



# A Comparative Study of the Ideas and Thoughts of Ibn Miskawayh Razi and Khajeh Nizamolmolk Tusi on the Relationship of Ethics and Politics

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**Abstract:** *The relationship between ethics and politics is one of the most important and at the same time subtlest issues in the domain of political philosophy. Ibn Miskawayh Razi and Khajeh Nizamolmolk Tusi are known with two different approaches (the former is known in theoretical politics while the latter is known in political practice). This essay seeks to show their points of difference and commonalities on the relationship of ethics and politics with regard to their different approaches. Miskawayh is an advocate of a closer relationship between ethics and politics and thus ethical politics based on his guidance based politics. Accordingly, his views are more philosophical and religious and it is better to be called Islamic Wisdom approach. A review of the effects and conclusions of the research in the second part of the thesis has more clarified our mind regarding this conclusion. Khajeh Nizamolmolk, on the other hand, insists on power based politics and based on this notion of politics he prioritizes politics over ethics and prefers to pursue political ethics although we can find also ethical orations in his works. However, these ethical orations only have thematic value and are of instrumental bent. They have indeed been intended to solve the practical issue of the community and no moral intention underlies it. Miskawayh's thought has pioneered and theorized the notion of civil ethics and Khajeh's political heritage should be sought for in his pieces of advice regarding the necessity of justice and social order.*

**Key Words:** *Politics, Ethics, Ibn Miskawayh Razi, Khajeh Nizamolmolk*

## INTRODUCTION

To this day, numerous efforts have been made for systematization of the ethical issues and several schools have emerged within Islamic moral system and they continue to emerge as before. This essay deals with the differences of these schools via discussing the politico-moral ideas of Abu Ali Miskawayh and Khajeh Nizamolmolk Tusi. In doing so, we hope to contribute to further understanding of the relationship between politics and ethics. Unfortunately, some writers pursued the development of philosophy and sciences after ancient Greece and Rome in Christian era and then in Modern times and due to their scientific unfairness and bigotry, turned a blind eye to the Islamic era – a significant and influential historical era in which various experimental and rational branches of knowledge and science grew up in Islamic lands – as well as the role of Iranian scholars. One should not forget that the path that is embarked upon by the contemporary Muslim thinkers for the production of new ideas and thought have to be associated with the experiences of the past Islamic thinks if they seek to take efficient steps concerning the vital issues of political philosophy such as the relationship between ethics and politics and the like. When we turn back and review the relationship of

ethics and politics in Greek city-states we see that the chief goal and philosophy of these city-states had been social welfare for their citizens. This was the reason why politics did not have any other meaning than setting the ground for the spread of righteousness and sublimity among the people and all aspects of citizens' lives including religion, morality, politics, and social life were interdependent. Ethics was considered an integral part of the politics. In the middle ages the political organization of the government was different from the contemporary form of state; because the church prevailed over all aspects of people's social and individual life. Even the kings and emperors were subordinated to the religious authority of the church. One's affiliation to the church and Christianity was the criterion of his/her citizenship status and its respective rights and obligations. Thus, politics was inseparable from religion till the end of the medieval times. Then one can feasibly say that in traditional notion of the relationship between ethics and politics, the latter is conceived as an ancillary of the former and in general politics is thought to be a vital stage in the evolutionary course of human life that leads him to fruition. But with the emergence of new ideas in the fields of politics and government and the rise of modernity and renaissance particularly upon the birth of theory of "social contract", politics and ethics were considered two separate spheres. Machiavelli propounded a new dimension of political ethics. Max Weber proposed the ethics of duty and the ethics of belief. Nietzsche expanded the totalitarian ethics. According to Nietzsche, "good" refers to whatever that increases human power, such as human desire for power and the power itself. He believes that the authority is for the one who overcomes and power to will is the head source of all virtues. Generally speaking, moral idealism versus realism has sought to prepare the ground for the domination of ethical values and elements in politics. Idealism has remained a mere intellectual school while realism has been the dominant school in practical politics. Dominant school itself is divided into three theories of separation of ethics and politics, totalitarian ethics and dualist ethics. Islamic political thought has developed a meaningful theory regarding ethics and politics that combines the two idealist and realist approaches. The pioneers of thinking and ethics from Confucius to Buddha and from Zoroaster to Plato, Aristotle and contemporary thinkers have discussed ethics and its relation with politics in one way or another but it seems that in no other historical era the discussion concerning ethics and its relation with politics has had its current significance. (Qayyum Erfani, 2009, 2)

On the other hand, the relationship of ethics and politics has numerous practical consequences the most significant of which are the fidelity or infidelity of states and authorities to moral values and virtues. It is needless to say that the policies that are adopted by the statesmen can lead the society either to prosperity or to cultural breakdown. But if the state seeks to act ethically and adopt morally informed policies, it should give the priority to the ethical principles over the national and governmental issues and interests.

## 1- Commonalities

### 1-1- Executive Experience in Government

Ibn Miskawayh and Khajeh Nizamolmolk were both of executive experience and had close relations with the court. In his discussions of the events of 340 of Hijra (951 A.D) in *Tajarib al-Umam*, Ibn Miskawayh Razi reports on his continuous and numerous meetings with Abu Muhammad Mahlabi the Minister of Al-e Booyeh court. He also speaks of his position as a courtier in 341 of Hijra (952 A.D). (Miskawayh ,1997, 163) One can surely claim that at least 32 years of Miskawayh's lifetime passed as a politician.

On the other hand, Khajeh Nizamolmolk also had a long executive experience as a statesman. He served the government in ministerial affairs and was an adviser to Ghaznawi commanders in various points of Khurasan province. With the invasion of Seljuk Turkmans to Khurasan and the collapse of Ghaznawis Khajeh preferred to cooperate with Seljuks. Alp Arslan appointed Khajeh as the Court Minister and Khajeh held this position until the reign of Malekshah of Seljuk. During his thirty years of ministry, he proved his competence in management of government affairs and the crackdown of oppositions of Seljuks and succeeded to strengthen the foundations of Seljuks' power. Khajeh Nizamolmolk has been considered the most famous Iranian minister after Islam. The foundation of Nezamiyeh of Baghdad is regarded as one of his important

contributions. Nezamiyeh of Baghdad was the biggest and most significant university of Islamic sciences after Al-Azhar University of Egypt. It is necessary to be noted that *Javidan-e Kherad* [Sophia Perennia] the immortal work of Miskawayh on practical politics and *Syosatnameh* [Book of Politics] a valuable work by Khajeh Nizamolmolk Tusi again on practical politics both contain very thoughtful common advises in this regard.

### **1-2- Admiration for Iranian Thought and Wisdom**

Both thinkers show an equally remarkable admiration for Iranian past masters and thinkers. Miskawayh reveals this admiration in *Javidan-e Kherad* by his appreciation of Iranian wisdom while Khajeh Nizamolmolk seeks to promote Iranian intellectual heritage by reviving the ideas of Iranshahri in *Syosatnameh*.

## **2- Differences**

### **2-1- Definition of Politics**

Before turning to the relationship of ethics and politics, we should give our definition of politics. According to Miskawayh, man is the “microcosm” and s/he requires society to satisfy his mental and physical needs and fulfil his sense of perfectionism and seek to reach rational and moral virtues. Human beings are by their nature social entities and this is why Islam insists on religious communities so as to increase the Muslims’ friendship. Miskawayh emphasizes the harmony of mental and physical aspects of human social life. Accordingly, like Farabi, Miskawayh also draws sharp lines between theoretical and practical wisdoms. Thus conceived, religious politics refers to the management of society and individuals in their worldly and otherworldly affairs. (Miskawayh,1996, 105)

Miskawayh has brought the concept of virtue in the field of politics and accordingly divided this field into two utopian and nonutopian sections. Thus, Miskawayh presents two types of power-centered and guidance-centered politics and finally chooses the latter.

On the other hand, Khajeh Nizamolmolk understands ethics as a function of politics and believes that moral norms and values serve the interests of state and the ruling ideological principles. The most important characteristic of the relevant literature regarding writing manual for politicians is the issue of principality of power. Then in this approach, politics is conceived as a set of rules that teach the politicians how to preserve their power and establish it in the society and prevent from the collapse of an empire. Accordingly, it is not important that if the incumbent king or ruling body is competent enough to reign the society or not! It is not important that if the governing individuals are of spiritual sanctity and virtuous character or not. Then whereas the originality is of the power its preservation is prior to all moral and religious principles and rules. This is in contrast with Miskawayh’s guidance-centered notion of politics and power. “One of the important reasons of justification of victimization of ethics in favor of political power is the identification of king’s interests and those of the country, as if the king is the crystallization of the country and society.” (Tabatabaei,2010, 348)

### **2-2- Different Approaches to the Relationship of Ethics and Politics**

Since Iranian behavioral thoughts are more concerned with practical politics, Khajeh Nizamolmolk is also the most remarkable representative of this type of thinking. Comparative study of the ideas of Ibn Miskawayh and Khajeh Nizamolmolk shows that the relationship of ethics and politics has faded into the background in the practical and applied doctrines of Khajeh Nizamolmolk in his *A Treatise on Kings Behaviors*. While Abu Ali Miskawayh seeks to strengthen the relationship of ethics and politics in his ideas via taking a philosophical and religious attitude. Of course, it should be noted that since practical politics is concerned with individual and organizational actions and reactions it is always exposed to the threats of turning unethical instead of being subjected to philosophical and theoretical attitude.

Although Miskawayh is the author of *Tajarib al-Umam* [Nations Experiences] and *Sophia Prennia* and he was also engaged in practical political affairs he discusses political matters in his books from a religious and philosophical point of view like a theoretical philosopher similar to Farabi.

### **2-3- Theory of Islamic Caliphate**

“Miskawayh interprets religion and Shariah as a sacred tradition and assigns its preservation to the Imam (leader) of Muslims, because leader is the symbol of religion and politics and his art is the art of kingship and until he is in power the connection of Shariah and politics is secured and if he passes away and no one takes care of the divine tradition corruption would engulf politics and as a result the power and leadership are exposed to a major revolution and the reign of king that was once the guardian of religion and politics changes into a totalitarian regime.” (Muhajernia,2001 ,42) Two thinkers’ notion and definition of politics have been influential on their special view of the position of caliphate. Following Maverdi’s theory of caliphate, Miskawayh considers Imam as the successor of the Shariah. Imam is in charge of spreading the judgements and virtues in the society. But Khajeh believes that caliph or Khalifa is the owner of Shariah or one and the same with it. Whatever is issued from Khalifa is part of Shariah and this is surely different from what Miskawayh is saying in this regard. This is why, according to Khajeh, Khalifa’s rulings even may be in contradiction with Shariah in some cases but they are still irrevocable due to their prudential nature. It should be taken into account that every ruler has the right to take some prudential actions in particular cases but it is important where this prudence is exercised.

Maverdi’s political theory has been offered based on Islamic holy book and prophetic traditions that ground the rulings of the king and sustain caliphate. According to Maverdi’s political thought, against Iranshahri’s theory, Khalifa is the successor of the owner of Shariah. Then, politics is based on Divine Shariah and religious rulings are the focus of political analysis and all kingly orders owe their meaning to it. According to Maverdi’s theory of caliphate, divine Shariah is the principles and every other thing should follow it while Iranshahri gives priority to Shah as the owner of the shariah who is identical with the latter. “Ideal kingship will be fulfilled when the power to be accompanied by justice, religion and wisdom.” (Mojtabaei,1973, 95) Consequently, one can argue that “such notion of ideal kingship that is also compatible with Islamic traditions of Iran is by no means in line with Maverdi’s views and other writers of books of Shariah.” (Tabtabaei, 2006)

### **2-4- Notion of Shariah**

If we consider Khajeh’s sermons and advices with more precision, we will see that in most of his sermons and lectures on battling against oppression, justice administration, establishing the power of state and order and the like, Khajeh speaks in a way and chooses some words as if his notion of shariah is instrumental not thematic. Khajeh is more focused on Iranshahri’s tradition than the textual sources of Shariah. For example, Khajeh’s conservatism in establishing the power of king is not something that can be in line with Shariah. Or in some other place he refers to the necessity of taking advantage of the relatives and servants for supporting the power of court and this is surely not consistent with shariah.

“Khajeh insists on religiosity only based on political analyses not for the mere sake of religion itself. Khajeh understands social order as a fixed and unchangeable entity and does not believe in social tension rather he is supporting social unity a la classic political thought instead of believing in the division of labor and power among the social classes and businesses.” (Tabtabaei , 2006, 97)The interconnection of religiosity and monarchy in Khajeh’s words is not based on Islamic sources rather it is driven from Iranshahri’s ideas according to which king is the shadow of God and he is the owner of shariah without being connected to revelation or textual sources and prophet’s words.

### **2-5- Practical and Theoretical Wisdoms**

“In the middle ages from Kendi and Farabi’s era onward, political philosophy was the area of scientific discussions, but it is for sure that there was not then a clear theoretical framework for politics as a science.

Muslim philosophers usually pursued their discussions of politics under their theosophical discourses and it was theoretical wisdom that did lay the ground for political ideas. Sometimes they propounded such issues as king philosopher, first master, king, Imam, founder of laws and politics in their theoretical discussions. Abu Nasr Farabi, the greatest intellectual figure of middle ages, begins his philosophical discussions with an explanation of the statesman and his properties. His theoretical philosopher is equal with the political thinker and in his view, a perfect philosopher is the one who has internalized three intellectual, moral and practical virtues inside himself along with sciences and theoretical virtues so as to be defined as the first master, Imam, Prophet or king.” (Farabi,1992)

Like Farabi, Maskawayh has also grounded politics as a civil science in theoretical wisdom rather he has insisted on the necessity of ruler’s knowledge theoretical issues such as epistemology, ontology, anthropology and teleology more than practical wisdom. (Muhajernia, 2011, 43)

However, there is no such philosophical deep reflection and thorough analysis in Khajeh in his theoretical wisdom and civil ethics. Khajeh has adopted a pragmatistic approach instead of mere theorization.

On the other hand, Khajeh Nizmolmolq Tusi is one of the important political theoreticians and writers of political works in Iran. His *syarolmolook* [Kingly Behaviors] is the most important work that has transferred Iranshahri’s political thought into Islamic era. History attests that the more politics have distanced itself from theorization and taken itself nearer to the domain of practice the lesser adherent it has become to the moral principles. Writing political manuals is dealing exactly with practical politics. The writers of these political manuals have struggled to establish political power. The relationship of ethics and politics in his doctrines has its origin in Khajeh’s long experience in practical politics.

## **2-6- Context and Time of Two Thinkers**

Evidence shows that Miskawayh was born in Shahr-e Ray in a year between 320-325 of Hijra. In his report of the events of the year 340 of Hijra, Ibn Miskawayh Razi has spoken of his long and numerous dialogues with Abu Muhammad Mahlabi the Minister of Ale Booyeh. He has also referred to his position as courtier in 341 of Hijra. (Miskawayh, 1997) Since Mahlabi was in office as the minister and secretary general for almost fourteen years, then one would suppose that Miskwayh has not been less than twenty in this time. The third and fourth centuries of Hijra is of paramount importance in the history of Islamic thought. Such great Muslim thinkers and philosophers as Farabi, Abu Ali Sinaf, Abu Hayyan Tohidi, Abu Suleyman Sajestani, Sahib Ibn Ebad, Abu Ali Miskawayh, Ibn Ameri and Ekhvan al-Safa lived in this era and in fact this historical era features the climax of political philosophy in Islam. Miskawayh is an Iranian Shiah religious thinker who was active in Ale Booyeh court for several years. Abu Bakr Kharazmi and Abu Mansoor Shabani were Miskawayh’s contemporaries who have referred to his intellectual life in some points of their works. Moreover, in later centuries, such great translators and report writers as Qafti (564-656 of Hijra) in his *Tarikh al-Hukama*, Yaqut al-Himawi (574-629 of Hijra) in his *Mujam al-Udaba*, Beyhaqi (575 of Hijra) in his *Tarikh Hukama al-Islam*, and many others, referred to Miskawayh and his intellectual heritage.

Miskawayh is scientifically comparable with such great philosophers and thinkers of his age as Abu Ali Sina, Ibn Ami and Abu Suleyman Sajestani. Before him Aristotle was called in the First Teacher of Ancient Greece and Farabi had been honored with the title the Second Teacher who were both founding figures in Greek and Islamic philosophy. Abu Nasr Farabi the greatest thinker of the middle ages sought to depict the identity of a statesman by turning to theoretical virtues. His theoretical philosopher is equal to political thinker. Ibn Miskwayh was of acceptability inside the ruling court and also had fame and name by the prominent philosophers and thinkers of his time. We can include Ibn Miskawayh among the philosophers who were well-versed in various sciences of their time like mathematics, literature, history and geometry besides politics insofar as one would say that no historian and scholar in Islamic world is needless of his *Tajarib al-Umam* and *Tahzib al-Akhlaq*. All scholars who have seriously engaged with practical issues owe their vision

in this regard to Miskawayh's ethics. His innovations in practical wisdom and ethics is of such unique place that he has been honored with the title Third Teacher.

On the other hand, Khajeh Nizamolmolk Tusi, Abu Hassan Ibn Ali Ibn Eshaq, better known as Nizamolmolk, was the Seljuk minister and one of the remnants of middle class landlords of pre-Islamic era who were known as *Dehqan* [farmer]. (Abi Nasr Boka, 1996, 312) According to the majority of biographers, he was born in Noghan of Tus in 408 of Hijra [1017 A.D] and this date seems to be correct in view of his age that was seventy seven when he was killed in 485 of Hijra. (Beyhaqi, 1982, 76) The farmers in Iran before the advent of Islam and also after some centuries after the arrival of Islam were declared second rate landlords of noble origin. This social class played a decisive role in keeping the balance of society. Other classes like agriculturists and business people depended on them. He was serving in secretarial occupations in Khurasan regions and as the commanders of Ghaznavis until his twenties. With the invasion of Seljuk Turkmen and the debacle of Ghaznavis Khajeh decided to cooperate with Seljuks. Alp Arslan appointed Khajeh to the ministry and during the reign of Malekshah of Seljuk the son of Alp Arslan he was in charge of this position. During his thirty years of ministry, Abu Ali showed great competence in defeating the enemies of the two kings and by doing so, he secured the foundations of the power of Seljuks.

### **2-7- Relationship of Philosophy and Politics**

Miskawayh believes that practical philosophy begins from the arrangement of human soul's faculties and reaches politics and civil management. Here is the common point between philosophy and politics and neither one of them is needless of the other. Miskawayh has accepted the views of Second Teacher in his *Tahsil al-Saadah* that philosopher needs to engage in practical philosophy and acquire intellectual, moral and practical virtues so as to complete his partial theoretical philosophy.

Philosopher, theosopher, and politician in the country, and Imam as the vicegerent of Allah, hold the same position and this shows the interconnection of politics and wisdom. This interconnection in the fields of anthropology and teleology has been considered by the Third Teacher more than other philosophical issues.

The interaction of politics and philosophy is in a way that the former without the latter and likewise the latter without the former remains incomplete. This is why Miskawayh endorses Aristotelian view in this regard and argues: "and to this very reason wisdom requires to be accompanied by the art of ruling". (Miskawayh, 1996, 85) Wisdom needs politics and the art of kingship and it is through versing oneself in wisdom and politics that man becomes competent for being appointed to the offices of Imamate, Caliph of Allah and Hakim. Wisdom in this context refers to philosophy. Of course, philosophy is of a Greek origin in a certain sense and wisdom is the highest virtue according to Quran. However, Muslim theosophers accepted Greek philosophy particularly philosophy of Socrates, Plato, Aristotle and many of Neoplatonists in early Christianity as the Divine Theosophers.

Miskawayh insists on the strong relationship between politics and philosophy. In practical wisdom Miskawayh pursues his theorizations in theoretical wisdom. In fact, those concepts that he prescribes to be taken into earnest account by the leader of Islamic community are almost all related to moral virtues and this shows itself the strong relationship between practical and theoretical wisdoms. While Khajeh Nizam is more a political philosopher than a mere theoretician. He is a pragmatist politician who was inspired by Iranshahri's tradition and Iranian's experience in governance.

### **2-8- The Relationship of Ethics and Politics**

This section seeks to discuss both thinkers' views as regards the relationship between ethics and politics in view of quadruple logical relationships. Miskawayh believes that the relationship between ethics and politics is absolute generality and specialty. For according to Miskawayh's political thought, politics should be wholly ethical and the range of ethics is so wide that covers the whole domain of politics and the politician who does not act ethically cannot successfully pass his exam. But in Khajeh Nizamolmolk's view, the relationship of ethics and politics is at best partial generality and specialty. This is to say that Khajeh prescribes the king to

engage in ethical affairs for better management of the social problems and order. However, sometimes we can see some actions that are taken by Khajeh and the king which are against ethics. To put it otherwise, ethics is allowed as far as it does not block the political actions and plans.

### **2-9- Difference in Religious Creed**

Miskawayh is a Shiah thinker who has been active in the courts of Ale Booyeh kings. Ale Booye and Boomian (320-447 of Hijra) belong to Deylamian dynasty and were Shiah Muslims who reigned the central and western parts of Iran and Iraq and their origin was North Deylim (a mountainous region in Gilan). This dynasty was toppled in 447 of Hijra [1055 A. D.] by Seljuks (who also chose Khajeh Nizamolmolk as their minister after several years). They were Shiah Muslims and in this era, they had special respect for the Shiah immaculate Imams. During the reign of Muez al-Dolah (367-372 of Hijra) and with his order the ceremonial commemoration of Muharram was resumed. They were Twelver Shiah and celebrated Ghadir as a special occasion. But on the other hand, Khajeh Nizamolmolk was an extremist Sunni who held the office of ministry in Seljuk court. Surely, Miskawayh's presence in a Shiah government as well as Khajeh's major activities during Seljuks were key to the shaping of their political thought. Seljuks were from a dynasty who ruled over major parts of Western Asia (including current Iran) in the fifth and sixth centuries of Hijra. Seljuks converted to Islam and after the leadership of Seljuk Ibn Daqaq they called themselves Seljuks.

Religious and sectarian differences reached their highest point during Khajeh's time and they were more than mere verbal disputes and even in some cases they would lead to bloody contentions. "In Khajeh's opinion who was an extremist Shafei Sunni and only believed in the jurisprudential schools of Shafei and Hanafi (religions of Seljuk Turks)" (Khajeh Nizamolmolk, 2004, 27) we can distinguish between two types of differences: religious differences and denominational differences.

Religious differences refer to excommunication of other religions by such figures as Khajeh and banning them from entering the court. Historians and commentators suppose that one of the motives of assassination of Amid Kondori, Hanafi minister of Seljuks, was of this nature. Khajeh describes Shiah sects with such names as Khareji, Rafizi, Shaghi and Qermati (all meaning infidel). He used to be hard on Shiah Muslims and some parts of his Syarolmoolook discusses the reasons of this harsh treatment. (Journal of Strategic, 2010, 36)

### **2-10- Relationship of Religion and Ethics**

The ethics that Miskawayh discusses in his works is very close to religion and is inspired by it. Propounding such issues as virtue acquisition in society, leadership arts, civil management, leader's qualities, and divine politics in Miskawayh's works shows the key role of religion in his ethical perspective. Ethics and ethical virtues and values are his central preoccupations; this is why he turns fast to normative issues upon his turning to the domain of governance and state. He uses such terms as virtuous city, just city, oppressing city and this shows that his intended city and government is led by a virtuous and just man. Miskawayh's city is rooted in human social nature and in some way is of an actual and independent existence, but he also insists on the key role of human virtues and basic values both in the goals of foundation and continuation of the city. Of course, it should be mentioned that Miskawayh's intellectual orientation is rooted in two sources. One is Islam and Islamic philosophy and the other is Greek philosophy and such philosophers as Aristotle. In fact, Miskawayh's political thought is a combination of Islamic philosophy and Greek Philosophy like Farabi's political thought.

On the other hand, upon a closer inspection of Khajeh Nizamolmolk Tusi's ideas we find out that he believes in instrumental ethics. According to this type of ethics, the ruler should make use of all existing possibilities to keep the laity satisfied. It is needless to say that ethics is not of a central role in Khajeh's thought. It seems that the sermons and advices that one comes across in Khajeh's works have their origin in the author's knowledge of Iranian tradition of governance.

### **2-11- Political Ethics or Ethical Politics**

The intellectual differences of these two thinkers show that Abu Ali Miskawayh was a proponent of guidance-centered politics and naturally he was seeking to fulfil an ethical politics. On the other hand, Khajeh Nizam had been a theoretician of power-centered politics and sometimes ethics in his thought turns political. Abu Ali Miskawayh is not known as an immoral politician and also in his works, there is an emphasis on ethicality of politics. While, Khajeh is of a notorious administrative record and it clearly shows that he was not himself faithful to the ethical advices that he has given in some points of his works; the point is that even these sporadic ethical sermons and remakes are of practical purpose and they were intended to solve the existing problems in political arena. It is related that Khajeh himself had some two thousand servants and this caused troubles for Malekshah who was afraid that Khajeh would revolt against him because of his power. The servants of Nizamolmolk did not lose their power even after his death and this was surely in contradiction with ethics and meritocracy. One of the notorious examples of Khajeh's indecent behaviors was his treatment with the other Seljuk minister Khajeh Amid al-Molk Muhammad Ibn Mansoor Kondori. Kondori was Toghrol Beyk's minister before Khajeh and had taken positive actions and that have all been documented in the history. (Ravandi, 1982) Khajeh was the rival of Kondori in power and their religious and denominational differences worsened their adversaries. Khajeh was a Shafei Sunni jurist, and an Ashaari theologian and Kondori was an extremist Hanafi. Kondori had personally ordered his people to curse Ashaaris. Abbasid Caliph had also some complaints of Amid al-Molk Kondori because he had let his daughter to marry Toghrol Beyk with his insistence. Upon Khajeh's request, Alp Arsalan arrested Kondori and expelled him to Neishaboor and then sent him to Marv and killed him after one year. (Minavi, 1980) As a proponent of guidance-centered politics, Miskawayh defended the closer interconnection of ethics and politics and as a result an ethical politics and had a philosophical and religious approach that might be well called Islamic wisdom.

Khajeh Nizamolmolk was an extremist defendant of power-centered politics and believed in the priority of politics over ethics. Though there are some sporadic and scattered moral advices in his works they were supposed to solve the problems of leadership instead of having any thematic value. To put it otherwise, ethics and a moral society were not an ideal for him. Thus the freshness of Miskawayh's thought lies in his theorization of civil ethics and also the culmination of Khajeh's political art and practical experiences in politics is seen in his advices regarding the necessity of administration of justice and social order. Meanwhile we should not forget Khajeh's great contributions that were made to the expansion of knowledge and science via foundation of Nizamiyah.

These two thinkers have numerous similarities in view of their presence in the court and administrative activities and both of them have praised Iranian thought and reason in their works. However, they are of different intellectual agendas. Besides living in different eras and places they had different definitions of politics and consequently different views regarding ethics, politics, Islamic notion of caliphate, the relationship of philosophy and politics, practical and theoretical wisdoms and religion. However, as we know and we have already elaborated in our discussions of the research hypotheses, there are various views regarding the relationship of ethics and politics and different schools have expressed their views in this regard. Those who insist on the interconnection of ethics and politics are of more coherent and logical views. According to pure Islamic perspective that is represented by Immaculate Imams, politics and ethics should go hand in hand both in theory and practice and Shiah Imams are themselves high examples of this union. Their martyrdom endorses the ethical quality of their political actions. In the school that have been founded by Immaculate Imams (peace be upon them) ethics is not a means rather it is the ideal and goal. This ethics is of a deep interconnection with religion in general and monotheism in particular. This reveals the intellectual and moral contradictions of the eastern and western deviated schools. This thesis scientifically refutes the current immoral theories in political thought and invites the researchers to engage in more clarification of the profits of the interconnection between ethics and politics (including the decrease in bellicosity due to



immorality, building friendship among people and politicians, increase in public confidence in the ruling party and the like). The letter that Imam Ali (peace be upon him) notified to Malek Ashtar Nakhaai is indeed the moral manifest of humanity and everyone particularly politicians must read it carefully. Many scholars believe that the Sophia Prensia that Miskawayh speaks of is indeed referring to Imam Ali who is the closest man to the Prophet Muhammad.

### **Conclusion**

This essay deals with the differences of these schools via discussing the politico-moral ideas of Abu Ali Miskawayh and Khajeh Nizamolmolk Tusi two great scholars and thinkers of the fourth and fifth centuries of Hijra. To this end, we have to first know their categorization of politics and the relationship of ethics and politics.

In this thesis, we have categorized all existing perspectives regarding the relationship of ethics and politics under two general headings. First, power-centered politics and second, guidance-centered politics. In view of the definition that is offered by Miskawayh one can feasibly argue that he is one of the proponents of guidance-centered politics while Khajeh Nizamolmolk is clear an advocate of power-centered politics.

Relying on guidance-centered politics, Miskawayh is defending an ethically informed politics via adopting a philosophico-religious approach. We may well call this an Islamic wisdom approach. Reviewing the results of our research in the second chapter of the thesis more and more proves this view as true. Khajeh Nizamolmolk was a remarkable proponent of the power-centered politics and defended the priority of politics over ethics. Of course, he had some moral advices in his works that are of instrumental value. Thus the freshness of Miskawayh's thought lies in his theorization of civil ethics and also the culmination of Khajeh's political art and practical experiences in politics is seen in his advices regarding the necessity of administration of justice and social order. Meanwhile we should not forget Khajeh's great contributions that were made to the expansion of knowledge and science via foundation of Nizamyah.

To conclude one can claim that these two thinkers are numerous similarities in view of their presence in the court and administrative activities and both of them have praised Iranian thought and reason in their works. However, they are of different intellectual agendas. Besides living in different eras and places, they had different definitions of politics and consequently different views regarding ethics, politics, Islamic notion of caliphate, the relationship of philosophy and politics, practical and theoretical wisdoms and religion. However, as we know and we have already elaborated in our discussions of the research hypotheses, there are various views regarding the relationship of ethics and politics and different schools have expressed their views in this regard. Those who insist on the interconnection of ethics and politics are of more coherent and logical views. According to pure Islamic perspective that is represented by Immaculate Imams, politics and ethics should go hand in hand both in theory and practice and Shiah Imams are themselves high examples of this union. Their martyrdom endorses the ethical quality of their political actions. In the school that have been founded by Immaculate Imams (peace be upon them) ethics is not a means rather it is the ideal and goal. This ethics is of a deep interconnection with religion in general and monotheism in particular. This reveals the intellectual and moral contradictions of the eastern and western deviated schools. This thesis scientifically refutes the current immoral theories in political thought and invites the researchers to engage in more clarification of the profits of the interconnection between ethics and politics (including the decrease in bellicosity due to immorality, building friendship among people and politicians, increase in public confidence in the ruling party and the like). The letter that Imam Ali (peace be upon him) notified to Malek Ashtar Nakhaai is indeed the moral manifest of humanity and everyone particularly politicians must read it carefully. Many scholars believe that the Sophia Prensia that Miskawayh speaks of is indeed referring to Imam Ali who is the closest man to the Prophet Muhammad.

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