

Interview with Dr. Ezzati

*A*boul Fazl Ezzati was born to a family of clergies in Qum, 1933.

Upon finishing elementary studies, he started Houza lessons along with modern educations. He graduated from Tehran university in Philosophy in Ph.D while continuing houza studies.

He began teaching at Tehran university. Due to his proficiency in English language, he was interested in teaching in abroad universities. In 1974, he benefited Harvard and Oxford sabag to become familiar with Western culture.

After being retired from Tehran university he stayed in England and started working in Oxford university in the Islamic studies. On the occasion of translation of al-Nihayah we had an interview with Dr.Ezzati, from which some sentences are as follows:

Q: please let us know about some of your activities regarding writing book, translation, ...?

A: actually I attend quite a few number of conferences holding focusing on Islamic issues such as “comparative study of martyrdom in Islam, Christianity, and other religions”. I prepared it in an article which was later published.

Regarding writing books I succeeded in writing several books. All in all I wrote 10 Persian books, 2 Arabic books, and 5 English books. It is note worthy that all of them have been translated to several languages ,for several times, like Turkish, Russian, Espanish, Housa, and Malazian.

Q: explain about your activities abroad?

A:I established a center for higher education “ Islamic college for advanced studies” about 10 years ago. I used to be an active member of it and now I am one of its board of directors . I am teaching Islamic law there.

Q: your last work which is definitely a very important work is translation of Al-Nihayah from Shaikh al-Tusi. Could you please talk about it?

A: Well, for teaching Islamic law I needed a special text of Islamic law, to use it as a reference. In fact I felt this necessity from 25 years ago, so I set a contract with an Islamic center and started translating. I translated around 400 pages; though it was not complete. You know, Al-Nihayah is the most credential books in the Islamic Law from 1000 years ago till now.

Then there was a big gap and then around 6 years ago I started translating again. Al-Nihayah had no table of contents, and I put one for it, and I wrote an introduction to it and then added a bibliography, which can be useful for ordinary people. About 150 years after Shaikh Mofid no one found the ability to write a new book or put a new theory on Islamic Law. But after

luckily after this book a revolution happened and Islamic law grows in a way of blooming and perfection. Now this book can be used as a source book for all researchers in this field.

The origins and recourse of morality and law are the same in the Islamic and shia law systems. There is no contrast between the Islamic schools. It can show religion along with the rules. Contrasts happen when we look for ethic out of religion and then compare it with Islamic legal system.

For example, in the Islamic legal system, testify of two women is just (righteous). This is compatible with the definition of justice. Other religious legal systems (those who obey the divine Books) should be ethical systems too. If they stay with each other they will have no contrast. Although the Islamic Determinists and Liberals have differences with each other, yet they are harmonious. In secular legal systems. The philosophical and ethical systems have contradictions.

In a secular system ,it has been tried to send out ethics from the system ,because they believe society can not be ruled just by ethic . And they have filled the gap with civil laws .

The human societies have passed 3 stages :

1-primary stage (personal dictatorship)

2-Ethical,cultural,and traditional stage;

3-The contemporary civil stage

In the third stage , every phenomenon should enjoy its own rule .culture and laws should move side by side Both of them should have civil codes. For example, in driving regulations ,ethics should go along with culture and law ;while the rules are dominant over ethic and culture . In the Islamic ethical chart it should be noted that the holy prophet ,never considered himself beyond the rules .He assumed himself submitted to it . One aspect ethics is jealousy, which has two faces , outer & inner faces . law can do nothing with inner face , but if its outer face exists, then it will be punished by law. The holy Quran say:” there is not a grain in the darkness of the earth nor any thing fresh or dry but is written in a clear record.”

But it is about legislation from the emerge of Islam till now. It has been tried to put the Islamic law along with morality ,so that they play a more effective role in the society .

Would you please tell your idea about the Islamic and the western societies ?

The western societies have a complicated view about Islam. The conflicts of the West & East originates before the appearance of Islam . After Islam , the Roman empire ,as the symbol of the west and the Eastern empire, Iran, were collapsed . For example, philosophy ,was belonged to Egypt & Greece ;but after the Islamic dominance, the Islamic philosophy was composed .The western culture was restricted to the Greece . The portion of Egypt in the old philosophy was neglected and it caused the crusade wars !

however to the people democracy has the first priority. since they choose their governments, so they would accept the view of their governments rather than the others .

Although medias & propagandas have important effects but since they have chosen their governments ,so they have a sense of participation in their decision .

what is your message to the Safineh readers?

The Muslims, specially youth ,should know that nobody can be more kind than a mother. The Westerners ,specially the missioners ,use different social ,spiritual ,and economic tricks to attract youth .

western culture is attractive for the youth. But they should know that the life is not just youth stage . youth isn't just lustful of either ! such an attraction is perishable . we read in the holy Quran: "The right word is stable but void is temporary and transient .

The youth should build ,their ideas &believes according to their culture &religions .humanity of human is more valuable than the appearances.

what is your idea about the religions dialogue ?

divine religions have a lot in common ;but at the same time their enemies are a lot . Christianity is not a religion .Its but a simple culture now. Anti-religions though to have resulted in neglecting of God opposition Him. The development of worldly life and its pleasures end .The Christianity is unable to answer the questions of the modern people ;so they are referring to other religions and schools of thought ,in order to experience them .