THE METHODOLOGY OF IBN ḤAZM IN COMPARATIVE RELIGION WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO HIS MASTER PIECE AL-FAṢL FĪ AL-MILAL WA AL-AHWĀ' WA AL-NIḤAL

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Abstract

This paper seeks to study the methodology of Ibn Ḥazm, a classical Andalusian Muslim theologian and jurist from the eleventh-century C.E. (Christ Era), in the field of comparative religion with special reference to his master piece entitled *al-Faṣl fī al-Milal wa al-Ahwā' wa al-Niḥal - the Decisive Word on Sects, Heterodoxies, and Denominations*. This study examines Ibn Ḥazm's original contribution to the development of the science of comparative religion and discusses his methodology in dealing with theological doctrines of Christianity. To achieve the main goal in this study, the descriptive method has been employed to present the right information about Ibn Ḥazm and his contribution to the field of comparative religion. On the other hand, the analytical method has been employed to analyze the approach of Ibn Ḥazm towards the study of Christianity and some of its major doctrines. The findings of this research will enrich the perspective of modern comparative religion with the insights of one of the most original Muslim treaties in theology and improve our understanding of contemporary Muslim approaches to the study and undertaking of comparative religious studies.

Key Terms: Comparative Religion, Methodology, Refutation, Theological Doctrines, Islam, Judaism, Christianity.

Introduction

Ibn Ḥazm, a versatile and prolific Muslim scholar of eleventh-century C.E. Muslim Spain, (al-ʿIrāqī, Abū Wāfiyyah, & Hilāl, eds., 1978, p. 7; Adang, 1996, p. 59) was a polymath whose encyclopedic knowledge reached across all major intellectual disciplines of the era – from logic, ethics, theology, literature, history, and law to medicine and the natural sciences. (al-ʿIrāqī, et al, eds., 1978, p. 5; Ibn Kathīr, 1997, pp. 73-74; Zott, 2004) Due to his vast knowledge, Ibn Ḥazm turned out to be a great poet, calligraphist, orator, debater, writer, (al-Ma'sumi, trans., 1996, p. 5) as well as the most accomplished scholar of all among the people of Spain, in the Islamic sciences, like philology, rhetoric, biography and history. (Iḥsān Abbās, rev., 1969, p.

326; al-Arna'uṭ & al-ʿArqaswisī, revs., 1992, p. 187) He was upholding the true knowledge based on the covenant that Allah (s.w.t.) took with believing learners – to communicate just knowledge to people and not to hide it from them, and disputing with those who disagree with his stand. (al-Ḥamawī, 1999, p. 248)

Ibn Ḥazm's methodology in acquiring knowledge was very different in nature compared to his former Muslim scholars. He established a methodology dominated by disputes and refutations. Therefore, many Muslim Jurists of his time could not stand his approach as well as the rulers and governors were avoiding him. (Abū Zahrah, 1998, p. 7)

He was a master scholar of the *Qur'ān* and *Ḥadīth* as well as an outstanding figure of *al-Ẓāhirī* school of thought. (Ibn Khallikān, 1969, p. 325) He had a vast knowledge about theological doctrines and scriptures of both, Christianity and Judaism. (al-Ma'sumi, trans., 1996, pp. 4-7; Zott, 2004) Credited with the composition of an estimated 400 literary and scholarly works, (Ibn Khallikān, 1969, p. 326; Ibn Kathīr, 1997, p. 73) Ibn Ḥazm's *Kitāb al-Faṣl fī al-Milal wa al-Ahwā' wa al-Niḥal* continues to be considered a work of monumental significance in the science of comparative religion, which presents a systematical study of the theological doctrines of the three revealed religions, Islam, Judaism and Christianity, as perceived by the Muslim, Jewish and Christian denominates at his time.

Firstly, this paper has studied the chronicle of Ibn Ḥazm looking at his name and family lineage, his dates of birth and death, his education, his teachers, his school of thought, and his major works. *Secondly*, the study has discussed the methodology of Ibn Ḥazm, a great Muslim scholar of his time, in comparative religion referring to his *Kitāb al-Faṣl fī al-Milal wa al-Ahwā' wa al-Niḥal*. The focus of the discussion has

been on the section related to the religion of Christianity, its major doctrines as well as the Christian denominations that existed during Ibn Ḥazm's time.

Ibn Ḥazm's Chronicle

Many Muslim and non-Muslim scholars have acknowledged the great contribution rendered by Ibn Ḥazm to the development of different fields of knowledge, especially the science of comparative religion. To know who this great scholar was and what he did, it is of great significance to examine his chronicle.

His Name and Family Lineage: Ibn Ḥazm's name is Abū Muḥammad ʿAlī bin Aḥmad bin Saʿid bin Ḥazm (Naṣr & ʿUmayrah, revs., 1985, p. 3; al-ʿAsqalānī, 1971, p. 189) bin Ghālib bin Ṣāliḥ bin Khalaf bin Maʿad bin Sufyān bin Yazīd. (Ibn Kathīr, 1997, p. 73) His surname is Abū Muḥammad, but he is generally known as Ibn Ḥazm al-Zāhirī or al-Andalusī. (Ibn Khallikān, 1969, p. 325; Chejne, 1982, p. 20) According to the opinion of some biographers, Ibn Ḥazm comes from a family of Persian in origin that embraced Islam at the early time of *al-Futuḥāt* (the spread of Islam) to the Persian people. However, it has been claimed by other biographers that the family of Ibn Ḥazm was of Christian Spaniard in origin, where his grandfather embraced Islam lately. Also, there has been a doubt in his family linage and origin by some biographers. (Ḥasān, n.d., p. 32) The first opinion sounds very authentic as it has been supported by Ibn Ḥazm himself, who have said that his family linage was of Persian origin. Yazīd al-Fārisī, his great-great-grandfather, accepted Islam during the reign of ʿUmar, becoming a *mawlā* (client) of Yazīd Ibn Abī Sufyān. His grandfather, Khalaf, came to *al-Andalus* during the reign of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Dākhil, the first Umayyad ruler of Muslim Spain. (Ibn Kathīr, 1997, p. 73; Chejne, 1982, p. 20; Aasi, 1999, p. 43)

His Birth and Death: He was born in 384H/994CE in Cordoba, the capital of the Umayyad Caliphate in Spain. (Ibn Khallikān, 1969, p. 325; Adang, 1996, p. 60) Ibn Ḥazm has recorded the date of his birth by himself, which took place after the morning prayer and before sunrise in the last day of the month of Ramadan of the year 384 H. / 7, 994 CE. (Ibn Kathīr, 1997, p. 73) He died on the twenty-eight of the month of *Shaʿban* in the year 456H/August 15, 1064CE. (ʿAbās, revs., 1987, p. 252; Chejne, 1982, p. 20)

His Education: Ibn Ḥazm's education was entrusted to pious men and women. He was taught reading, writing, and reciting the *Qur'ān* and poetry by the ladies of the harem. (Abū Zahrah, 1998, pp. 29-31) In addition, he studied *Ḥadīth*, Arabic grammar and philology, poetry, literature, and the *Kalām* (al-Kalām wa al-Jadāl). (al-ʿIrāqī, et. al., eds., 1978, p. 5; Naṣr & ʿUmayrah, revs., 1985, pp. 3-5) It has been narrated that Ibn Ḥazm mastered *first* literature, hearsays, and poetry as well as logic. (al-Arna'uṭ & al-ʿArqaswisī, revs., 1992, p. 186)

His Teachers: The teachers who taught Ibn Ḥazm were: Abū Muḥammad al-Rahūnī ʿAbdullāh Ibn Yusūf Ibn Nami, Masʿūd Ibn Sulaymān Ibn Muflit, Abū al-Khayār (in Fiqh and introduced him to the doctrine of Zāhīri), Abū al-Qāsim ʿAbdu Raḥmān Ibn Abī Yazīd al-Miṣrī, Abū ʿAmr Aḥmad Ibn Muḥammad al-Jasūr, Muḥammad Ibn al-Ḥasan al-Madhḥajī al-Qurṭubī, ʿAlī ʿAbdullāh al-Azadī, Abū Bakr Muḥammad Ibn Isḥāq al-Hamadhānī (in Ḥadīth), etc. (Naṣr & ʿUmayrah, revs., 1985, pp. 7-8)

His School of Thought: As far as Ibn Ḥazm's school of thought (Madhhabuhu) is concerned, at the beginning he was a follower of the *Mālikī* School, then he was for sometimes attracted to the *Shafiʿīte* School, but latter on, he was initiated into the *Zāhīrite* School by Ibn Muflit between 1027 and 1034. (Abū Zahrah, 1998, pp. 36-38)

The reason why Ibn Ḥazm did not follow the *Mālikī* and the *Shafiʿī* schools of thought, instead he embraced the *Zāhirī* school of thought, because, while observing different classes of the Andalusian society, he saw many scandals taking place in the political arena in the name of *Sharīʿah* (Islamic Law). Therefore, the atrocities, corruptions, and malaises, according to Ibn Ḥazm, were taking place in the absence of *Sharīʿah*, and in the transgression of its explicit proofs comprehend in the name of *al-Qiyās* (Analogy), *al-Istiḥsān* (application of discretion in legal matters) and *al-Taʿlīl* (justification). *Al-Zāhirī* school of thought was chosen by Ibn Ḥazm as it insists on *al-Ijtihād* (legal judgment) and forbids playing with the texts, and determines its goal through the nearest way. (ʿUways, 1988, p. 89)

Essentially, *Zāhīrism* advocated that each Muslim rely solely on the Holy *Qur'ān* and traditions and derive legal decisions independently of any established school of law. The school had been established by Abū Sulaymān Dāūd Ibn ʿAlī Ibn Khalaf (883) in Iraq. Dāūd was a student of *Shāfiʿī*, who disagreed with him in for giving a great role to analogical reasoning (Qiyās) and the consensus (Ijmaʿ). Therefore, he advocated a strict adherence to the literal meaning (Zāhīr) of the holy texts (Holy *Qur'ān* and the Traditions). As developed by Ibn Ḥazm, Zāhīrism offered the tools necessary to ascertain the truth, which other systems lacked. Its aim is to understand the Holy texts on the basis of Arabic grammar (al-Naḥwi al-ʿArabī), lexicography (al-Maʿājim), and linguistic intuition (Hadas). (Chejne, 1982, pp. 43-46)

It is understood from the writings of *Ibn Ḥazm* that *Zāhīrism or Zāhīriyyah* school of thought has been presented by him as an attempt to construct a single discourse community for all Muslims in order to differentiate them from other communities. Besides, the *Zāhīriyyah* method enabled him to strengthen his polemic

against the Jewish and Christian communities and their religious claims as it has been made very clear in his *Kitāb al-Faṣl*.

His Major Works: According to Saʿid al-Andalusī, Ibn Ḥazm has produced some 400 hundred works, which are equal to 80.000 pages. Some of his significant works are: *Ibtāl al-Qiyās wa al-Raʾy wa al-Istisḥān wa al-Taqlīd, Ṭawq al-Ḥamamah, al-Iḥkām lil Uṣūl al-Aḥkām, al-Istiqṣā, Asmāʾullāh al-Ḥusnā, al-Muhalla, al-Uṣūl wal Furūʿ, al-Faṣl fī al-Milal wa al-Ahwāʾ wa al-Niḥal,* etc. (Naṣr & ʿUmayrah, revs., 1985, pp. 9-12)

Ibn Ḥazm wrote his works in an environment faced by political and social instability, which caused the happening of many events moved swiftly and had grave repercussions for the future of all *al-Andalus* and in turn, the Banū Ḥazm. When the civil war broke out, he and his family left the political involvement and move to the west of Cordova. (Adang, 1996, p. 61)

In Cordova, eternal war between al-Mahdī and al-Mustaʿin was taking place. In that war al-Mahdi was killed and replaced by al-Hisham. But, al-Mustaʿin with the help of Berbers assassinated al-Hisham, then, *al-Andalus* was divided into several small states that were ruled by them. Ibn Ḥazm joined the army of Umayad prince in order to bring him to power, but they lost, and therefore, he was put to jail twice. (al-Maʾsumi, trans., 1996, p. 3.) When he got out from the jail he left the political career and devoted himself to learning. He decided to settle on the family estate at Manta Lisham, where he spent his last few years living in peaceful surroundings. The society of *al-Andalus* was a melting pot of different cultures, races and religions. *Al-Andalus* was a prosperous country and therefore, the knowledge and study was widespread among the people regardless of their race. There were many big libraries full of books of different sciences. (Chejne, 1982, pp. 22-35)

Ibn Ḥazm's Kitāb al-Faṣl fī al-Milal wa al-Ahwā' wa al-Niḥal:

Ibn Ḥazm's work – *al-Faṣl fī al-Milal wa al-Ahwā' wa al-Niḥal - the Decisive Word on Sects, Heterodoxies, and Denominations* – continues to be considered a work of monumental significance in the science of comparative religion. Indeed, it is a great work dealing with religious-historical issues that has not been produced similar to it in the world thought before the time of Ibn Ḥazm. He has discussed in his *Kitāb al-Faṣl* issues pertaining to various Muslim sects and the religious doctrines of both Judaism and Christianity, in a very systematical manner. It is very obvious that Ibn Ḥazm has written his book in a polemical, argumentative form. He analyzes religious data according to the rules of logic and dialectics, and engages himself in dialogue and debate with the leading scholars of other religious traditions, and especially Judaism and Christianity, at his time.

It is observed while reading Ibn Ḥazm's *Kitāb al-Faṣl* that his audience to whom he addresses his message is made up of the adherents of three major religions, Islam, Judaism, and Christianity. However, Jews and Christians are considered as his major audience related to other religious groups. It is for the simple reason that Jews and Christians were his main target with whom he was debating and quarreling in regard to religious matters, like the authenticity of the revealed scriptures, the concept of trinity, incarnation, and so on.

The main reason for the writing of *Kitāb al-Faṣl*, as mentioned by Ibn Ḥazm at the beginning of his book, in volume one, was the lack of objectivity, fairness, and comprehensiveness that he found in the previous works of Muslim scholars. (Naṣr & 'Umayrah, revs., 1985, pp. 35-36) Moreover, there is no clear evidence about the time when Ibn Ḥazm began to write his *Kitāb al-Faṣl*, a he himself does not mention that in his book. Indeed, it is of a great importance to be acknowledged by the researcher

that in this research paper, he will refer to Ibn Ḥazm's *Kitāb al-Faṣl fī al-Milal wa al-Ahwā' wa al-Niḥal*, edited and revised by Dr. Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Naṣr and Dr. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ʿUmayrah. This version of *al-Kitāb* has been published in Beirut, *Dār al-Jīl*, 1405H/1985CE, and consists of five volumes. However, the researcher will employ in this study volume one that consists of 384 pages, and especially the section related to Christian theology perceived by its main denominations that existed during Ibn Ḥazm's time.

Ibn Ḥazm's Methodology in Comparative Religion

The methodology employed to the science of comparative religion in the writings of Western scholars of comparative religion, has been formulated differently compared to the writings of Muslim scholars. The Western legacy of comparative religion has emerged as a result of scientific analyses of religion, like the *Philosophy of Religion*, (Hick, 1990) the *Sociology of Religion*, (Fields, trans., 1995) the *Psychology of Religion*, (Strachey, trans., 1961), and so on. All Western methodologies have study religion from an outside point of view and not within it, and therefore, they do not give the right picture of religious norms and values as presented by the adherents of each religion.

Western methodologies and approaches have deprived religion of its real sense of spirituality and sacredness. In this sense, they do not intend to please neither the adherents of religions nor the scholars of comparative religion. (Kamaruzaman, 2003, p. 4) Rather, they have attempted to give a different shape and form to religion as such. This has created many problems for the real intellectuals of the science of comparative religion among Muslims and others. Thus, the very aim of the science of

comparative religion, which is to develop mutual understanding among the followers of world religions and not enmity or hostility, has been abused.

The method employed by the Muslim scholars to the study of religion has a different tune. From the time of Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) up to the time of Ibn Ḥazm, many Muslim scholars were engaged in dialogue with followers of other religions in general, and the adherents of Judaism and Christianity in particular. They have written many books on the field of comparative religion. Although Muslim scholars had shown through their works their best in the field of comparative religion, yet Ibn Ḥazm was unsatisfied with their methodology. According to him, the works presented by Muslims theologians before him, have lack of objectivity, fairness, and comprehensiveness. Therefore, he decided to produce a magnum opus in the field of comparative religion, where objectivity, fairness and comprehensiveness were clearly presented. (Naṣr & ʿUmayrah, revs., 1985, pp. 35-36)

The method employed by Ibn Ḥazm in his *Kitāb al-Faṣl* to study Muslim sects, Judaism and Christianity is based on disputes, polemics, and arguments regarding religious matters, like the misrepresentation of the Truth by the Muslim sects, and its alteration by the Jews and the Christians. He analyzes religious data according to the rules of logic and dialectics, and engages himself in dialogue and debate with the leading scholars of other religious traditions at his time. It is observed while reading Ibn Ḥazm's book that his non-Muslim audience to whom he addresses his message is made up of the adherents of Christianity and Judaism.

Indeed, the Jews and the Christians were considered his main target with whom he was debating and quarreling in regard to religious matters. In his book Ibn Ḥazm goes into a deep analysis of the scriptures of the religions, looking for faulty historical data. He refutes the validity of religious scriptures and doctrines of other religions

especially Judaism and Christianity by proving the unreliability of their scriptures. (Kamaruzaman, 2003, p. 23)

Ibn Ḥazm's Critique on Christian Theology and its Major Doctrines

Ibn Ḥazm, while studying Christian theology and its major doctrines gives a brief introduction about the Christian Sects. He states that Christians are of many sects, and among them are the following: *First*, *Aṣḥāb Arius* [the followers of Arius or the Arianism, a Christian heresy proposed in the 4th century C.E. by the Alexandrian presbyter Arius] (Encyclopedia Britannica Online, 2014 'Arianism'), who believed in the uniqueness of God, and held that Jesus ['Isā (a.s.)] was a human servant and creature and Word of God through whom God created the heavens and the earth. (Naṣr & ʿUmayrah, 1985, p. 109) However, the question may arise whether the Arians can be called as true believers or not? Since they do believe in the Absolute Unity of God – *Tawḥīd of* Allah (s.w.t.) and do not associate any other creature with Him, Allah (s.w.t.) they can be considered as believers, or monotheists. But, they do not bear witnesses to the last Prophet, Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) and his Message.

Second, *Aṣḥāb Bawlis al-Shamsātī* (the followers of Paul or the Paulinists), who believed in the pure unity of God, in pure and exact monotheism, and held that 'Isā was a human servant of God and His messenger. God created him from the womb of his mother Mary without the participation of any male, and he was human and there was no divinity in him. Paul used to say: "I do not know what are the 'Word' and the 'Holy Spirit'?" (Naṣr & ʿUmayrah, 1985, p. 110)

It is viewed that if the Paulinists of the time of Ibn Ḥazm were following Paul's true beliefs and teachings, then, there should not be Christianity, but just a Jewish sect. However, in the Christian history, it is very obvious that Paul has been

frequently called the real founder of Christianity, because his views came to shape and dominate subsequent Christian thinking. His unique philosophy is particularly apparent in his writings collected in the New Testament. He came out with new terms such as "Original Sin," "Redemption," "Logos," etc. In his writings, he states: "The death of Jesus Christ, then, was the payment or atonement that *redeemed* humanity, or won for it freedom and eternal life" (Romans 5: 17-19), and "For the word (Logos) of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God" (I Corinthians 1:18), and "But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the Wisdom of God" (I Corinthians 1:24). Through Paul's statements, we observe that there is a clear contradiction between the statement of Ibn Ḥazm regarding the saying of Paul and the true story. Unless the Paul mentioned by Ibn Ḥazm in *Kitāb al-Faṣl* is a different Paul from the Paul who created Christianity, its theology and doctrines that have been followed by the Christian Church in general and the Orthodox Church and the Catholic Church in particular, since the Council of Niece, 325C.E., when Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire until today, the twenty first century.

Third, followers of **Aṣḥāb Maqdūniyūs** [the followers of Maqedonius or the Macedonians – a Christian heresy that arose after the death of Maqedonius, a Semi-Arian who was twice bishop of Constantinople, during the 4th century C.E.], (Encyclopedia Britannica Online, 2014 'Macedonianism') who believed in the absolute unity of God, and held that Jesus was a human being, a created servant and a Prophet of God like the other Prophets (peace be upon all of them). They also held that Jesus was the "Holy Spirit," and the "Word of God," which are both created by God. Maqedonius was influenced by the views of Arius, and therefore, his followers, Macedonians can be called as true followers of Jesus. (Naṣr & ʿUmayrah, 1985, p.

110) However, there will not be any difference in their beliefs as far as they do not bear witnesses in the Prophethood of Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) and his Message.

Finally, the followers of **al-Barbarāniyyah** [the Collyridians – a Christian sect composed mainly of women that developed during the 4th century C.E.. They were originally from Thrace (Greece), and their central ritual involved the offering up of small cakes or small loaves, which in Greek denotes *collyris*], (Carroll, Michael P, 1986, p. 43) who believe that both, Jesus and his mother are deities other than God. According to Ibn Ḥazm, this group does not exist anymore. (Naṣr & ‘Umayrah, 1985, p. 110) They have committed blasphemy when they associate Jesus and his mother with God, or make them equal to God. Therefore, they will be responsible for that in the Day of Judgment.

As far as the Christian sects and orthodoxies of his time are concerned, Ibn Ḥazm mentions three main sects, which are as follow: *First*, **al-Malkāniyah** [the Melkites - the Christians sect that generally consisted of Greek colonists and the Arabicized population of Egypt and Syria. They accepted the ruling of the Council of Chalcedon (451C.E.) affirming two natures of Christ: Divine and Human.] (Encyclopeadia Britannica Online, 2014, ‘Melchite’) who believe that God means three things: **the Father, the Son,** and **the Holy Spirit.** All of them are eternal. Jesus is truly God and truly man. Mary gave birth to both, the divine and human, and both are one and the same thing, the Son of God. (Naṣr & ‘Umayrah, 1985, pp. 110-111) In response to their saying and belief Allah (s.w.t.) has addressed in the Holy Qur’ān: They do blaspheme who - لَّقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُواْ إِنَّ اللّهَ ثَالِثُ ثَلاَثَةٍ وَمَا مِنْ إِلَـهٍ إِلاَّ إِلَـــــهٌ وَاحِـدٌ (المائــدة: **73**) say: Allah is one of three in a Trinity: for there is no god except One God.” (Abdullah Yusuf, transl., 1989, al-Māidah: 73).

Second, **al-Nasṭūriyyah** [the Nestorians, a Christina sect that was developed during the 4th century in Asia Minor and Syria out of the condemnation of and his teachings Nestorius about the nature and person of Christ, by the Councils of Ephesus (431C.E.) and Chalcedon (451C.E.).] (Encyclopeadia Britannica Online, 2014, 'Nestorian') who have the same belief exactly like the previous group, but they insist that Mary did not give birth to the divine or deity. She just bore only a man. They maintain that God did not give birth to man; rather, He gave birth to divine. (Naṣr & ʿUmayrah, 1985, p. 111) Here it is very clear that this contradicts its own faith. Because, their claims do not complement each other; rather, they do contradict each other. This is a great blasphemy done towards both, God and His Prophet (p.b.u.h.).

Third, **al-Yaʿqūbiyyah** [the Jacobites – it is a Christin sect that has been established in the sixth century C.E. based on the thoughts of the Syrian Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch, Jacob Baradaeus (578C.E.) the bishop of Edessa.] (Bendict C.T., 2007, p. 119) who believe that Jesus is God, and God himself died, crucified and killed, and the whole universe remained for three days without Provider and Maintainer. Then, God rose up and returned to His place, and became originated/eternal. It was God who was conceived and carried in Mary's womb. (Naṣr & ʿUmayrah, 1985, p. 111)

In regard to the above mentioned belief of this group, the question arises who maintained the world for these three days, when God was crucified and killed? One may wonder how God, Who created the whole universe, is being carried in the womb of a human being. Allah (s.w.t.) has mentioned in the Holy *Qu'rān* that: " لَّقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّــذِينَ (المائــدة: **17**) قَالُواْ إِنَّ اللّهَ هُوَ الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ... - In blasphemy indeed are those that say that Allah (s.w.t.) is Christ the son of Mary." (Abdullah Yusuf, transl., 1989, al-Māidah: 17).

The Christian doctrine of **Trinity** has been elaborated by Ibn Ḥazm through scriptural and rational arguments based on the belief of the Melkites. He says in his own words: "They (Melkites) hold that by God they mean three things: **the Father, the Son** and **the Holy Spirit**. All three are one and the same thing and each of them is equally the other." (Naṣr & 'Umayrah, 1985, p. 112)

According to Ibn Ḥazm's thinking all this is a confusion since if the three are one and the same, then what sense is there in calling the first as "the Father," the second "the Son" and the third "the Holy Spirit." He goes further, by saying that even the New Testament contradicts this understanding, when Jesus said: "*Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God*" (Luke 22:69), and "*But of that day and hour knoweth no* man*, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only*." (Matthew 24:36). Thus, in these texts it is very obvious that the "Son" is not the same as the "Father." Also, he is less than the "Father" in knowledge and the rank. (Naṣr & 'Umayrah, 1985, p. 112)

The analogy used by Ibn Ḥazm in the above argument toward Melkites' perception of **Trinity**, is very true and right. Even logic does not accept this understanding, because you have to submit your will to the will of one God and not three. Moreover, one is not the same as the **three**.

Furthermore, Ibn Ḥazm mentions an argument "*Some maintain that we know by necessity that God is the Perfect. The number three is the most perfect number as it includes in it both odd and even. Hence God is three and should be called as three rather than one.*" Ibn Ḥazm argues that this argument contradicts their own belief that God as **Trinity** is not a Triune God; rather, He is both **One** and **Three** at the same time. If they call God as three in terms of number **Three** that includes one in it as an odd and a part, then, one as a part of the three cannot be same as three, because a part

of the whole cannot be same as whole, and this is impossible. (Naṣr & ʿUmayrah, 1985, p. 112) Ibn Ḥazm's rational argument is very true and just, because their system of belief "Trinity" is based on false foundations. Even their perception of **Trinity** contradicts the claims of their own Gospels.

To make things clear, in different societies, there are many groups of people that believe in some particular numbers and take them as perfect numbers or sign for good fortune. So, Christians believe that number three is their perfect number, and therefore, they consider it as an equal number with number one. Since, God is perfect and number three is perfect so, for them God is regarded as equivalent to number three instead of one. Although, there is a big difference between number one and number three, yet Christians do consider them the same as far as the concept of trinity is concerned. There are others who do believe in fortune number such as Chinese people who believe that number four brings them bad fortune, or luck.

Also, he argues that to describe God in a number implies that God belongs to the category of things numbered because there is no number without things numbered. If God is one or three as a number than this entails that He is also limited and originated as everything numbered is limited and originated. Therefore, this sort of argument makes God originated and composed. (Naṣr & ʿUmayrah, 1985, pp. 114-115) However, as far as the human rationale is concerned, this is true, because they do not look at the things as they are in reality. Moreover, in Islam, the term *al-Wāḥid* used for God does not mean the number one; rather, it means a Unique and Self-Subsistent Reality.

The Christian Doctrine of **Incarnation** has been discussed by Ibn Ḥazm's according to the beliefs of Christian sects of his time. Ibn Ḥazm says: "*They [the Christian sects] maintain that the Divine is united with the human in such a way that*

the two became one thing." (Naṣr & ʿUmayrah, 1985, p. 116) *Firstly*, the **Jacobites** hold that this unity of the Divine and the human is like *mixing wine with water and becoming one thing*. (Naṣr & ʿUmayrah, 1985, p. 117) However, if this is the case, someone may ask; if the Divine became man then Christ becomes human because the Divine and man when mixed together became one thing, that is Christ and human. Thus, there does not remain any divinity in Christ. Same thing goes if both divine and man united became divine then there is no humanity in the Christ.

Secondly, the **Nestorians** hold this unity like *the unity of oil and water each maintaining its own nature*. (Naṣr & ʿUmayrah, 1985, p. 117) This statement reveals that in Jesus man remained man and the divine remained divine. In this case, every human being remains in himself divine and human. *Thirdly*, the **Melkites** use *the analogy of the sun light in the house, and fire and a fiery iron bar*. So, according to their analogy, the Divine becomes an accident and human its substance. (Naṣr & ʿUmayrah, 1985, p. 117) This is a clear corruption of the concept of God (Who is above everything) and man (who is just a representative of God on earth).

Ibn Ḥazm concludes that what they (the Christian sects of his time) believe belongs to the category of the impossible because the Eternal does not change into the nature of the human, the originated, nor can the originated change into deity, which is the Eternal. This is impossible in itself, and such claims cannot be found in the books of Prophets. (Naṣr & ʿUmayrah, 1985, p. 118) Indeed, Ibn Ḥazm's critique towards their beliefs is reasonable, because it is impossible for a human being to become a deity or God, or to be equal to God.

Ibn Ḥazm emphasizes on the issue related to the doctrine of "Logos" by saying that they also add to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit a fourth one, which is named "the Word – Logos". This Logos is united with man who was conceived in the

womb of Mary. (Naṣr & ʿUmayrah, 1985, p. 118) If they believe that this "Word" is a fourth one, then they believe in Quaternity; rather than in Trinity. But, if they hold that this 'Word' is one of the three, then they should come up with evidence for that. One may ask them: is this "Word – Logos" "the Father" or "the Son" or "the Holy Spirit"? Or is it something else?

If they hold that this "Word - Logos' is 'the Son' who was also conceived in the womb of Mary, then they deny what is mentioned in their texts "*At the beginning there was the 'Word', and this 'Word' was in God, and God was the 'Word'.*"(John 1:14). (Naṣr & ʿUmayrah, 1985, p. 119) This is true, because "Word" cannot be at the same time "Son" (according to their claims, or beliefs) and "God" (according to their Gospels). However, if this is the case then, on which source do we have to be based in order to prove the exact relation of "Word" with "God", or "the Son."

If they hold that "Word" is "the Father" who also was conceived in the womb of Mary, then they deny the formula of their creed, where it is clearly admitted that it was "the Son" who was conceived in the womb of Mary. But, if they maintain that "Word" is both "the Father" and "the Son," they deny their saying that "the Son" will be seated on the right side of his "the Father," and only "the Father" knows the time of Judgment Day, and "the Son" does not know it. (Naṣr & ʿUmayrah, 1985, p. 119)

Ibn Ḥazm's argument toward their claims about the relationship of "Word" with "Father" and "Son" is true. However, if "the Word" is both "the Father" and "the Son," then, "the Son' will be inside the 'the Father." This will be like the baby who is in the womb of his mother. It will, thus, be impossible for the baby to seat on the right side of his mother when he is in her womb. Indeed, this action is impossible, and therefore, same thing goes with "the Son - Jesus Christ".

Ibn Ḥazm asks what do they mean by "*Iltaḥamah*" (became flesh)? If they believe that "the Word" became a human then, this goes against the belief of the Nestorians and Melkites. (Naṣr & ʿUmayrah, 1985, p. 119) This is true, because Melkites and Nestorians believe that when two substances are mixed they still can be differentiated, or recognized according to their origin. Therefore, it is impossible for them to believe that "the Word" became a human.

Conclusion

This paper has reached at the conclusion that Ibn Ḥazm's *Kitāb al-Faṣl* continues to be a monumental contribution to the science of comparative religion. The methodology employed by Ibn Ḥazm in his *Kitāb al-Faṣl* to the study of Christian theology and doctrines, it is of a disputative nature. Also, his methodology is very remarkable, because it gives a vast knowledge about the doctrines and claims of the Christian sects at his time. Ibn Ḥazm responded to the claims of the Christian sects of his time regarding the *Christian Theology* of **Trinity**, **Incarnation**, and **Logos**, by employing genuine rational and textual arguments. Even though, these doctrines cannot be sustained on the basis of rational reasoning. It is apparent from his discussion that Christians' claims and doctrines toward the understanding of God as three in one and one in three and "the Son" and "the Holy Spirit" as well as "Logos" cannot be found in any place in their Gospels. This is just a false claim from the church personalities.

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