# Apophatic Theology with Emphasis on Philosophical-Theological Views of Qazi Sa'id Qomi

Bahador Mehraki[*1]; Abdollah Gholami[2]

[1] Assistant Professor of Islamic Education Department, School of Medicine, Shiraz University of Medical Sciences, Shiraz, Iran

Email: dr.b.mehraki@gmail.com

[2] Assistant Professor of Islamic Education Department, School of Medicine, Shiraz University of Medical Sciences, Shiraz, Iran

Email: gholami13296@yahoo.com

## Abstract

True perception of perfectionistic attributes of the divinity and how they are attributed to Him along with the extent of alignment of attributes with true unity are some of historically acknowledged basic problems of theology. Some scholars advocate apophatic/negative theology while others join the camp of cataphatic/positive theology. Qazi Saʿid Qomi is one of the Muslims advocating the negative theology who emphasized on divergence of creator from creatures as well as negation of homogeneity between the two. The present paper adopts a critical approach to Qazi Sa'id Qomi's views so as to further review and clarify them. The results suggest that this approach leads to cessation of divinity perception.

**Keywords:** *Negative Theology; Positive Theology; Identicalness of Attribute and Essence; Attribution of Divine; Attributes to Creatures*

## Introduction

Tabatabai (1903-1981), the famous contemporary author dealing with philosophical and theological subjects, suggested that there are three philosophical and theological schools when it comes to allocating divinity attributes to creatures.

- *Positive theology* in which he regards God the same as mankind and he addresses the divinity's attributes.
- *Negative theology* in which he discusses divinity's attributes and actions in an apophatic manner (i.e. what something is not and not what something is).
- *Integration of affirmation and negation* (i.e. using both negative and positive theology to discuss the attributes and actions of the divinity) (Tabatabai, 1989: 5 (130)).

The attributes of divinity are generally divided into attributes of essence and attributes of action. The first category includes those attributes the abstraction of which is solely based on consideration of essence (e.g. science, power and life). In contrast, action attributes are the ones the abstraction of which takes the essence and essence as action (e.g. creation and gifting).

In yet another classification, divine attributes are divided into affirmative and privative ones. The affirmative attributes are the ones which address the essence of divinity. Such attributes are divided into real and additional categories. The real attributes are themselves categorized into essentially real and additionally real groups (MullaSadra, 1981: 6/118).

From another perspective, affirmative and privative attributes are divided into essence and action attributes. Regarding essence attributes, the existence of essence is sufficiently supported by its realization (e.g. life) but in the case of action attribute, realization of an attribute is conditional on realization of other ones (e.g. the attribute "creator" which is inferred from the association between creator and creatures; Kharazi, 1997: 81).

Abdullah Zenozi (1257) suggested that an attribute has a descriptive denotation the existence of which is not self-sufficient no matter it has an existence other than what it describes or not. In other words, an object's attribute is a descriptive denotation which is extracted from that object either essentially or consequentially (Zenozi, 1982: 224-225).

Tabatabai detailed the difference between an attribute and a name by suggesting that there is no difference between the two other than the fact that an attribute refers to a meaning with which an essence is blessed no matter the attribute is the same as essence or not. In contrast, a noun refers an essence which has acquired that name. Thus, knowledge and life are attributes while alive and knowledgeable are nouns because the terms do nothing but to refer to intended meaning. One may note that the reality of noun and attribute is the reality revealed by the "attribute" and "noun". So, life for the divinity is the same as his essence and the reality of an essence taken as the same as life is the divine noun (Tabatabai, 2000: 8/461).

Taking the theory of originality of existence into account, MullaSadra advocated the identicalness of attributes with essence. In his opinion, the divinity's essence and attribute are conceptually different but they are truly identical in the realm of being. In other words, the divinity's essence has solely an external manifestation and God knows a science which is the same as His essence (MullaSadra, 1981: 38).

He also suggested that the essential attributes of the divinity such as knowledge, power and life are distinct realities with degrees of intensity the highest level of which belongs to God and the lower levels are occupied by human beings (MullaSadra, 1981: 6/115). He also noted that although the attributes of divinity and mankind are similar but their different realities in terms of intensity cause them not to be similar to each other (MullaSadra, 1991: 1/298). In addition, he noted that although attributes are conceptually different from each other but when it comes to external existence, they are identical and the same as existence of divinity (MullaSadra, 1981, 6: 109-110).

Ashaera, the followers of Abū al-Ḥasan Ashari, took the divinity's attribute (e.g. science, power, life, will, hearing and seeing) as obsolete and an effect of essence (Shahrestani, No Date, 1: 95).

Negative theology is a type of theology which details our perception of God in a negative manner. In contrast, positive theology addresses the divinity in a positive manner by allocating certain attributes to the divinity perceptible to the men too. As to advocates of the negative theology, one could point to Aristotle (427 B.C.), Plotinus (205CE), and Ibn Maimon Andelosi (1135), Hakim Rajabali Tabrizi (1080), and his research disciple Qazi Sa'id Qomi (1049).

In Parmenides' essay, Plato notes how a unit is neither static nor variable and neither small nor big. It has no beginning, end, or name and it cannot be perceptible, sensed or discussed (Plato, 1349, 3: 1543-1620). Ibn Maimon, the famous Jewish scholar, details the distinction between God and the

creatures by noting, "He is a being unlike any other and He shares nothing of any kind with them" (Burrell, 2001: 62-63). Rajabali Tabrizi and his famous student Sa'id Qomi believed that one cannot talk of God and his attributes in a positive manner and so, they should be addressed negatively.

During Safavid era, there were to major intellectual movement addressing intellectual-philosophical problems. One movement was led by Mirdamad and his students especially Hakim MullaSadra and the other one was pioneered by Mirfendereski and his students Hakim Rajabali Tabrizi and Mohammad Sa'id Qomi (also known as Qazi Sa'id Qomi). Mirdamad and his students raised certain notions such as originality and shared spirituality of existence among others. In contrast, Tabrizi and his students did not advocate share such beliefs. Influenced by religious and neo-Platonic teachings, Hakim Tabrizi and his student Qazi Sa'id Qomi believed in negative theology and absolute purification of the divinity. The philosophers of negative theology claimed that one can only describe God based on what He is not and not what He truly is. For instance, when claiming "God is capable", we mean that God is not incapable or ignorant.

Qazi Sa'id Qomi (1049), a major Shiite theorist of negative-abstraction theology, had few major students such as Hakim Mohammad Hassan Feiz Kashani (1091) and Hakim Rajabali Tabrizi (1080). He took the divine unity as something premised on negation of attributes and they inferred affirmative attributes as referring to their opposites (Qomi, 1419, 1-116).

Qazi Sai'd took wisdom as a divine blessing and he adopted rational reasoning in his works frequently. But he suggested that human wisdom can only perceive affairs that are similar in kind and so it is incapable of understanding divine essence, attributes and actions (Qomi, 1419, 1: 84). Similar to other Shiite scholars and theologians, he rejected theologians' theory of manifestation of attributes on essence, criticized the essence and attribute objectification theory raised by Shiite scholars and noted that admitting such theories requires delimitation of the divinity (Qomi, 1419, 1: 79).

## Historical Background

Plato in Parmenides discussed how a unit is neither static nor variable and neither small nor big. It has no beginning, end, or name and it cannot be perceptible, sensed or discussed (Plato, 1349, 3: 1543-1620). Plotinus (1987:746), a major new-platonic scholar, discussed the One (i.e. his god) by suggesting, "The person who deprives Him of everything and attributes nothing to Him is speaking righteously". As to understanding of the One, he noted, "The one essence is like the origin of everything but he is none of those things. Thus, it is neither a thing nor many. It is neither wisdom nor the spirit, neither mobile nor static, neither in time nor in place. One cannot talk about or write on Him. Our talking and writing are solely intended to guide others toward Him" (Plotinus, 1366, 1: 1082).

On how to discuss "the One", he said, "We know Him to the extent that we can talk about Him but what we discuss is not him. We only can say what He is not but not what He really is" (Plotinus, 1366, 1: 1082). Elsewhere, he suggested, "So, the only thing that we can say about Him is that He is beyond the universe. There is no name for beyond the universe and this only implies that he is not this or that" (Plotinus, 1366, 1: 1083). The above statements suggest that to Plotinus, the one can't be addressed and He can solely be discussed in a negative manner.

Ibn Maimon, the Jewish philosopher and scholar, believed that negative attributes get us closer to perception of the divinity and the more we get informed of these attributes, the more our understanding of divinity will become (Ibn Maimon, No Date, 140). Another famous Jewish philosopher called, "Phílōn" noted, "Perceiving the essence of divinity is impossible to mankind but His existence is vivid to everybody" (Runia, 1998: 357).

Dionysus, the famous Christian figure, noted that God is beyond affirmation and privation (Pany, 1998: 624). Augustin, the famous Christian philosopher, suggested, "When you find Him, He is no longer God. God cannot be delimited by words. Saying what He is not is easier than suggesting what he truly is.

Thinking of God will lead to silence" (Basiris, 1363: 63-64). The Muslim scholar "Ibn Al-Futi" denied the divinity's attributes altogether (Wolfson, 1368: 143).

Keramia, the Muslim Asha'ri theologians, accepted the non-divine attributes but denied the attribute of immortality. They also noted that such attributes are created (Tabatabai, 1370: 275). Zarar was one of the Muslim Mu'tazilite theologians who noted that what we clearly got of divinity is nothing but negations and additions (Tusi, 1405: 314-315) and the God's being knowledgeable and capable has a negation denotation (i.e. God is not incapable and ignorant; Ash'ri, 1954: 281).

Among Shiite Muslims, Hakim Rajabali Tabrizi and his student Qazi Sa'id Qomi acknowledged a negative denotation for all divinity attributes. In fact, they took the negation of innate attributes from God as vivid and without any need for reasoning and to deal with opponents of such viewpoint, they find no solution but reasoning.

**Qazi Sa'id Qomi's Viewpoint**

Hakim Qazi Sai'd Qomi took wisdom as a divine blessing and adopted frequent rational reasoning in his works but he took perception of divine essence, attributes and actions as something beyond human wisdom (Qomi, 1419, 1: 80-81). He believed that existence of divinity can be discovered through creatures and a priori reasoning (Qomi, 1419, 1: 127) and taking the limits of human wisdom the divinity attributes are taken as confessed attributes. Confessional and comparative wisdom signifies reasoning by thinking through nature, its creatures and wonders of the universe and confessing the divinity's existence and attributes (Qomi, 1419, 1: 128). He admitted the effects of such attributes emerge from divinity and not through comparison of divinity's attributes with those of creatures. From his perspective, God shares his essence and attributes with creatures. He took proving a divine attribute, either objectively or subjectively, as something based on delimitation of the divinity and analogy of God and the creatures. He denied the objective division of divine attributes into affirmative and privative types as he took the division solely literally (Qomi, 1419, 1:135) and he noted that true unity signifies negation of attributes, reference to positive divine attributes, and negation of their opposites.

He noted that wisdom has no way to perceive the true nature of divinity as God is pure existence and has no attributes. He disagreed with objectification and manifestation of attributes out of essence. In fact, he took the objectification theory as despicable, took its advocates as non-believer and labeled the manifestation of attributes out of divine essence as even more undesirable (Qomi, 1419, 2:449). He also took the manifestation of essence through attributes as something which requires knowing one of the two but no wise soul will take it (Qomi, 1362: 68).

Qazi Sai'd Qomi suggested that the perception capability of rational and imaginary powers is limited to general and rational notions but God is not contained in neither of those realms. This is because general notions are abstract and fabricated by human mind. The understanding of rational notions is either through perception of constituents or innate causes, essence or understanding of effects. This is while God is the pure existence, it lacks elements and constituting parts and it has no essence and innate causes. In addition, God has no manifestation because something coming into being from God signifies limitation and therefore innate fault of the divinity (Qomi 1419, 1: 125).

In his opinion, the requirement for rational perception of divination is limitedness of unlimited essence of God and association of the creator with creatures, the rational perception of the divinity is therefore impossible. He notes that true belief in divine attributes is gained by those who take the divine essence as rich and without need for anything, those who take the divinity's attributes a barrier to understanding the ultimate essence of God. The essence attributes imply their privation from essence and affirmative attributes and nouns are manifestations and consequences of the divine essence which partially show it (Qomi, 1419, 3: 216).

In Qomi's opinion, description of the essentially existing (i.e. divinity) by vivid affairs around us is impossible no matter those affairs are negative, positive, the same as essence or a consequence of it (Qomi, 1362: 66). He suggested, "Since being an object and existence are identical, God is none of the objects and therefore God is precedent to them" (Qomi 1419, 1: 314). On divine attributes, he also noted, "All of these attributes go back to negation" (Qomi 1419, 1: 482).

He suggested that there is no commonality between man and God in terms of essence, effects or attributes (Qomi, 1419, 1:394). In addition, God has no association with man in terms of status of being and the general notion of existence and objectification do not apply on God (Qomi, 1419, 1: 341). That's why the terms commonly used for divinity and other creatures have literal commonality but their conceptualizations are not identical.

As to the viewpoint of manifestation of attributes out of essence, he noted this way God is either a set of attributes and essence or He is solely essence and attributes have nothing to do with realization of divinity's existence. If God is a set of attributes and essence, integration in the inclusive essence of the divinity is essential and if God is solely essence and attributes are out of Him, God will need an essence out of himself to gain such attributes. Therefore, both of these two cases are not admissible (Qomi, 1421, 92).

On identicalness of essence with attributes, Qazi Sai'd noted that if an attribute of divinity is the same as his essence, the signifier is the same as the signified which seems impossible (Qomi, 1419, 3: 183-192). He suggested that "attribute"- take either the same as essence or not- surrounds what it describes and separates that from others and the described object is limited due to the attribute. So, the divinity's essence has no attribute (Qomi, 1419, 1: 394-395). He regarded attribute as something which expresses the distinct state of an object (Qomi, 1419, 3:10). Elsewhere, he noted that attribute is a function of and secondary to essence (Qomi, 1362: 70) and he regard "noun" as an essence which is acquired through an attribute. So, Qazi Sai'd distinguishes between attribute and noun and he took attribute as something secondary to essence.

Hakim Qomi addressed the "attribute" as a symbol of limits and constraints. Therefore, he regarded description of God as a sign of his limitation (Qomi, 1419, 1: 299). Elsewhere, he noted that attributes refer to something else (i.e. effect) and so, he doesn't consider God as describable (Qomi, 1419, 1: 126). Yet, he suggested that describing the divinity by certain attributes requires analogy of the creator with creatures because only in that case the attributes apply to the creator and the creatures (Qomi, 1419, 1: 179).

Referring to Quran verses and religious scholars' narratives, he notes that understanding and description of God through rational talents is impossible. He suggests that attributes follow what they describe and "the attributed" leads to the "attribute" but that requires delimitation of the divinity which is impossible. Qazi Sai'd added that the association between divinity and creatures is based on complete isolation. He noted that God has no similarity with any attribute of creature and their commonality is solely literal (Qomi, 1419, 1: 82).

In addition, he denied the divinity of any positive attribute and provided those attributes with a negative interpretation. He found positive interpretation as likening God to mankind and violation of true essence of the divinity. Instead, he offers an applied interpretation for positive attributes in which God is taken as creator and presenter of those attributes and not blessed with them.

Qazi Sai'd suggested that if God has commonalities with creatures in terms of essence and attributes, God should be potentially existing in the same way as creatures. In addition, he noted that rational perception is solely limited to beings. So, taking the unlimited status of the divinity into account makes it impossible to perceive God rationally. He believes that the capability of rational power is limited to general and rational notions which are fabricated in human mind and so, one cannot get to know God through abstract and mental notions. He also notes that rational understanding is either through perception

of constituents, perception of innate causes and essence or understanding of outcomes. This is while God is pure existence and it lacks multiple essence, innate causes or effects because descent of something on the divinity requires fault and need (Qomi, 1419, 1: 125).

Hakim Qomi took God as distinct from other beings in every aspect of essence, attributes and actions (Qomi, 1419, 1: 80-81). He tried to reject divine attributes so as to prove that God is not describable. Instead, he took attributes in their negative denotation so that they imply the divine essence negatively. In his opinion, affirmation of an attribute for God requires analogy because affirming an attribute for God and his creatures is analogy in meaning. Qazi Sai'd took the description of everything as contingent upon surrounding that thing which needs delimiting it. This is because description occurs only when knowledge is bestowed on an object which implies delimitation and causality (Qomi, 1419, 1: 79-119). Thus, he interpreted positive attributed in the sense that God creates those attributes in others and not the case in which derivation of those attributes originates from God no matter the attribute refers to the essence or it is inflicted on it.

He suggested that description of essence by attributes signifies that attributes come after essence and essence lead to the divinity. This is while the essence leading to attribute requires the divinity to be definite which is impossible. The requirement for proving divine attributes is taking him to be constrained because description of essence through attributes means that attribute comes after essence and the essence leads to certain attributes. This is while the essence leading to attribute requires the signified to be finite (Qomi, 1419, 1: 257).

Qazi Sai'd suggested that the affirmative approach to the divine attributes of God requires similarity between God and his creatures because such approach requires spiritual and conceptual commonality between divine attributes of God and creatures' attributes. In addition, he noted that God lacks any similarity and/or association, even a conceptual one, with his creatures and the similarity is solely literal (Qomi, 1419, 1: 258). That is because if God has common aspects with creatures in terms of essence and attributes, we encounter a false and inadmissible case.

In his opinion, if the meaning of existence is common between creator and creatures, the one bestowing the life and those blessed with it, it is essential that they are similar to each other and there is no difference between them (Qomi, 1419, 1:355).

Hakim Qomi stated that the division of divine attributes into two types (i.e. affirmative and privative) are solely literal and one can only discuss the divinity through negative attributes. He also noted that certain attributes such as alive, all-knowing, and capable among others are solely literally used to describe the divinity (Qomi, 1419, 2: 179). Elsewhere, he refers to the difference between positive and negative attributes by suggesting that negative attributes deprive themselves of divine essence while positive attributes exclude their opposites from divine essence (Qomi, 1419, 1: 179). He took the positive attributes as functioning to exclude their opposites from the divinity so that when God is said to be all knowing that means that God is not ignorant (Qomi, 1421: 94).

He also noted that the attributes given to the divinity by Quran do not signify that such attributes are external to or the same as the essence. Instead, he offers an applied interpretation for positive attributes of God in the sense that the divinity gifts qualified persons with these attributes and creates such attributes in them. For instance, God is knowing because he provides scientists with knowledge and he is capable as he provides capable people with power (Qomi, 1362: 76).

From Qazi's viewpoint, prophets and top theologians described the "essentially existing" with certain attributes because people have a faulty understanding and not because the divinity can be described by such terms or God allocated such attributes to himself. The purpose of such religious figures was to convey that the essentially existing doesn't have the opposite of such attributes. For instance, describing God as "all-knowing" means that the divinity is not ignorant (Qomi, 1362: 71).

**Further Review**

One of the problems with negative theology is that the language of religion is a cognitive language. This implies that religion guides people by familiarizing them with God and his attributes. Therefore, Quran and hadiths describe God with positive attributes.

Qazi Sai'd interpreted the essence attributes of the divinity in a literal and spiritual manner (i.e. something that is contingent on another thing) but this is not the case for rational problems and the advocates of essentialist approach to attributes do not make a difference between essence and attributes of the divinity in the world out there.

The statement that the advocates of negative theology take the positive perception of divine attribute as the requirement for perception of his infinite essence is not true because positive perception is through gained conception and knowledge while perception of divine essence is through in-moment knowledge. So, there is not disagreement between positive perception of divine attributes and perception of his infinite essence.

From viewpoint of positive theology advocates, perception and understanding of the divinity signifies a general knowing of God and not a detailed understanding of the essence of the divinity. General knowledge doesn't require perception of the divinity's essence as human wisdom with its limited capacity can attain a general understanding of attributes and nouns. In addition, the limits of human wisdom do not mean the total incapability of his wisdom.

The fact that Qazi Sai'd denied the essential attributes of divinity and he took God as the cause and origin of such attributes cannot be rationally admitted because it is impossible for God to have such attributes and be able to transfer such attributes to others. Qazi Sai'd's statement on denial of any innate attribute for the divinity implies that the divine essence is devoid of perfections and also that essence of divinity is made up of existence and lack.

Meanwhile, Qazi Sai'd's denial of opposites of positive attributes which implies that such attributes can't be found in the divinity is not correct. This is because denial of divine attributes is actually denying the denial of perfection of such attributes in God. This leads to proving such attributes and not denying the existence of such attributes in God. For instance, the rational requirement of denying ignorance in God is admitting his knowledgeability because ignorance is denial of knowledge and denying the denial of knowledge is affirmation and proving the knowledge.

Qazi Sai'd tried to refer to essential attributes as practical ones so as to stay away from the problem of cessation of understanding the divinity. But he actually didn't solve the problem of ceased perception of divine essence but raised the problem of relevance between creator and creature and also ceasing the creator's perception because if he doesn't take relevance in action-oriented attributes he will face the problem of ceased perception of divine essence and attributes along with problem of ceased action.

In other words, Qazi Sai'd took the perfect attributes of the divinity as signifying actionable attributes (i.e. presenter of that attribute) so as to stay away from the problem of relevance (association) of creator with creatures. But this measure doesn't seem justified because relevance and association of creator with his actions is raised which if denied, it will lead to the problem of ceased perception of the divinity. The notion of "objectivity" in MullaSadra's transcendental wisdom signifies that contrasting and differing notions are abstracted from a single existence (MullaSadra, 1981, 6: 124). In contrast, the advocates of negative theology take "objectivity" as unification of attributes and integration of attributes with essence.

Therefore, it seems that Qazi Sai'd did not have a vivid perception of objectification of essence with attributes and integration of substantive unity and conceptual multiplicity. In addition, he didn't pay attention to the fact that certain attributes might be shared between God and man but such attributes in

human are essentially possible while they are essentially existing in the divinity. Thus, one might suggest that from such perspective Qazi Sai'd did not distinguish between concept and manifestation and combined the two of them. Undoubtedly, the substantive characteristics of human attributes are different from those of God's attributesbut this doesn't go against the spiritual commonalities of these attributes. For instance, it's admissible if the divinity's knowledge has the same denotation as the man's but human knowledge is limited and variable in its manifestation but divine knowledge is infinite and constant.

In other words, Qazi Sai'd took the objectification of essence and attribute the same as development of essence and existence and therefore their unification. This is while objectification to MullaSadra and his advocates implies that the perfect attributes of the divinity such as knowledge and power are conceptually different but in terms of manifestation, they are identical and the same as the essence of the divinity. For instance, knowledge and power are conceptually different but in terms of manifestation they are identical and the same as the essence of divinity (MullaSadra, 1981: 145; MullaSadra, 1370, 1: 209). So, one may suggest that multiplicity of concepts resulting from a single origin is admissible just as diverse notions such as knowledge, power and life can be abstracted from the divine essence as the single origin (e.g. knowledge, power and life among others).

Another problem with the approach to identicalness of essence and attributes of the divinity is: How the divine attribute of God can be the same as his essence when denotation and conceptualization of these terms are perceptible but perceiving the depth and reality of divine essence is impossible? To answer this question, MullaSadra noted that conceptualization of all divine attributes is similar for God and the potentially existing but their instances are different in terms of extent and degree. Therefore, instances of divine attributes such as divine knowledge is not understandable to creatures due to their degree of existence (MullaSadra, 1370, 1: 209).

Other forms of negative theology suggest that if we generally take creator and creatures as incongruent, we have proved the existence of a kind of opposition between creator and creatures. This is while God has nothing similar or opposite to it. In that case, creator cannot influence the creatures (IbrahimiDinani, 1375: 241-242).

In other words, a requirement of negative theology is that there should be an "anti" for God since some researchers noted: "This kind of distinction which states that whatever exists in the creatures is opposite to and incongruent with whatever exists in the creator proves that there is an opposition between creator and creatures. This is while God has nothing like or opposite to it. The creature is not against creator as the creature is the manifestation of the creator (Motahari, 1379, 1:34).

The association and relevance of cause and effect does not always signify the similarity between the two. In fact, there are associations between many affairs but due to difference in their degree, those affairs are not similar with each other. In addition, divine attributes of the creator could have graded differences with creatures' attributes and their conceptual commonality might not signify their similarity. In the same vein, the divine attributes have absolute perfection and they lack any faults and limits but creatures' attributes are partial and limited which suggests that these two types of attributes are not similar.

From viewpoint of transcendental wisdom theory, the association between creator and creatures does not imply that they both share the same reality of existence because from their viewpoint, reality of existence is not something separate from creator and creatures as reality of existence in any degree is the same as that degree. From their perspective, reality of existence is not like a general meaning shared between beings which has different similar and distinct aspects. In fact, pure existence has no meaning beyond reality the existence of which denotes something other than completeness and absoluteness (MullaSadra, 1981, 3: 62).

The association of creator with creatures does not imply the similarity and identicalness of the two as the association does not imply that cause and effect are of the same degree. In fact, the association

suggests that there is a longitudinal association between cause and effect as any effect originates from a distinct cause while cause has a higher degree than effect.

In addition, the commonality between creator and his creatures does not imply that they are similar because meaning and conception are subjective affairs beyond the (instances of) creator and his creators and the two of them are distinct in terms of instances and external reality. In other words, semantic commonality denotes a conceptual discussion and not an instantial one. Therefore, Qazi Sai'd wrongly took the notions of concept and instance as the same by suggesting that the commonality of meaning and conception between creator and creator signifies their similarity.

Denying the similarity of creator and creatures shouldn't lead to the implication of opposition between the two because God has no instance or opposite. In the same vein, creatures are not against their creator but a manifestation of the creator. If we acknowledge the difference between creator and his creatures, then perceiving divine attributes and nouns will not be possible, the creator can't be worshiped and even if he is worshiped the act of worshipping him will not be joyful. This is while Abrahamian religions are based on perception of divinity, loving and getting close to God.

## Conclusion

Hakim Qazi Sai'd Qomi made a lot of attempts to prove negative theology but failed to do so. His statements are riddled with serious rational ambiguities and problems. For instance, admitting this perspective makes it impossible to understand God and his attributes. In addition, a divinity without attributes cannot present his creatures with such attributes. By stating that positive theology results in similarity between creator and creatures, he mistook a concept for its instances.

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