

Our Philosophy



Muḥammad Bāqir Aṣ-Ṣadr

Translated by
Shams C. Inati



Islamic Book Trust
Kuala Lumpur

Copyright © 1987 The Muhammadi Trust

First published in English 1987
The Muhammadi Trust,
London.

This edition 2009 with permission
Islamic Book Trust
607 Mutiara Majestic
Jalan Othman
46000 Petaling Jaya
Selangor, Malaysia
www.ibtbooks.com

Islamic Book Trust is affiliated to The Other Press.

Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia

Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

Sadr, Muhammad Baqir

Our philosophy : translation, introduction and notes by Shams C.
Inati / Muhammad Baqir As-Sadr ; foreword by Seyyed Hosein Nasr.
Includes index

ISBN 978-983-5062-14-8

ISBN 978-983-5062-15-5 (pbk)

I. Philosophy, Comparative. 2. Philosophy, Islamic. I. Inati, Shams C.
II. Nasr, Seyyed Hossein. III. Title.

181.07

Printed in Malaysia by
Academe Art and Printing Services Sdn Bhd (11248-U)
7 Jalan Rajawali 1A
Bandar Puchong Jaya
Batu 8 Jalan Puchong
47100 Selangor Darul Ehsan

Contents

Foreword	ix
Translator's Introduction	xiii
Prologue	xvii
The Nature of this Work	1
INTRODUCTION: THE SOCIAL ISSUE	5
The Social Schools of Thought	6
I Capitalistic Democracy	6
The Materialistic Tendency in Capitalism	9
The Position of Ethics in Relation to Capitalism	10
The Tragedies of the Capitalistic System	11
II Socialism and Communism	14
Deviation from the Communist Operation	16
Flaws of Communism	18
The Correct Explanation of the Problem	21
III The Islamic System: the Proper Treatment of the Problem	24
The Message of Religion	28
A Final Point	32
Part One: The Theory of Knowledge	
1 THE PRIMARY SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE	39
Conception and Its Primary Source	40
I The Platonic Theory of Recollection	40
II The Rational Theory	41
III The Empirical Theory	43
IV The Dispossession Theory	46
Assent and Its Primary Source	47
I The Rational Doctrine	48
II The Empirical Doctrine	51
Marxism and Experience	60
Sense Experience and the Philosophical Edifice	63
The Positivist School and Philosophy	65
Marxism and Philosophy	70

2 THE VALUE OF KNOWLEDGE	
The Views of the Greeks	77
Descartes	78
John Locke	80
The Idealists	83
I Philosophical Idealism	84
II Physical Idealism	85
III Physiological Idealism	93
The Defenders of Modern Skepticism	98
The Relativists	99
I Kant's Relativism	101
II Subjective Relativism	101
III Scientific Skepticism	106
Behaviorism	108
Freud	108
Historical Materialism	110
The Theory of Knowledge in our Philosophy	111
Developmental Relativism	113
I Sense Experience and Idealism	116
II Sense Experience and the Thing in Itself	116
III The Dialectical Movement of Thought	120
The Development and Movement of Truth	126
The Union of Truth and Falsity	129
IV Scientific Revisions and Absolute Truths	134
V The Marxist Relapse into Subjectivism	135
	137
Part Two: The Philosophical Notion concerning the World	
1 PRELIMINARY NOTES	149
Correction of Errors	150
Clarification of a Number of Points concerning These Two Notions	151
The Dialectical Tendency of the Materialistic Notion	156
2 DIALECTICS OR DISPUTATION	161
The Movement of Development	164
The Contradictions of Development	180
I The Nature of the Principle of Non-Contradiction	183
II The Manner in Which Marxism Understood Contradiction	184
III The Political Purpose beyond the Contradictory Movement	193
The Leaps of Development	196
The General Linkage	203
Two Points concerning the General Linkage	206

3 THE PRINCIPLE OF CAUSALITY	217
Causality and the Objectivity of Sense Perception	217
Causality and Scientific Theories	218
Causality and Inference	221
Mechanics and Dynamics	221
The Principle of Causality and Microphysics	223
Why Things Require Causes	225
I The Theory of Existence	226
II The Theory of Creation	227
III, IV The Theories of Essential Possibility and Existential Possibility	228
Fluctuation between Contradiction and Causality	230
Contemporaneity between Cause and Effect	231
I The Theological Argument	232
II The Mechanical Opposition	233
III Conclusion	234
4 MATTER OR GOD	239
Matter in Light of Physics	240
I The Conclusions of Modern Physics	244
II The Philosophical Conclusion to This	244
Concerning Experimentalists	245
Concerning the Dialectic	246
Matter and Philosophy	248
Correction of Errors	250
The Philosophical Notion of Matter	251
Physics and Chemistry as Concerned with the Part	252
Philosophy as Concerned with the Part	253
The Philosophical Consequence	254
Matter and Motion	255
Matter and Sentiment	256
Matter and Physiology	257
Matter and Biology	258
Matter and Genetics	260
Matter and Psychology	260
5 KNOWLEDGE	267
Knowledge on the Level of Physics and Chemistry	269
Knowledge on the Level of Physiology	269
Knowledge in Psychological Research	270
Knowledge in the Philosophical Sense	274
I Geometrical Properties of the Perceived Image	274
II Stability in the Acts of Visual Perception	277
The Spiritual Side of a Human Being	278
The Conditioned Reflex and Knowledge	280
Index	289

In *Our Philosophy*, 'Allāma Muḥammad Bāqir Aṣ-Ṣadr addresses issues related to the universe and to life from the point of view of Islam. He makes the claim that neither Capitalism nor Communism is capable of offering real comfort and happiness. The only system capable of doing so is the Islamic one.

In a long introduction, the flaws and disadvantages of capitalism and materialism are delineated, and the truths and benefits of Islam are pointed out.

The rest of the work is divided into two main sections. The first deals with the theory of knowledge and is preparatory to the second which deals with philosophical notions concerning the world. The author discusses the disagreements among certain philosophical notions and the dialectical method upon which modern materialism rests. He goes on to consider the causal laws governing the universe and the conflict between materialism and theology. On the basis of this discussion, the author forms his notion of the world in the light of philosophical laws.

Finally, the author looks at the conflict between materialism and theology as it relates to knowledge and thought. He claims that thoughts are not mechanically conditioned by the requirements of the community. Rather, they are the result of free motives that induce one to create a system in harmony with one's community.

The Author

A Shiite theologian, philosopher, religious leader and political figure, 'Allāma Muḥammad Bāqir Aṣ-Ṣadr was born in Iraq in 1931 and executed by the Iraqi government in 1980. He advocated an organised Islamic movement, a centralised party, that could work with the various units in the Islamic nations to bring about what he considered 'the desirable social change'. He was the father of *Ḥizb ad-Da'Wā al-Islāmiyya* (the Islamic Call Party) and wrote many books on economics, sociology, theology and philosophy.

The Translator

Dr Shams Inati was born in Lebanon, received her degree in Philosophy and History at the American University of Beirut, and her PhD in Islamic Philosophy at the State University of New York. She now teaches Islamic Philosophy and Religion at the Villanova University, and has done extensive work on Avicenna, including a translation into English, and an analysis of his *Al-Ishārāt wat-Tanbīhāt (Remarks and Admonitions)*.

ISBN 978-967-5062-15-5



ISLAMIC BOOK TRUST, KUALA LUMPUR

www.ibtbooks.com