your Lord. We have clearly explained [our] signs for a group that takes counsel*” (Quran 6:126).

As the Divine Brush is a conjunctional process, Lord Jesus has settled himself right in the middle religion among the trinal ones, to state the He is the God: “*The Life, the Truth and the Path are all me. I am the only Path that leads to the Father*” (John 14:6). By this, Jesus affirms both Judaism and Islam, when He as the Way, has come from an older religion (Judaism) and leads to a newer one (Islam). Jesus is that of Way which, in Islamic terms, is called Tarighah (Creed, Way, Path, Way of Life, Divine Method), literally meaning Path; as with the Old Testament on Path (*נתיב* Nativ), that it is read in Hebrew as, “*Your Word is a lamp at my feet and a source of illumination for my path*” (Psalm 119:105). And in all of the three religions, the Path is identical to Truth and Law. The Quranic perspective is that, different religious communities are simultaneously called to Islam and their unique Paths are real and part of God's purpose, allowing each to follow its own way to the one True Truth [22]. All religions (dins) are one, but each community may have different laws, customs, and regulations (Shariah) [23]. “Like St. Augustine, Marsilio Ficino said, “Every religion has something good in it; as long as it is directed towards God, the creator of all things, it is True Christian religion”. ³The new religion always is built upon the last remnants of the former, whereas nothing much is left from the previous continuous tradition; of both, either the firstly True essence of the old religion or the time for True purpose of that religion, no matter if fulfilled or not. To help myself expounding this, I shall discuss my opinion on the Nature of God in the next part.

6. The God's Nature

The Living God which all religions emanate from, is the God who indeed incarnates in flesh: “*We acknowledge that the mystery of holiness is really great. He was made known in the flesh, confirmed by the Spirit, witnessed by angels, declared to the world, accepted as True, and raised to glory*” (1 Timothy 3:16). His Nature is Unique and Godly: “*However, the Prophet declares that the Lord*

³Marsilio Ficino, Opera, 2 tom. (Basel, 1574), I, 6. For brief discussions of Ficino on religion, see Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *The Meaning and End of Religion* (1962) (London: spCK, 1978), pp. 32-34; Peter Harrison, “Religion” and the Religions in the English Enlightenment (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 12-13. Similar sentiments had been expressed previously. Justin Martyr thus wrote that those who lived before Christ according to “reason” or “the word” (meta logou) were Christians. I Apology 46. Cf. Hugh of Saint Victor, who declared that in all times, from the beginning to the end of the world, there could be found individuals expressing faith in Christ. “Credimus enim nullum tempus esse ab initio mundi usque ad finem saeculi, in quo non inveniatur fideles Christi.” De arca noe mystica, cap. 3, PL 176, col. 0685B; cf. “Unde patet quod ab initio et si non nomine, re tamen Christiani fuerunt.” De sacramento christiane fidei VIII, 11; PL 176, col. 0312D.

is the Living God, the everlasting King, and the Living God (Jeremiah 10:10); or: “*The Israelites will question, ‘What is his name?’, as Moses approaches them and says, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you’. How should I speak with them? ‘I shall be what I shall be’ (Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh), is the God’s cryptic reply. Remind the Israelites, ‘I shall be hastened to you’*” (Exodus 3:6–14).

Here, like in the Holy Name “YHWH”, the verb “Ehyeh” signifies presence rather than existence. The basic idea about God in the Bible, Jewish history, and modern men’s and women’s lives, is not that, He exists in a vacuum, but rather that, He is present in each person’s life and the lives of the people around them [14].

The visibility of Divine as a walking and Living God among men, is that of which has been known since ever. In ancient Hinduism which Krishna was (is) believed to be the Avatar of Vishnu [24] among other nine topmost incarnations known as Dashavatara, to ancient Greece which Zeus, Apollo and Hermes have had incarnated in Human forms [25], mankind has been acquaintance with the concept of Living God. In fact, while Gods incarnated in India to correct the fading out of righteousness, the Greek mythology is not as bound by time as the Indian model of incarnation, to be proposing the final tenth incarnation of Kalki to come; instead, it is more epitomized and focused on cosmic order and balance. But, it does not really matter how God is seen; what counts, is how the concept is applied [14]. The same Kalki like Messiah, could be expectedly found in Zoroastrianism awaited as Soshyant, in Judaism awaited as Mashiach and in Islam expected to appear and rise at the end time as both Mahdi and Jesus. Although the Nature of God is subjected to surveys, but only an astronomically few Humans have known God as such in His spiritual essence. But as far as I am able to dig into this, I will discontinue talking about Messianic issue here, and try to focus on exhausting about the Nature of God.

In Sufism also, as it is the mysticism’s branch in Islam (Tarighah), not only the Nature of God the one who incarnates [26], but it is a perennial step ahead of all religions combined, which declares the God is both extant and present in Human flesh in all times. In fact, the Messiah is the very incarnation of God Himself, manifesting in a new figure according to each time of His presence on earth: “The idea of the Prophetic succession was the Bab’s most groundbreaking principle. He preserved the idea that Mohammad was the incarnation of global intelligence (God), but He made a crucial modification that, He insisted that all the Prophets who came before Mohammad, shared a common Primal Will, and that Mohammad was just one among them” [27]. This Godly figure, is manifold and all is one in Nature. It includes Jesus and Imam Ali Ibn Abitalib and so many others which are unknown to public mankind. This is the Great News, and the only marvelous news, to be the Evangel to peoples. Abraham Joshua Heschel (1907-1972) held that, religions have greatly missed the sense of wonder and immediacy at God’s power, as well as the sense of urgency regarding the demands He places on Human Beings and societies. God is not just a power or function, but a Living reality [14].

God with this Nature, never ages, never dies and knows no boundaries cognate of history or else. The Religion is established and directly defined by God Himself and it is Him who decides if an old traditional law is to be expired or continued. Every time He incarnates, it is exactly at that moment which the former figure (material body) of His Almighty is put to death. As He transfers from body to body, death never encompasses Him in flesh. *“God, there is no God except He, the Living, the Everlasting. Neither dozing, nor sleep overtakes Him. ...”* (Quran 2:255). His resurrection is eminent and His presence is the very religious revolution. In Quran 3:64, it reads, *“Tell ‘O People of the Book, let us reach a joint Word between us and you which we shall deify none except Allah, that we shall affiliate none with Him, and that none of us take others for lords besides Allah’. Declare, ‘Bear witness that we are Muslims’, if they walk away”*. To my understanding, in this Quranic verse, Allah is that of Word of God, who is common among Jews, Christians and Muslims; and there is no other God but Him. According to Quran 3:64, it is the Word of God who is equal (سَوَاءٍ: identical, normal, peer, match, counterpart) among Muslims and the People of the Book. As with God who is alike to His embodied incarnation, respectively Father and the Son, in John 10:30 it reads, *“I and the Father are one”*; and in John 1:1 it reads, *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God”*. Which conveys, “God = Jesus = Allah = Word”.

God in His Nature is fiery and radiant in face [28]. Here are some verses from the Bible and Quran: *“Is not my Word like fire”*, declares the Lord, and like a hammer that breaks a rock to pieces?” (Jeremiah 23:29). *“And from afar, Moses heeded a Fire on the flank of the Tor, after He had ministered His sentence and left along with His household. He told His family to ‘stay here, as I see a Fire’. Maybe I could bring you some news or a flare from the Fire so you can stay warm”* (Quran 28:29). *“When He came to it, He was called from the right bank in the blessed plot of the tree: ‘Moses, I am God, Lord of the Worlds’”* (Quran 29:30).

The Nature of God cannot be anything but the Word of God and whatever subordinates to it: *“For even though they lack the law, gentiles who obey its requirements out of natural law become themselves laws to themselves. On that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of mankind by Christ Jesus, they demonstrate that the work of the law is inscribed on their hearts, their conscience also bears evidence, and their contradictory thoughts accuse or even absolve them”* (Romans 2:14-16). Hereupon, Humans are not born religion free, which that very religion, is nothing but God Himself, His Word. Our True religion is not that of man made history of religion, but is that of religion of God which progresses the tradition of religious history, the very religion of the Prophets. Our religion is Love, the very Lord’s religion, which is that of the Straight Path.⁴ The man made religions are not recognized religions before God, but history; and those religions established by exalted Humans, including from Zarathustra to Mohammad, are True religions which are alike to God Himself,

⁴Once heard this notion in one of H. Elahi Ghomshei’s talks on TV in Persian.

but the continuity of them and the rest is history, not religion (Zoroastrianism to Islam). The Divine Brush as is traced, haled and experienced, constitutes a spectrum of fullness to emptiness which historically and naturally drains of potency; so, what remains at the end of a religion's era, is just pure history, while what it started, was a pure religious history of its time. According to Joseph Mardani, it is contemplation that guides and directs us to the Straight Path, not reading the (religious) literature of others.

It is so that, while True religions once were established, they were there to enforce our Natural Faith in God⁵, but the Continuous Religious Traditions (CRT), whether without Prophets or without the incarnation of God Himself in that particular time, are just agencies to do whatever has ever happened in the history, known as The History of Religions (HR). To put it briefly, it is the religion without history which is beautiful, the only elegant, while there is no religion in the world but the Word of God, according to which, both the Human's nature and the Human's shape are created: "*Your beauty should not derive from external embellishments like fancy clothing, gold jewelry, or braided hair. Rather, it ought to be the image of your inner self, the timeless beauty of a calm and peaceful soul, which has immense value in God's eyes*" (1 Peter 3:3-4). Disfigured, is that which, is left astray irreversibly, damned to hell, whereas it was not worthy of Redemption: "8. *His teachings are all reliable. They are enacted faithfully and uprightly, and they are entrenched for all eternity.* 9. *He gave His people redemption; He established His covenant for all time; His Name is Holy and Mighty*" (Psalm 111:8-9). It can usefully be recited from Michelangelo that, "Beauty is that of removal of the excess". More closely and before him, the first Shiite's Holy Imam (The fourth Caliph) has spoken so on Truth: "*Destroying the multiplicity of the illusory existence, is the conquest of the king of Truth*" [29].

By cutting the surplusages historically added to CRT, the Pure and True Religion (PTR) will be yielded. It is only beyond the fabricated religiosity that, Faith is obtained and the God's Nature can be seen through Faith only, not by religiosity; because it is written, "The righteous shall live by Faith and it is through it, that God's righteousness is made evident from Faith for Faith" (Romans 1:17). Practically in this regard, it does not matter which religion is introduced after another, as far as the Faith, both God Himself and Faith in and by Him to be that of Holy Spirit and the Word, is there. It is only the Faith that matters. Therefore, by taking a look at opposing religions, we will notice that laws regarding many things are changed time by time, but what Bible says, is approving that He is the source, as the Faith is, not religions: "Do not be deceived; God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows" (Galatians 6:7). Thus, any investment in any specific religion is temporal, time limited; and for today onward, it is wrong to do so, while investment on the True Faith which lays beyond religions, is the True and ultimate investment in God, which is the matter of salvation. The Love of Prophet or guardian or executor in the heart, is called

⁵The notion comes from "Hossein Mohyeddin Elahi Ghomshei" in one of his sermons in Persian.

Faith, and the loss of their Love from the heart is the loss of Faith. It is not important to like terms (literacy), we should Love what we see.⁶ In this sense, God can be seen and only the seen God can be Loved and this is meaningfully the very Faith.

God's Nature although does not change, but His earthly rules will receive the constantly changing and convertible earthly elements (*i.e.*, what to eat or avoid); and on a bigger scale, respectively everything changes towards Him, from atom to atom and from one kind to another, until they reach from absolute earth to absolute Divine. Therefore, if God cannot be seen and understood on earth, or the material world, then He cannot be met spiritually as well.

Life Truths are also spiritual Truths. The cosmos is governed by natural laws of physics, which are axioms of fixed and unalterable determinations. These laws of nature serve to demonstrate the unchangeability of God's spiritual laws, which make up Divine Law articulated in Ro 1:20 and Ps 19:1-7 [30]. The statements that Jesus is the Father's servant, that He will grow in stature, wisdom, and favor with God and man, that He will not seek His own glory, that He will not know the end of the world, that He will not speak of Himself, and that He will be seen and handled⁷, all relate to His Humanity; for as God, He cannot in any way be said to grow, that He knows everything, that He acts on His own volition, and that He cannot be seen or handled. Nevertheless, Jesus applies these qualities to Himself as befitting His role as Mediator rather than just attributing them to His Human nature on their own [31]. In other words, the Word of God is visible both in material and spiritual world, but not His Nature (Essence): "Human, you are making a lot of effort to follow your Lord, and you will see Him" (Quran 84:6).

7. Messiah

History is the course of events incorporated within a time limit; hereupon, we can name that era with those who had ruled on lands and people, having their footsteps curved in the dents of historical memories. As far as there is no civilization as such, which would not have been based upon a religion or would not be patronizing one, so that so history, whether a religious history in the beginning or just a history of man, is not religion itself, while the Faith throughout religions is the True religion. This theory works on True religions only, those which share the Unique One God altogether, no matter the different names of are. Intelligibly, those True religions, all of which are the redeemers of their own people by an arriving Messiah, no matter the different nomenclatures, are defined. If this is the issue, theorized, written, worked on, maneuvered on, fought for, rebelled on behalf, and so on, then it is history again, not religion. The True religion as it derives from the God, will bring forth the True doctrine of Faith, including and most importantly, the concept of Messiah. Since the True reli-

⁶The notion is retrieved from a sermon in Persian by "Joseph Mardani", the late Patriarch of Gonabady's Creed.

⁷Isiah 41:1, &c.; John 5:17; Luke 2:52; John 8:50; Mark 13:32; John 14:10; 6:38; Luke 24:39.

gions are as vital as the God Himself, so they grow, update and function time wise, and this means that, only within a historical time frame, a religion can be defined and named; and beyond that limit, the remained basic elements of that religion are the True essence of it, upon which, they were once introduced, built and continued. So, I call these elements, the Elements of Veracity and Integration (EVI), which carry their founders' main teachings (Truths), and convey them to the next religion of another time frame. This demise of a religion or transfer of its Truth to another, is a historical phenomenon which creates history, but it is not history; that is to say, religion is that of only which is Truth (Truthful Religion), not what is practiced historically (Historical Religion). Hence, religious history holds a lower and primitive status than the Truthful religion. [Historical Religion (Mankind) < Religious History (Humans/Prophets) < Truthful Religion (God Himself/God's incarnation)].

The Messiah is always the One who commits this revolutionary act, and He is always there to approve the former Messiah's teachings and bode the next One to come. This fact applies to the both religions of Islam and Christianity respectively, with this exceptionally vast gap that, firstly, Judaism does not record such a phenomenal inception; and this is because this religion has been living for unbelievably a very long time, leading to its concretion as an ethnic religion rather than a group of people with a common belief (or a set of beliefs). And secondly, Islamic authorities, both political and religious, are officially saying that Mohammad as its founder, is the last Nabi, Nabi, also spelled Navi in Hebrew (נָבִיא). and draft the Quranic verse 33:40 to enforce their stance: "Mohammad is the Messenger of Allah and the Prophets' seal; He is not the father of any of your men. Furthermore, Allah is fully aware of everything".

8. Conclusion

It is well said once by H. Elahi Ghomshei that, the nations of the world need to scribe a new declaration, "Declaration of Universal Nature". As any society without this standard of living, will turn into a civilized or uncivilized chaos, to be called a Barbarian population and the standards as such have gradually faded out. History in this regard as well, is momentous for starting and promulgation of the Divine tradition. As said, even a civilized society can fall apart for gradually and historically distancing itself from God, His tradition or religion, His Straight Path, as examples of, are recorded in both Bible and Quran regarding the ancient Israelites. As to history and religion, Typologies provide the reader with a wide range of options for how the fields should relate to one another. It offers alternate options rather than contesting the historical veracity of the classic accounts of conflict in the past, which is how it challenges the monolithic myth of conflict [32]. Religious experience has the potential to give unrestrained power and create unbridgeable differences between insiders and outsiders, when it is interpreted as being personal, immediate, and "self validating in an uncontestable way" [33].

Other than God's Nature and Holy Ghost, sacred is only the Word of God. If it is written though, it is history, not religion; and if we take history wholly for granted, we are falsified with our own assumptions and imaginations, not we have received the Divine Truth. Only Truth can speak for itself to be true, otherwise, the allegedly sacred texts are just a shade of the Truth, holding signs for a direction which can change from religion to religion and many of their contexts altered from one sacred book to another. Studying religion is corrupted by confusing religion with history.

In keeping up with this manner, this paper tried to bypass the “disciplinary isolationism” or “theoretical protectionism” regarding the boundaries between religions, so a theologian could speak transreligiously; and it is also True that, “the whole notion of plurality is rather a local than a global one” [32]. History can claim for itself and mankind can take it as seriously as it desires, but history is like a mountain with gold found in it and it takes experts in geology to assess if it is worthy to be drilled and dug into for gold harvestation; with this look at God's Nature that, history revolves around Him too, history whether is to be worthy to be remembered and studied is one thing, or because of its fallacy and wrongfulness to be now onwards cut off from Faith, is another. In both cases, all this body of text is written down. Historical accidents can never serve as evidence for essential rational Truths [34].

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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