



Research Paper

A Comparative Study of the Authority of Speculative Opinions in Beliefs from the Perspective of Usulists and Theologians and Its Impact on Imitation in Doctrinal Knowledge

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Abstract

It can be said that the most important component of the propositions of any religion is its doctrinal statements, while propositions related to ethics and laws occupy a secondary position. This is because it is through the formation of correct beliefs that one finds the path to happiness. It is also evident that the means of attaining knowledge are not limited to the acquisition of science; rather, restricting these means solely to scientific knowledge might make the formation of a doctrinal system for the general public difficult. With this in mind, when we study the words of the great osul scholars and rational thinking, we clearly observe that most scholars do not assign significant value to the knowledge derived from conjecture. However, these conjectures have become a central focus in jurisprudential issues. The question then arises: what's the reason for this distinction or in other words, why are conjectures disregarded in doctrinal matters? Ultimately, we concluded that in matters of belief where the acquisition of knowledge is not required, a general belief suffices, and the reason of closure does not work. However, in doctrinal matters such as the knowledge of God, where acquiring knowledge is necessary we may regard knowledge as a necessary precondition. If one is unable to acquire knowledge, then there is no obligation to seek conjecture.

Extended Abstract

1. Introduction

One of the important issues in the science of principles (Osul al-Fiqh) that plays a crucial role in deriving practical rules is the validation of conjectures, which is almost unanimously agreed upon by all osulions. This issue is important because the certain propositions derived from the Qur'an and Sonnat are not sufficient to address all jurisprudential issues, especially contemporary ones.

However, the purpose of this article is to examine what has led to the acceptance of these conjectures—widely recognized in jurisprudential issues—being rejected in doctrinal matters, which are fundamentally more important. Why has this been difficult for many scholars, such as Sheikh Mufid (RA) and Allama Hilli (RA), who have shown reluctance towards the use of conjectures for establishing doctrinal issues? For instance, Sheikh Mufid (RA) in some cases ob-

jects to Sheikh Saduq (RA) for utilizing solitary reports (khabar vahed) to prove doctrinal matters.

Sheikh Ansari (RA) and the late Akhund Khorasani (RA) discussed the application of conjecture in beliefs at the end of the conclusion of the argument of doctrine of obstruction. This is why many Osulions, including Muhaqqiq Na'ini (RA), Muhaqqiq Iraqi (RA), and the late Khoei (RA), have continued this discussion within the argument of closure.

The distinction of this article from previous researches is that a descriptive and analytical approach based on other researches has been adopted, examining and analyzing the words of both the theologians and the osulions. Furthermore, the views of Akhund Khorasani (RA) are particularly explored and, in the end, it is considered how adopting a foundation in this matter influences the issue of the permissibility of imitation in beliefs.

2. Methods

In this article, we used a descriptive and analytical approach, referring to library sources, to examine the words of the osulions and theologians, focusing on the views of the late Akhund Khorasani (RA).



3. Results

Our Findings in This article are as follows:

The scholars who turned away from relying on conjecture in matters of belief did not do so because they ignored this issue, but because of the special importance of beliefs in human happiness.

According to Akhund Khorasani (RA), in the first category of beliefs, attaining knowledge is not obligatory, whereas in the second category, it is required. However, if certain knowledge is unattainable, acquiring conjectural knowledge is not necessary.

Another key point is that conventional knowledge is sufficient, and there is no requirement for formal logical knowledge.

Additionally, knowledge acquired through taqlid (imitation) is deemed sufficient, and there is no need to attain it through demonstrative reasoning (borhan).

4. Conclusion

The conclusions drawn from this article are as follows:

1. The rejection of conjecture in matters of belief is not due to their lesser importance but rather because of the special significance of beliefs in an individual's life and ultimate happiness. This is evident from arguments such as the prevention of possible harm, as expressed by scholars in relation to the obligation of acquiring knowledge.

2. According to the classification of the late Sahib al-Kifaya (RA), in the first category of beliefs, the argument of closure does not apply because acquiring knowledge is not necessary to the extent that hardship would arise, and one must rely on conjecture. Belief in the reality as it is, is sufficient, and the lawgiver does not re-

quire more than this. It was also suggested that belief is different from knowledge and represents a higher level, i.e., conviction. Therefore, even when knowledge is unattainable, one can still believe in the reality as it is. The belief in this context does not refer to belief in a general concept, as stated by Muhaqiq Isfahani (RA), but rather belief in specific unknown characteristics by means of a connecting title.

3. In the second category of beliefs, acquiring knowledge is necessary, and the primary reason for its proof is the prevention of possible harm, which, contrary to the view of the late Akhund Khurasani (RA), which renders the knowledge of God a non-independent (gheyri) obligation. In this category, if knowledge cannot be attained, acquiring conjecture, even a specific conjecture, is not required.

4. It was also stated that knowledge does not need to be logical but rather could be an ordinary, everyday form of knowledge. This is because for preventing potential punishment, assurance is enough, and we do not need absolute certainty. The source of knowledge does not need to be a rational proof; knowledge acquired through imitation is also sufficient.

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Authors' Contribution

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declared no conflict of interest.

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