

Analysis of Horofieh's View on Monotheism

Dr Alireza Jalali¹ and Atefeh Bank²

1- Email: alireza_jalali26@yahoo.com, Phone Number: 09133270885

2- PHD student, Payame noor University, Tehran; Email: a.b49ph@yahoo.com, Phone Number: 09128238962

Abstract: Monotheism and unity are among the most important debated topics in mysticism. Hence, monotheism is one of the key concepts of theoretical mysticism. In the history of Islamic mysticism every mystic talks about their own understanding of the notion of divine unity. Khwaja Abdullah Ansari talks about unity in his discussions of the ultimate (Nahayat). Attar also introduces unity as the fifth valley of spirituality in his book *Mantiq-ut-Tayr* and introduces deprivation and perdition as the seventh (or the last) valley. Perdition comes at the end of the first journey of the four spiritual journeys. At this point, the devotee (sufferer) finds God in himself and everywhere else. Perception of unity in the path to understanding pragmatic mysticism leads to realization of unity in theoretical mysticism. This paper is focused on the Horofieh's account of perception of unity and its analysis of monotheism. According to the poems and reports by Fazlallah Horofie and his disciple, Nasimi, reaching the level of perdition can be understood. However, on account of some of the interpretations some have ascribed the belief in the godhood of man or Fazlallah to Horofieh. In addition, according to the rules of Horofieh, monotheism is expressed by calculating the numerical values of Abjad letters.

[Alireza Jalali and Atefeh Bank. **Analysis of Horofieh's View on Monotheism.** *J Am Sci* 2013;9(8s):44-52]. (ISSN: 1545-1003). <http://www.jofamericanscience.org>. 8

Keywords: Horofieh, Monotheism, Unity of perception, Calculation of Abjad letters.

Introduction

Monotheism and unity are among the most important debated topics in theoretical mysticism. Moreover, pragmatic mysticism also deals with the perception of unity. In the history of Islamic mysticism every mystic talks about their own understanding of the notion of unity and their personal experience with it. Some of their exaggerated words are deceptive and sometimes even bring about commination to the perceiver. Horofieh is among the movements that have stirred much controversy. It is, in fact, a Sufi doctrine with many followers. It was established in the late 8th century by combining elements of mysticism (tasawwuf), Shiism, intuitivism, science of letters, hermeneutics, and teachings of Ismailism. The founder of this movement was Seyyed Abulfazl Fazlallah ibn Abu Muhammad ibn Abd al-Rahman Jalal al-Din Astar Abadi known as Naimi, who was born in 740 A.H (Golpinarli, 1995, p. 11). Regardless of later deviations of Horofieh, it is one of the most important and influential mystic movements. It not only has contributed to the development of Shiite mysticism, but also has considerably contributed to the interpretation of verses and narratives about scientific facts. It, indeed, has had a great impact on mystic notions and methods.

The majority of Horofieh scripts are still unpublished and preserved in their original forms in

libraries in Iran, Turkey and Vatican. Some superficial researchers believe that followers of Horofieh had belief in godhood of man or their leader, Fazlallah Horofie Astar Abadi (Tabari, 1969, p. 332).

According to spiritual expressions, monotheism is about believing that real and actual existence only belongs to God and no one else. It implies that everyone except for God is only a reflection of the real existence of God Almighty. As Jaami puts: "كل ما في الكون وهم او خيال/ او عكوس في المرآيا: "او ظلال/ لاح في الظل السوى شمس الهدى/ لا تكن في نيه الضلال": "Man is only the reflection of the immortal Light/ the universe is only a wave in the eternal sea" (Jaami, 1991, p.181; Sadr al-Din Shirazi, 1419 A.H., pp. 1/4).

Therefore, mystics believe that all but God is illusion. That is to say, everything is a reflection or shadow of Truth (God).

In mystics' view, the relation between all but God to Truth is similar to the relation between sea wave to sea or shadow to the shadow owner. Ali ibn Musa al-Reza (PBUH) the relation between all but God to God is similar to the relation between the mirrored image of a person and the owner of the image (Majlesi, 1403 A.H., 10, p. 313). In other words, although a mirrored image shows all of the attributes of the person, it lacks depth and is only an illusion. This paper aims to analyze and criticize understandings of monotheism in accordance with

the beliefs of prominent followers of Horofieh movement.⁶

1. Mystics' Accounts of Perception of Monotheism

First of all it is necessary to consider words of other Muslim mystics. It is evident that mystics have presented their accounts of their personal experience of perception. Therefore, rational descriptions of monotheism by mystics are in fact rational expressions of spiritual perception. Before advancing further it is necessary to review stages of the mystical path to Allah (God).

1.1. The Four Spiritual Journeys

The four spiritual journeys are briefly as follows: 1) journey from the creation to Truth by surmounting veils of darkness and light and believing in monotheism. It is accomplished by perceiving actions, attributes, and intrinsic manifestations and consequently merging with God. At the end of this stage trivial souls gain proximity to God. According to a hadith Qudsi at this stage God's becomes man's eye, ear, hands and feet. That is to say, man sees through God, hears through Him and even gets to know him through God. Therefore, at this stage the devotee is drown into God; 2) endless journey from Truth to Truth, which puts an end to the mystic path. It is the beginning of an unconscious journey to the truth of names and attributes of God and consequently leads to perdition; 3) journey from Truth to the creation. It is the stage at which the soul survives inexistence and gains conscious. It is the awareness after disappearing and studying the unseen realm. The soul thus reaches the state of perdition and recovers from it at this point; 4) journey from the creation to the creation with Truth. At this stage the soul survives through God and achieves wholeness. He is able to simultaneously see unity in plurality and plurality in unity of all creatures (Ibn Arabi, 1988a: pp. 162-166; R. K. Sadr al-Din Shirazi, 1419 A.H., pp. 1/13; Kashani, Ez al-Din, 1988, pp. 132/467; Khomeini, Ruhallah, 1981, p. 304; Bahr al-Oloum, 1981, p. 134).

1.2. Khwaja Abdullah Ansari's View on Perdition and Monotheism

Khwaja Abdullah Ansari talks about perdition and monotheism in his discussion of the ultimate under the following titles: gnosis (knowledge), perdition, survival, inquiry, wile, existence, abstraction, individualization, plurality, and monotheism. He starts the section with the following verse from Holy Quran: "كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ وَ يَبْقَى وَجْهَ رَبِّكَ" (Sura Al-Rahman/27). In addition, about gnosis he states: "المعرفة احاطه بعين الشيء كما هو". Abd al-Razzaq Kashani elaborates on Khwaja's words and says that gnosis is the union of knowledge and the

mystic (the knowing). It is acquired when the mystic merges with knowledge or the essence of knowledge is embedded into the mystic. In other words, gnosis is not obtained unless you drown in the knowledge and it drowns into you. Hence, gnosis is enthusiasm for knowledge and having a taste of it (Abd al-Razzaq Kashani, 1993, p. 565). Furthermore, Khwaja explains perdition as follows: "الفناء في هذا الباب اضمحلال: "ما دون الحق علما ثم جددا ثم حقا". "Perdition is when all but Truth vanishes into knowledge through denial and later on through believing in Truth." Abd al-Razzaq Kashani describes the first stage as follows: "When a mortal soul vanishes into knowledge he comes to realize that the True Existence exists because it is existent. Afterwards, he perceives the True Existence and denies the existence of everything but Truth. Therefore existence of God becomes the basis of his denial. He realizes that existence of the inferior is not eternal and consequently puts belief in Truth on the basis of truth. He, in fact, reaches Truth from truth and does not consider existence for God's creatures and only recognizes the existence of Truth. This is the stage when the mystic gains wholeness (Abd al-Razzaq Kashani, 1993, pp. 574-578). Khwaja Abdullah starts the section on monotheism with the following verse from Quran: "شَهِدَ اللَّهُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ" (Al-e-Imran/18). He uses the verse to argue that God dislikes accident. According to Kashani, Khwaja believes that monotheism speaks for God's dislike for considering His creatures to be proofs of His existence. However, perceiving God's existence through His various manifestations and forms is not in contradiction with monotheism. Therefore, the real Unitarian is the one who realizes that God has been/will be the only proof of His own existence and that no internal or external accident is required for proving His being (ibid, pp. 607-610).

1.3. The Viewpoint of Attar of Nishapur on Perdition and Monotheism

In his Mantiq-ut-Tayr, Attar fully describes the mystical path to perdition in verse. He considers seven definite stages of spirituality: quest, love, gnosis, self-sufficiency, monotheism, wonder, and perdition. The last three stages are associated with the research topic. In fact, these three stages are combined in monotheism because after putting belief in oneness of God the devotee wonders and reaches the stage of perdition when his wonder ripens. In describing monotheism Attar says: "When the devotee reaches this stage/ he leaves the path and goes astray for finding himself/ confused, he comes back/ he becomes part of a whole, from which he cannot be distinguished/ he is only a surface that neither is a soul nor a member/ he is nobody and everybody/ he is nothing and everything." That is to

say, the devotee loses his individuality and paradoxically stands for the whole universe. Next, Attar talks about how the devotee feels about the situation he is in: "I cannot differentiate between me and you/ I drowned in you, and we both were lost/ I lost myself and found you/ when I found myself I found oneness/ you are lost to Him to attain wholeness/ it is individuality in oneness". Therefore, the major characteristic of monotheism is to lose one's self to God and to become nothing and everything. In the aforementioned lines Attar addresses wonder as well, but in the next chapter he focuses on the amazement of the devotee solely and writes: "Next is the valley of wonder / the traveler feels pain and regret/ if asked whether he is intoxicated or not/ he would not know/ he would not know whether he is within the light or outside of it/ he would not know whether he is hidden or visible/ he would not know whether he is mortal or immortal/ he is both mortal and immortal/ he would not know who he is/ he would not know whether he is the owner of his knowledge or not!". As seen in the aforementioned lines, the main characteristic of wonder is confusion and bewilderment. Therefore, at this stage the devotee will not be able to understand, interpret or explain monotheism. Finally, Attar believes that ultimate monotheism is manifested by deprivation and perdition. He puts: "Next is the valley of deprivation and perdition/ talk is not allowed in this valley/ it is similar to forgetfulness/ it brings about lameness, deafness, and trance/ when the sea starts to wave/ no pattern will remain intact on it/ both worlds are similar to the sea/ no one can deny this fact/ a soul cannot find anything but bewilderment in the peaceful sea/ he wonders whether something exists or not/ he wonders why noting makes sense/ as long as I am on my own I am bad but when I join God I lose conscious/ when I become unconscious I find godhood in my unconsciousness/ whoever loses himself and reaches the stage of perdition/ he finds existence in perdition/ when someone recovers unconsciousness/ he will be told secrets" (Attar, 1991, pp. 206-221). According to Attar, the main indicator of perdition is drowning in the sea of God's oneness, which is accompanied by unconsciousness and divine insight. That is to say, whoever reaches the state of perdition will not see anyone except for God.

In sum, based on the viewpoints of Muslim mystics on monotheism and oneness and the path to realize it, it can be said that monotheism is not possible without perdition because it is an integral part of monotheism. Khwaja Abdullah Ansari, Attar of Nishapur and others approve of this fact. Although Attar believes that deprivation and perdition follow

monotheism and wonder, Khwaja Abdullah Ansari believes that belief in oneness of God is attained following to perdition, abstraction and individualization. Therefore, Khwaja does not refer to wonder. However, because of the elements common in Attar's description of monotheism, wonder, and perdition it can be concluded that in his view these three valleys are inseparable and intertwined. Self-disintegration, becoming lost in God, the wholeness of the universe, confusion and bewilderment and speechlessness, and becoming one are the common characteristics of the three aforementioned valleys. Khwaja also does not introduce perdition as one of the valleys or states. He rather talks about perdition in his discussions of the ultimate, which originate from knowledge. Hence, in Khwaja's view perdition is a position, viewpoint or horizon that comes with knowledge of unity of the Divine Being and mortality of all but God.

2. Viewpoint of Horofieh on Unity

In Horofieh's view creatures of all worlds are only reflections of Truth. In his Javdan-nameh Fazlallah Astar Abadi says that anyone who is unaware of the essence and creation of man, balance of objects and the divine lines will be trapped in the hell made of his ignorance of the creation: "ما أشهدتهم "خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَ لَخَلَقَ أَنْفُسِهِمْ" (Kahf/19). Such a person will choose to worship idols, stars, the Sun, the Moon, the weather, fire, soil or wind. He will even consider himself to be the creator of objects and the universe and consequently he will be imprisoned by the creation. He will become like other living creatures, scorpions, animals, and inanimate objects, which are not evidence of their own shape and origin and do not balance themselves. He, inevitably, sees all objects as embodiments of Hell and absolute darkness and will only be released when he puts belief in the oneness of God (Vatican, 1997a, b).

Moreover, in a sonnet he writes: "I believe intoxication of wine is from the cup/ I see the face of the cupbearer in the cup/ in the crystal ball, which is manifestation of God/ I see His existence which relies on Him/ we are the manifestation of the never ending knowledge/ we are the manifestation of the eternal secret/ we are both His reflection and embodiment of His beauty and glory/ when we were created from K (Persian: ك) and N (Persian: ن) / the essence of the two letters became mixed with ours/ when God became the manifestation of the characteristics of His creatures/ all creatures and objects stand for Him and He stands for them" (Naimi's Collection of Poems, sonnet 11).

In addition, Seyyed Isaac, a successor to Seyyed Fazlallah, says: Scholars (followers or

Horofieh movement or Fazlallah Astar Abadi) and other researchers do not truly exist. All creatures are manifestations of God's divine being. According to "جف القلم بما هو كائن" and "لا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ" (Al-Rom/30), no form in the unseen world can be seen without knowledge of objects. As says Prophet Muhammad (PBUH): "اللهم ارني الاشياء كما هي". Since knowledge of objects flows from the unseen world, the owner of the knowledge will know that whatever he sees is only a reflection of Truth. God is, in fact, embodied in all objects (creatures) and consequently the devoted soul will gain knowledge of objects as well as self-knowledge (Legacy, 94). In other words, having the knowledge of the reality of creatures as well as self-knowledge the devoted soul fully puts belief in oneness. It is the same as perceiving unity in plurality and becoming a Unitarian (as says Attar).

The world, the rules governing the afterlife, and everything in the Heaven and Hell are emanations of God's attributes. Regarding this topic Seyyed Isaac puts: "all good thoughts, words and deeds lead to creation of nymphs, palaces, trees, singing birds, and beautiful songs. Therefore, everyone who follows the good, will reach good emanations of God. On the contrary, wicked deeds, words, and thoughts lead to creation of living creatures, scorpions, wild animals, huge fires... The reason is that, God's pure attributes are mentor for the elysian while God's anger and wickedness are mentors for the hellions. These attributes are old and cannot be separated from God's nature. Hence, some manifestations and creatures are graced and some are despised. Moreover, according to "وَاللَّهُ يَدْعُوا إِلَىٰ " (Yunus/25) and "هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوسُ السَّلَامُ" (Al-Hashr/23) the elysian and the hellion are both affected by God's inherent attributes (Legacy, 95). God Almighty states in Noble Quran: "مَنْ كَانَ فِي هَذِهِ أَعْمَىٰ فَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ أَعْمَىٰ" (Al-Isra/ 72). The verse suggests that man should try to see the nature and attributes of God, angels, Heaven, hell and all that exists in the afterlife in this world. The reason is that is man does not see them in this world, he will not be able to perceive them in the afterlife as well (Legacy, 96).

In Horofieh's belief, religion is designed based on divine attributes, because it complies with man's being and man's being complies with divine attributes. Divine attributes are also evidence for God's oneness: "Those who are not despised are the ones that walk on the straight path and are proofs of their creation and self. However, those who are despised are not on the straight path and are not evidence for the creation of themselves and other creatures". That is to say: "مَا أَشْهَدْتُهُمْ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ" "وَالْأَرْضِ وَ لَخَلَقَ انْفُسَهُمْ" (Al-Kahf/19). Religious rules

including prayers, fasting, etc ("لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا"/Al-Baqara, 286) are based on Adam's shape and figure. Besides, Adam's face and figure are also designed based on those of his Creator: "كَمَا قَالَ خَلَقَ اللَّهُ" (Ibid). As it was mentioned, Horofieh's view on the unity governing the universe does not differ from the viewpoints of other mystics. Nevertheless, there are rules to Horofieh that require closer examinations.

3. Monotheism and Secret of Number 32

Persian alphabets had been considered to be sacred by Horofieh and movements before it (Zekavati, 1988, p. 15). Followers of Horofieh ascribed the truth and oneness of God to alphabets and number 32. Interpreting a part of Arshnameh (by Seyyed Fazlallah), Seyyed Isaac fully explains the importance of number 32 and its relation with self-scrutiny, theosophy, and monotheism. He is on the belief that attributes of God Almighty are divided into two types: additional attributes and inherent attributes. He also believes that the aforementioned 32 words are among the inherent attributes of God. The attributes are as old as Truth and eternal as He, because they are the same as God's essence and integral parts of His being. Therefore, the attributes cannot be separated from God (University, 1994b). As the following verse describes God Almighty, the words defining God's attributes are equal to His essence, affect all objects and are used to describe everything. There is also no imaginable or thinkable thing to which the 32 words have not been attributed: "إِلَّا إِنَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُّحِيطٌ" (Foselat/ 54). Hence, as God is generous, merciful, and old by nature the 32 words are also the same (University, 1995a). He continues to say: "Sufis and some sages believe that all objects are raised by God's sacred names such as Basit (who extends), Qabez (who takes), Fattah (who opens), Razzaq (who feeds), and so forth. Therefore, each object is the manifestation of one of God's names, which guides and raises it (University, pp. 33a, b). The origin and the truth behind these 32 divine, old and eternal names are hidden. The 32 words include: ["I seek refuge from Satan the cursed to God. In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate"]:

ا ب ت ث ج ح خ د ذ ر ز س ش ص ض ط ظ ع غ ف ق ك ل م ن و
ه ي پا چا ژا گا
All of God's sacred names originate from these 32 words and are based on them (University, p. 33b). Whenever a mystic gains knowledge of the 32 words, he will know his God. That is to say, a mystic should know that the 32 words are the mentors for all objects and creatures. These 32 divine words govern the appearances and interiors of all objects and creatures (University, p. 34a). Hence, anyone who does not acquire this

knowledge and does not understand that all the perceptible in all horizons is within himself is one of those who “يَلْقَاءُ رَبِّهِمْ لِكَافِرُونَ” (Al-Rom/8). Such a person does not understand that human’s ego is a comprehensive entity and an explainer book (University, p. 35b). On the other hand, if man gains knowledge of the book of his existence (which is called the explainer book by Imam Ali, peace be upon him) as well as words, divine words, and old attributes of God he will read himself and will know that God has bestowed upon him the attributes: “إِقْرَأْ كِتَابَكَ كَفَىٰ بِنَفْسِكَ الْيَوْمَ عَلَيْكَ حَسِيبًا” (Al-Isra/ 12) (University, pp. 35 b and 36a). The verse means: “read your book, it is enough. Your ego is assessed on behalf of you.” In his Arshnameh, Seyyed Fazlallah writes: “there are thirty two attributes to God Almighty/ from which you cannot be separated / look into yourself / beware that you are defined by the thirty two attributes / you are connected to God’s nature/ when you discover the attributes you achieve glory/ number thirty two is evidence of the thirty two attributes / God’s aim was to love you” (University, p. 36a) (University, pp. 36b and 37a, b). Therefore, a great deal of effort is required to join the group of God’s lovers and beloved men, be the manifestation of the 32 eternal divine words, lose oneself to a real love for God, and live on divine words. “من ذكرني و احبني و من احبني عشقتي و من عشقتي عشقته و من عشقته قتلته و من قتلته قتلته فأنا دينه...”

As it was explained, in Horofieh’s view the truth of existence and its unity are described by number 32, which stands for the number of divine words. Seyyed Isaac elaborates on this topic and writes: “Free scholars and sages had been discussing the notion of existence. However, the meaning of existence remained unknown until God revealed His beauty to the seers: “a lot of suspicion was raised/ everybody investigated his own point of view” (University, 49a). The aforementioned line is interpreted as follows: the total Abjad value of the word “وجود” (English: existence) is 19: the value of letter “و” is 6, the value of “ج” is 3, the value of the second “و” is 6 also, and the value of the last letter, “د”, is 4. On the other hand, the total value of the word “وجود” in minor Abjad letters is 12: “و”=3; “ج”=3; “و”=3; and “د”=3. Letter “س” is equal to “31”. The sum of value of letter “س” and the dot in the letter “ج” also equals 32 (University, pp. 49a, b). In addition, the total value of the word “انسان” (English: human) is also 32 (Ibid). Therefore, according to Horofieh, human being, the universe and God all are associated with number 32 and all of them refer to one entity.

4. Horofieh and Godhood of Man or Fazlallah Horofie

Another theme that is commonly discussed in Horofieh texts is the godlike characteristics of human, holy figures, or Seyyed Fazlallah. In a poem, Seyyed Falallah says: “I am the placeless treasure/ I do not fit in any place/ I am superior to body and soul/ I cannot fit in a body or soul (Naimi’s Collection of Poems, p. 228)

Emad al-Din Nasimi, one of the successors to Fazlallah, who is in fact the interpreter and promoter of Seyyed Fazlallah’s beliefs and thoughts writes in a refrain: “we are manifestations of God’s essence/ we are the orrery that shows the whole world/ Thou athirst come to us for we are the life-giving water/ Thou that are mistaken by doubt/ do not compare yourself with us/ we do not die nor perish because we live in the eternal world/ Thou that are eager to see God’s face/ If you overcome your doubt you will see our godhood/ we are the greatest of the kings but we are beggars in the land of inexistence/ as long as we stick to your hair/ we are protected by the glory/ if we come out, the sun of unity will rise from the east of the unseen world/ in the unquestionable world we are the reason/ if you are a devotee and the sun of religion/ we are the fruits of Truth/ we are the Holy Spirit and the Great God/ we are the soul that is blown into human/ Thou that are the essence of the placeless treasure/ you are the soul and essence of life/ you are evident on surface but you have secrets hidden in you/ objects are created because of your grace/ what is the essence of you, the placeless treasure?/ you are the life, the world, the objects and the essence/ you are everything that has been created/ let go of yourself and see God because this is the way to an unknown being/ when you unveil your face you get to drink the water of life/ Thou Moses forget about the discussion of my manifestation and exaggerated words / all objects talk without words/ die and live on life/ if you ask for eternal life...the sun of our beauty rose/ it came out of the darkness of doubt and heresy/ his beautiful manifestations shed light on a particle and the particle gained light/ you make a mistake by not reflecting your heart/ we are the hidden and the apparent/ you are unaware of the world of unity/ let go of your doubt and choose uniqueness/ forget about your ego, negation and stability and other things/ so that we can see this as you see the dawn of sun from the east (Nasimi’s Collection of Poems, refrain).

In a sonnet he also says: “in the ups and downs of the world of unity/ a devotee to Truth, whether Muslim or Christian/ there is no name for beings and objects where the rays of God’s light parade/ you will find all particles of the world

dancing upon the dawn of the sun/ if you see man's essence as ultimate plurality you gain unity when you reach there/ you start when you finish because you move in a circle with no starting point and ending point/ you get to know God by knowing yourself/ you then realize the secret of the mystery (Nasimi's Collection of Poems, sonnet 5). A close examination of the aforementioned poems and information reveals all of the elements in accounts of the ending phases of devotion (suffering) by other mystics. Not to mention that the ending stages include perdition, monotheism and wonder. In addition, characteristics of a perfect human being are also evident in the reports by mystics such as Ibn Arabi (R. K., Jahangiri, 2004, pp. 436-447). Water of life, grand names, manifestations of God's essence, God's face, and even Holy Spirit are all characteristics of perfect human being. If man finds his truth, he will find unity. The placeless Essence, essence of all objects, and the outside and inside of man are all perfect manifestations of God. In other words, they all stand for the "Truth of Muhammad", which is known by mystics as the first divine manifestation and the origin and mother of other manifestations. As the aforementioned poems imply, Horofieh are on the belief that all the truth is only understood by losing the self and dying in the path to God and monotheism. Therefore, the teachings of the Horofieh movement and other mystics are a result of the inseparability of self-scrutiny and theosophy: "من عرف نفسه فقد عرف ربه" (Majlesi, 1403 A.H., pp. 2, 32). However, it does not mean that man's existence can be compared to that of God. Therefore, although followers of Horofieh consider glory and greatness for man or Seyyed Fazlallah, it cannot be claimed that they believed in godhood of man. Nasimi has another poem written in Turkish. The poem says: "ايكى جهان منده سيغار ، من بو جهانه سيغمازام / كن و له هم مكان" "the world hurts. I let go of it and forget it as far as I am the time and place" (Nasimi's Collection of Turkish Poems, volume 3, p. 201). In another sonnet he says: "You cannot find your path to God unless you look at our face, His manifestation / if you are in search of God's essence, you shall take the path without any excuse or alibi". In the aforementioned line you can easily spot the viewpoint of Horofieh on Man's being God's manifestation. "Our face" here refers to the inside of holy figures. It also supports the fact that man is God's perfect manifestation. In a Marvi hadith from Imam Sadiq (PBUH) it is stated that "نحن وجه الله", which means we are God's face (Sadooq, 1996, p. 159; Majlesi, 1403 A.H., pp. 4, 6). However, all holy figures are God's face, but the level of their perfection depends on the quantity and quality of

their demonstrating divine characteristics. Not to mention that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and Imams (PBUH) displayed God's characteristics perfectly.

Seyyed Isaac al-Husseini says: "the essence and situation of all creatures are the proofs of the oneness of God and His justice. The reader of the text should, indeed, scrutinize it because it does not present information in an explicit way. You should try to gain knowledge of yourself and other creatures with the aid of God. You should see beyond the veil of thoughts, self-love and imitation to be free and reach a stage when you lose yourself and earn everything. You should love yourself and forsake yourself at the same time (Legacy, 97). The mystic looks at God and sees himself. He reads divine verses and makes himself only a reflection of God. When the mystic loses himself and becomes an embodiment of divine characteristics, he in fact gives himself away to find God. In other words, he finds himself in God and sees God in himself. The fact that the mystic loses himself and becomes everything or he sees himself and God at the same time is somewhat contradictory, but with respect to ontology it means that man does not own any existence of his own and is totally the reflection of Truth. With respect to epistemology, when the devotee loses his ego to God and drowns in him, he gets to live forever on Truth. Such a person only sees the truth and consequently talks out of it but those who do not reach the stage speak for their ego.

Somewhere else Seyyed Isaac writes: "Adam's children have dual relationships with God: They are both his servants and his beloved ones. Anyone who is loved by God has the highest spiritual rank, and anyone who is God's servant is saved by God. "وَلِمَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ جَنَّاتٌ" (Al-Rahman/ 46). Whoever is the manifestation of names and attributes of God is His servant and survives while whoever is the manifestation of God's essence is His beloved and has a high spiritual rank. However, whoever is neither God's servant nor His beloved is described as follows: "اولئك كالانعام بل هم اضل" (Araf/ 179) (Legacy 98). Hence, Horofieh does not support the godhood of neither man nor Seyyed Fazlallah. According to Horofieh, man is either God's servant or a being inferior to the animals. In addition, based on the unity governing the world it can be said that "هُوَ الْاَوَّلُ وَالْاٰخِرُ" "وَالظَّاهِرُ وَالْبَاطِنُ". That is to say, everything, especially human being, is the manifestation of God's characteristics. In Shabestari's words: "let go of your blindfolded vision and listen to the messages of God Almighty/ God says that your soul will continue to live/ why do you deny the doom's day? / gain awareness in the valley of tranquility because you

will finally see a tree claiming to be God/ how is that a tree can claim godhood but a virtuous man cannot? / whoever whose heart is free from doubt believes in the wholeness of the world / there is no companion or peer to God / God cannot be defined by words like I, you and us (Lahiji, 1958, pp. 368-378). Molavi also says: “how can a soul have the knowledge of the good and the bad? / how can a soul know to appreciate virtues and discourage harm? / since soul is naturally informant/ whoever has more knowledge has a stronger soul/ soul is affected by knowledge / and who is more aware of other souls is superior to them/ many at first gives his life away to be accepted in God’s court/ and it continues to be God’s manifestation (Molavai, volume 6, verses 148-152). If God is the beginning, the end, the appearance and the conscious and if man’s reality is the same as the truth, unsurprisingly a mystic (who is a real man) can see the truth through his vision and talk about it (Ibn Arabi, Peerless, pp. 4, 451). In his *Mantiq-ut-Tayr*, Attar puts wonder after monotheism. Therefore, naturally upon gaining knowledge of the truth and expressing them the mystic has to deal with some difficulties. Baba Taher also writes the following lines on the notion of unity in plurality: “I look at the sea and I see you/ I look at the desert and I see you/ when I look at mountains, valleys, and plateaus I see the reflection of your beautiful being (Baba Taher, 1997, couplet 3).

In another poem he talks about the amazement he had experienced as a result of seeing God: “Which one is the beloved and the lover? What is the reality of my heart if God loves it? I see the beloved and the lover as one, and I cannot distinguish between them (Ibid, couplet 33).

Ibn Farez also reveals a similar state of doubt in his writings. The reader of his poem does not discern the speaker. He does not know whether the speaker is the poet himself, God or the truth! The speaker also constantly revolves around the three pronouns. Ibn Farez has not formulated his poems deliberately. He is only doubtful as a result of losing himself to God, drowning into Him and mixing with Truth. About his losing himself to God he says: “ففي “الصحو بعد المحو لم اك غيرها و ذاتي بذاتي اذ تحلت تجلتي” (R.K., Ibn Farez, 1988, p. 42).

Although at the beginning a superficial look at Horofieh’s account of the compliance between oneness of God and unity of Man’s essence may make you believe that they believed in man’s godhood but in fact it unveils the fact that oneness is not only proved by personal intuition but also is supported by rationality. The truth of nature is perceived by a man free from illusion and belief in plurality. The reason is that man is the best reflection

of God and perfect emanation of God’s being: “عَلَّمَ الْأَنْدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا” (Al-Baqara/ 31). Although human is also part of the world that is the manifestation of Truth, human is the best manifestation. When a mystic sees God in himself, he finds himself as the container of God and His oneness. Therefore, when Seyyed Isaac gives worldly examples of divine unity, he does not find any creature or object better than perfect man that can reflect divine oneness. An example of such men is Imam Ali (PBUH). Oneness is a state without any discernable components. This is definitely the same as man’s reality because Imam Ali once said “انا النقطة تحت الباء”. Therefore point and oneness are the same because none of them can be divided into its constituting parts (University, p. 66 a, b).

Hence, it is not right for the followers of Horofieh to consider their leader, Fazlallah Astar Abadi, their God. In addition, some of the descriptions by Seyyed Fazlallah and interpretations of him by his successors are radical, which have resulted in wrong conclusions. In a sonnet Seyyed Fazlallah writes: “I am the embodiment of speech and I share the same nature with God/ all voices heard in both worlds originate from me/ from the beginning of creation to the end of the world all particles originate from me (Naimi’s Collection of Poems, sonnet 11).

Seyyed Isaac writes in his *Mahsharnameh*: “the Divine Holiness writes in his *Arshanameh*: In the Name of God, the Merciful the Compassionate/ Gabriel was told the secret of the sheet/ he became aware of the names and the named/ then God Almighty ordered him to descend and show himself to man/ he asked about man’s face from God and came to Prophet Muhammad/ Muhammad felt passion in his heart and started to inscribe / so that you realize there is no destination except for Truth/ demon has nothing to do with Truth... surely, was right God the Great (Arabic: صدق الله على العظيم)” (Vatican, p. 103). These lines explicitly indicate that no existence belongs to God’s creatures. These lines also suggest that Gabriel was God’s messenger, Prophet Muhammad was God’s messenger and Quran was his book. In addition, he calls his mentor, Seyyed Fazlallah, as the “Divine Holiness”. Therefore, according to the lines we realize that Seyyed Isaac highly respected the divine being of Fazlallah Astar Abadi. On the other hand, the holiness of God’s friends and manifestation of God in a perfect human are enough to prove that Horofieh did not worship Fazlallah as their God. The only issue that remains is that Seyyed Isaac considered Seyyed Fazlallah’s words as God’s words. This claim is actually based on the belief in the proximity of

trivial beings to God as well as the fact that Seyyed Fazlallah was drowned in God. Moreover, in numerous occasions disciples of Seyyed Fazlallah have introduced him as God and have ascribed everything to him. They have also relied on verses that somehow refer to God's grace. Nevertheless, all of these references point to the attention paid by followers of Horofieh to God and his being the origin for material and spiritual gifts bestowed upon creatures. They also imply that Seyyed Fazlallah was drowned to God. His knowledge of the unseen was compared to God's abilities and his munificence was also considered to be equal to that of God. They highly respect him because of his passion for him and not because they consider him their God. For instance, Molavi also highly respected "Shams Tabrizi" and referred to him as "Sham Tabrizi the Truth". That is to say, to Molavi, Shams was the divine shining sun and the reflection of God's attributes. Accordingly, there is no basis for claiming that Fazlallah is the god to the followers of Horofieh movement. He also never claimed so.

It was all that could be said in support of Horofieh. However, it shall be noted that exaggerated words of mystics are not perfect and in fact originate from their passion for Truth. On the other hand, if someone really drowns in God it is not right to consider him to be equal to Quran and the same time also saying "صدق الله على العظيم". Even Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) words are not introduced as words of Quran. Regarding Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) it is said that all his words arise from truth but we never say "صدق الله على العظيم" after reciting one of his expressions or hadiths. Therefore the phrase "صدق الله على العظيم" is only used with verses from Quran. There reason is that to us Quran is God's revelation and is transferred to men literally by Gabriel. Although words of God's friend (Prophet Muhammad) are wise (both in theory and practice) and divine and originated from the springs of wisdom that pour out from his heart to his tongue, it is not allowed to attach the phrase "صدق الله على العظيم" to them. Hence, wise words from Prophet Muhammad are not regarded as God's words. His words are different from Quran which is God's book and contains the words of God (قال الله العظيم في الكتاب). The truth is that, as a great mystic such as Ala al-Dowleh Semnani writes in response to Abd al-Razzaq Kashani, intoxication occurs to the devotee (sufferer) in the stage of spiritual coloring because in the stage of obedience no such a state and related words are seen from the devotee. Furthermore, after perdition and joining the wholeness there is another stage known as "صحو بعد المحو" (English: awareness following to effacement) and "life after death" and

"collection and gathering". Upon reaching the stage the mystic sees through unity and plurality and feels conscious in a state of perdition. In this state he knows time and place and respects the conventions of the universe and the world of plurality. Such a person does not speak exaggerated words and his speeches comply with religious words both aspects (Semnani, 1953, p. 230). Exaggerated words from mystics are not totally invalid. Such words show the immaturity of the speaker or his recklessness about the secrets he knows. Hence, there are consequences to such expressions. Undoubtedly the deviations that have occurred to the Horofieh movement from since the third generation of its followers are rooted in these careless expressions. Such deviations include the belief in the godhood or prophecy of Fazlallah.

There are no accounts of the relationship between number 32 and the unity governing the universe by other Sufi movement. Apparently the particularity of this number is one of the suggestions and innovations of Horofieh.

Results

Similar to other spiritual movements, Horofieh also believes in monotheism. Followers of Horofieh believe that God is the manifestation of God and His oneness.

Muslim mystics from different movements give slightly different definitions of monotheism. There reason lies in the difficulty of expressing one's perception of the unity governing the universe as well as divine monotheism.

According to Horofieh, number 32 contains a very great secret. It reveals the divine characteristics of human (the small world), characteristics of the world (great human) and characteristics of other creatures.

Followers of Horofieh believe in the oneness of God Almighty, his being the creator, and His other characteristics. Therefore it is not correct to associate them with the belief in the godhood of Seyyed Fazlallah. However, deviations have occurred to the followers that have led to disagreements.

References

- Ibn Farez, Omar Ibn Ali (1997), *Taeeyeh*, with a translation by Abd al-Rahman Jaami and an illustration by Qeysari, introduction modified and investigated by Sadiq Khorsha. Tehran, Noqteh Publications and Office of Publication of Written Legacy.
- Ibn Arabi, Muhyiddin Muhammad Ibn Ali (Bita), *Al-Fotoohat al-Makieh* (vol 1, 2, 3, 4). Beirut: Darsader.

- Bahr al-Olum, Seyyed Mehdi (1981) A Thesis on Journey (with an introduction and description by Seyyed Muhammad Hussein Husseini Tehrani), Tehran: Hekmat Publications.
- Jaami, Abd al-Rahman (1991), Naqd al-Nosus, modified by William Chitik , Tehran: Cultural Studies and Researchers Institute.
- Jahangir, Mohsen (2004), Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi: A Prominent Islamic Mystic Figure, Tehran, University of Tehran Publications.
- Khomeini, Rouh Allah al-Musavi (1981), Mesbah al-Hoday ela al-Khalafeh va al-Velayah (translated by Seyyed Ahmad Fahri), Tehran, Payam Azar Publications.
- Zekavati, Alireza (1988), Horofieh: a preface to Noqtavieh, Mysticism Journal.
- Semnani, Ala al-Dowleh (1983), Collection of Writings, gathered by Najib Mayel Heravi, Tehran, Mowla Publications.
- Sadooq, Muhammad ibn Ali ibn al-Hussein ibn Babouyeh al-Qomi (1996), al-Tohid, Qom, Islamic Publication Institute.
- Sadr al-Din Shirazi, Muhammad ibn Ibrahim (1419 A.H.) Al-Asfar al-Arba'h Fi al-Hekmah al-Motealieh, Beirut: Dar al-Ahya al-Taras al-Arabi.
- Tabari, Ihsan, 1969, Some Analyses of Worldviews and Social Movements in Iran.
- Attar, Farid al-Din Muhammad, 1991, Mantiq-ut-Tayr, gathered and modified by Seyyed Sadiq Goharin, Scientific and Cultural Publication Company.
- Kashani, Abd al-Razzaq (1993), Description of Stages of Travel, Qom, Bidar Publications.
- Kashani, Ez al-Din Mahmoud (1988), Mesbah al-Hodayeh va Meftah al-Kefayeh, modified by Jalal al-Din Homayuni, Tehran, Vafa Publications.
- Golpinarli, Abd al-Baqi (1995), list of Horofieh texts, translated by Tofiq Sobhani, Office of Publications of Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance.
- Lahiji, Muhammad ibn Yahya (1958), Illustration of Golashan Raz, by Keyvan Samii, Tehran, Mahmoudi Library Publications.
- Majlesi, Muhammad Baqer (1403 A.H.), Bahar al-Anvar al-Jameh le dor Akhbar al-Aemah Athar, Beirut, Alvafa Publications.
- Molavi Balkhi, Jalal al-Din Muhammad (2013), Mathnavi Manavi, gathered by Reynold Elin Nicholson, Tehran, Amir Kabir Publications.
- Hamedani, Baba Taher (1988), Couplets by Baba Taher, with an introduction by Mahdi Elahi Qomshei, Ganjineh Publications.
- Nasimi, Emad al-Din, Collection of Turkish Poems (Bita), volume 3, Baku Publications.
- Astar Abadi, Fazlallah (Bita), Collection of Persian Poems, Bandari Publications.
- Astar Abadi, Fazlallah, manuscript of Javdanameh, University Print: 6101 (it is referred to as "University" in the text).
- Astar Abadi, Seyyed Isaac (2010), wills, Legacy Mirror Journal, year 8, no. 8, spring and summer, p. 55, by Jalali, Alireza Jalali and Atefeh Bank (referred to as "Legacy" in the text).
- Astar Abadi, Fazlallah, Mahsharnameh (manuscript, Vatican 21).

3/18/2013