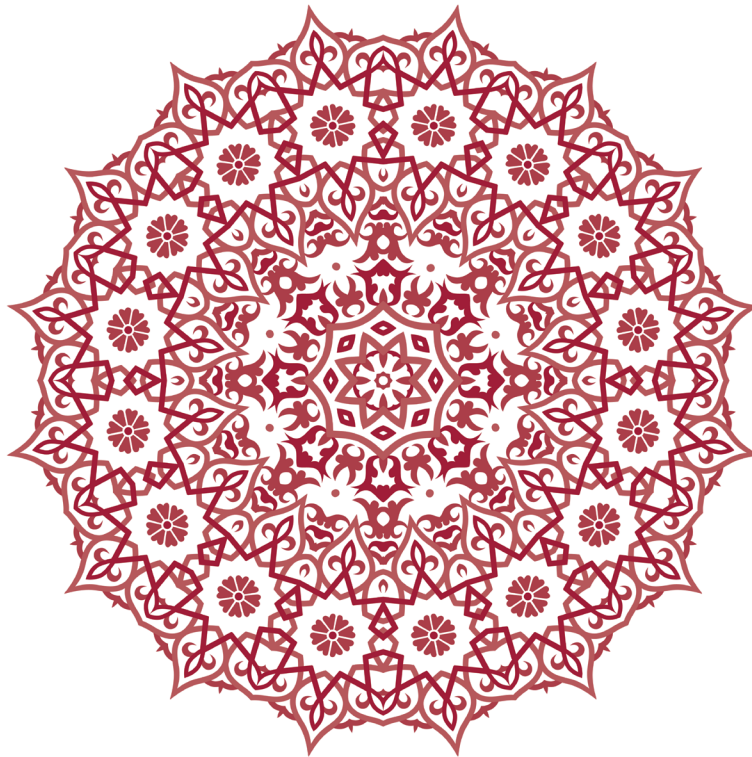


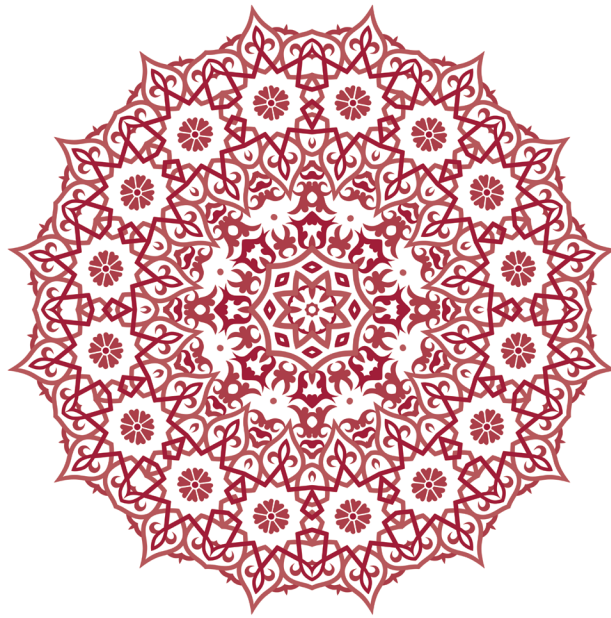
SCIENTOLOGY AND ISLAM AN ANALOGOUS STUDY



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4 April 1996

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INTRODUCTION

The word Scientology is composed of Latin, *scio*, which means knowing in the fullest meaning of the word, and Greek *logy*, which means study of or knowledge. Literally, this means *knowing how to know*. Scientology takes great care in knowing and it has as a purpose to know in a very truthful sense.

For Islam, “knowledge is the highest aim.” Islamic prophecy respects knowledge. In one of the hadiths (a collective body of traditions relating to Mohammed and his companions) it is said, “I am the *City of Knowledge* and Ali is the *Gate* for this.” Another hadith states, “Go to China for knowledge!” At that time, China was such a remote place that it would have been considered the end of the world, yet this is where one was commanded to go to pursue knowledge. For Islam, the pursuit of knowledge is a very high ideal.

In this way Islam has the greatest respect for *knowledge*. A person who has knowledge is called in Islam, *Ulama*. *Ulama* derives

from *ilm* which means *knowledge*. One can see that Scientology and Islam can be aiming in the same direction and thus they could have aspects in common.

This writer has been on pilgrimage to Mecca twice and is recognized as a leader in the Islamic world. Additionally, this writer has also recently studied the Scientology religion and traveled to its world headquarters, which is referred to as Mecca in its own terms, and has been surprised at some of the similarities.

According to the video *Introduction to Scientology* (which is a recorded interview of L. Ron Hubbard, the founder of Scientology, in 1966), Mr. Hubbard traveled in Asia for much of his teens. There he pondered the misery of Asia, wondering why it existed. From the beginning he was interested in researching the origins of man, and it was to become his life's work, which culminated in the birth of Scientology.

Mr. Hubbard first saw that though man had different cultures, races and so forth, there must be a common denominator, and if it could be found, then man could be elevated. Mr. Hubbard found that common denominator, and it was—Survive!

Why was the discovery of *survive* so important? If you look up the word *survive* in a dictionary, it is defined as “to keep living, being kept alive, even after others or other things are dead.” However, this is not enough to fully explain the term. What Mr. Hubbard found was man's common denominator and this was to become one of the fundamentals of Scientology.

In same video interview, Mr. Hubbard answered the question about a next life, saying that man can survive even after death, and thus there is a next life. So the term *survive* does not only pertain to this life but rather to eternity.

In the Dianetics and Scientology Technical Dictionary, survival is explained as: 1. is a condition susceptible to non-survival. If one is “surviving,” one is at the same moment admitting that one can cease to survive. Otherwise, one would never strive to survive. 2. survival might be defined as an impulse to persist through time, in space, as matter and energy. 3. survival is understood to be the basic single thrust of life through time and space, energy and matter. Survival is subdivided into eight dynamics (or urges to survive).

How does this compare to Islam? “What man is created for and living for” is explained in one Arabic word, *qiyama*. The Quran is not necessarily translated correctly from the Arabic, and this word has not been correctly translated into the English.

Qiyama (noun) is derived from *qom* or *qama*. This *qom* or *qama* has many different meanings such as: rise up, stand up, look back, attack, live with honor, rise from death, reverse, rise, depart, position, take rest, start, implement, support, and take responsibility. Bearing this in mind, as an overall concept, the meaning of *qiyama* in the Quran and *survival* in Scientology could well be stating the same thing.

Neither philosophy would have any argument with the fact that man is trying to survive and that man is trying his best to survive in the universe around him.

I. ISLAM COVERING ALL RELIGIONS; SCIENTOLOGY AS THE RELIGION OF RELIGIONS

Islam was founded by Mohammed (Peace Be Upon Him and his descendants). In the Quran, which Muslims absolutely believe in as the *word of God*, one may be surprised to find it written that the truth that has existed through this universe before the creation of this world is also termed Islam. All the messengers and prophets of God since Adam have taught “Islam.” Per the verbal tradition of Islamic prophecy, the number of messengers of God is said to be 313, while the number of prophets is said to be 124,000.

It was revealed that these *messengers and prophets of God* were sent to all communities, tribes and races and that they disseminate the same truth in each one’s language. In chapter #2, clause 136 of the Quran, it says, “Say! We believe in God and the things revealed to us. We also believe in things that have been revealed to Abraham, Ismael, Isaac, Jacob and the tribes as well as things given to Moses and Jesus and things given from God to all prophets. We never create discrimination between any of them, and we are Muslim.” Here is the Arabic word *faraq* which is translated as *never create discrimination*. The word also means separate, isolate, cut through and distinct. Thus, this meaning from the Quran not only means to never discriminate against other religions but also to never isolate, or cut through them. This does not only mean a *tolerance* of Jews, Christians, Hindus, Buddhists, and Shintoists but it means to hold them all in harmonious regard. That is what the world of Islam teaches. And thus, if a Muslim were to speak about Islam, he would naturally also include Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Shintoism and other religions in the realm of his understanding. This is original Islam, revealed by the prophecy to Mohammed (PBUH).

As a comparison, Scientology as Mr. Hubbard explained, is the religion of religions. This is outlined in the *Introduction to Scientology* video where the interviewer asks Mr. Hubbard if a parishioner from the Roman Catholic Church or the Anglican Church can be a member of

Scientology. Mr. Hubbard answered that they could and further explained that Scientology was a religion of religions.

In what could also be a great similarity to Islamic tradition, Mr. Hubbard said in a lecture in June 3, 1955, titled *The Hope of Man*:

I would like...to honor the great spiritual leaders of the past—not of modern times, but of the past—since these people handed along enough tradition to make us aware of the fact that there was a spiritual side to Man. These great spiritual leaders have been hanged, reviled, misinterpreted, badly quoted, have not been at all comprehended, but nevertheless, they are the hands through which a torch has been handed forward through the centuries so that we could culminate with a greater ability for Man and some hope for his future....

And one of the people who handed it on was a man named Moses. And again it was handed on to a man named Christ. And he handed it on and even the Arab nations benefited from this through their own prophet, Muhammad.

In the booklet, *The Way to Happiness*, Mr. Hubbard wrote:

Tolerance is a good cornerstone on which to build human relationships. When one views the slaughter and suffering caused by religious intolerance down all the history of Man and into modern times, one can see that intolerance is a very non-survival activity.

Religious tolerance does not mean one cannot express his own beliefs. It does mean that seeking to undermine or attack the religious faith and beliefs of another has always been a short road to trouble.

In *The Creed of the Church of Scientology*, Mr. Hubbard wrote:

We of the Church believe
That all men of whatever race, color or creed were created with equal rights.
That all men have inalienable rights to their own religious practices and their performance....

That all men have inalienable rights to conceive, choose, assist or support their own organizations, churches and governments.

One can see that the works of Mr. L. Ron Hubbard are strikingly similar to Islam in this respect.

II. THE MEANING OF ISLAM

Islam covers all religions and a revelation of the Quran states all *messengers of God* and *prophets* taught the teachings of Islam. Then what is the *Islam*?

The word Islam means *to obey God absolutely* or *to entrust to God everything*. It also can be explained as the word *peace*. If one researches back to the Arabic derivation of the word *Islam*, he will find that it comes from the noun Islam which is derived from the Arabic verb Salima which means: free, escape from, safe and sound, no mistake, and proved clearly. In other words, *Islam* could be written to mean *the way to freedom, the way to emancipation which escapes from all sufferings* and *the way to safety and health*.

In Buddhism, its own term *Buddhism* means to enter into the status of *Bodhi Sattva* and attain the state of *spiritual awakening* and to *follow absolutely*. Shintoism has the similar term *Kamunagara*. These are all different names for the state of spiritual release of man.

Similar terms exist in Scientology which are stated as the never-before-attained spiritual levels of *Clear* and *OT*. (*OT* means *Operating Thetan*. *Thetan* is the Scientology term for spiritual entity or spiritual being.)

Mr. Hubbard left two letters addressed to leaders of Buddhism where he declared that Scientology could make the achievements of the state of Bodhi possible to all in two or three years and suggested that leaders of Buddhism send two young men from each sect to train in the Scientology teachings and bring those teachings back to their sects.

Islam means the way to be free and the way to emancipation. To achieve the spiritual states of *Clear* and *OT* in Scientology one has to study and apply what he learns in what is termed *The Bridge to Total Freedom*. This Bridge is actually a chart that outlines the path of studies and applications that one has to travel to attain this freedom. In the sense of pursuit of spiritual freedom, Islam and Scientology have much in common.

III. THE COMPOSITION OF MAN FROM A STANDPOINT OF SCIENTOLOGY AND ISLAMIC PHILOSOPHIES

Both Islamic philosophy and Scientology philosophy agree that man is composed of spirit, soul and body.

Allamah Sayyid Mohammed Husayn Tabatabai explained the Islamic position best as follows:

Those who are acquainted to a certain extent with the Islamic sciences know that within the teachings of the Holy Book and the traditions of the Prophet there are many references to spirit and corpus, or soul and body. Although it is relatively easy to conceive of the body and what is corporeal, or that which can be known through the senses, to conceive of spirit and soul is difficult and complicated.

People given to intellectual discussions, such as the theologians and philosophers, Shi'ite and Sunni alike, have presented different views concerning the reality of spirit (ruh). Yet, what is to some extent certain is that Islam considers spirit and body to be two realities opposed to each other. The body through death loses characteristics of life and gradually disintegrates, but it is not so with the spirit. Rather, life in its origin and principle belongs to the spirit. When the spirit is joined to the body, the body also derives life from it, and when the spirit separates from the body and cuts its bond to the body—the event that is called death—the body ceases to function while the spirit continues to live.

Mr. Hubbard describes the parts of man in the book *Scientology: The Fundamentals of Thought* as follows:

The individual man is divisible into three parts.

The first of these is the spirit, called in Scientology the THETAN.

The second of these parts is the MIND.

The third of these parts is the BODY.

He continues:

These three Parts of Man—the *thetan*, the *mind* and the *body*—are each one different studies, but they influence each other markedly and continually. Of the three, the senior entity is the thetan. For without the thetan, there would

be no mind or animation in the body. While without a body or a mind, there is still animation and life in the thetan.

The thetan *is* the person. You are YOU *in* a body.

From a Scientology point of view the thetan lives on after death, as the thetan is immortal. This can be seen to be very much in keeping with the Islamic beliefs of the spirit.

A sub-study of Scientology is Dianetics. This was first introduced as a study of the mind, but later as the development of this study grew it was further redefined as a study of “What the soul is doing to the body.” Scientology was similarly further redefined as “The study and handling of the spirit in relationship to itself, universes and other life.”

The similarities are further emphasized by this statement by Mr. Hubbard: “However, as studies have gone forward, it has become more and more apparent that the senior activity of life is that of the thetan and that in the absence of the spirit no further life exists.”

Thus one can see that what is termed spirit, soul and body, as well as life and death, have much agreement with each other in both Islam and Scientology philosophies.

IV. AHLUL-BAIT—EXPLORING THE RELATION BETWEEN ISLAM AND SCIENTOLOGY

To understand that Islam and Scientology are compatible and in agreement, it helps to know *Ahlul-Bait*. For the reason of pronunciation, the term is spelled *Ahlul-Bait*, but it is actually *Ahl al-Bait*. *Ahl* means family and *al-Bait* means *house of God*. Thus, *Ahlul-Bait* means *family of the house of God*, although it is generally considered to mean, “The family of the Household of the Prophet.”

While the Quran encourages Muslims to accept that earlier prophecies and knowledges are actually a part of Islamic thought and a place for Islamic study, so does Scientology to a degree. Similarly L. Ron Hubbard writes, “The phenomena of Scientology are discovered and are held in common by all men and all life forms.” He also stated when describing the aims of Scientology, “The combined truths of fifty thousand years of thinking men, distilled and amplified by new discoveries about man, have made for this success.” It is apparent that both the Scientology and Islam teachings have the understanding that their philosophies and sciences (both these religions do profess to have both philosophies and sciences as they are religions

in the very widest and fullest sense of the term and both their philosophies and sciences are demonstrable) encompass not only their own adherents but apply to all manner of life and its interaction within the universe and beyond. From this point of view, both religions would consider themselves to have the understanding that they are part of the family of mankind and that mankind is something to be helped through their respective knowledges of life and the universe.

One fundamental and very basic aspect of both the Scientology and the Islamic religions is that they both believe that man is basically good. This is very distinct from Christianity, which supposes that man is composed of original sin. With such a basic common understanding this writer would be surprised if members of the Scientology and Islam religions could not gain an understanding of each other.

V. SCIENTOLOGY AND THE IMAM ZAMAM

In Shi'ite Islam, there is the Prophecy of Mohammed (PBUH) who left a crucial hadith (meaning a verbal tradition) which states, "I leave you with important things. The Quran which is the book of God and my *Ahlul-Bait* (family of the house of God), and you may never separate them." There is another prophecy in another hadith and that is each Quran verse has seven meanings and these meanings were handed on by Ali of the Household of The Prophet to the Imam who then passed it to the next Imam. The Imam is the spiritual leader of all of Islam per the Shi'ite teachings. These seven different meanings of the Quran verses can be either obvious or hidden. The current spiritual leader is termed the Imam Zamam, and he is now in a state of *Ghaib* which when translated means *hidden*, or *absent*. This Imam Zamam is in a state where no one can see, hear or touch him through the usual perceptions, so it appears that he is absent. However, he is not actually *absent* but rather sternly existing. This is a great and mysterious part of Islam, but it is possible such a state could be readily reached through the application of the Scientology technology and that the Imam Zamam could be experienced. Al-Hamd Li' Llah (Thanks for God)!

VI. PRACTICES OF SCIENTOLOGY

The Quran is not just for belief and faith. There is also *practice* which can be viewed as similar to Scientology in its emphasis on leading a better life. Obviously there are the ritual practices of the individual churches, which may not be the same, as the Scientology religion is obviously not the Islamic religion. However, both philosophies have doctrines and works that are designed to assist a person lead a better life outside their respective churches and

mosques. These include moral and ethical codes of conduct that members may benefit by if followed. Both have their own justice codes.

As an example of a compatible moral code, we could refer to the practice of the exclusion of alcohol on Islam's behalf, while for Scientology, L. Ron Hubbard wrote of alcohol in *The Way to Happiness*: "People who take alcohol are not alert. It impairs their ability to react even when it seems to them they are more alert because of it. Alcohol has some medicinal value. It can be grossly overestimated. Don't let anyone who has been drinking drive you in a car or fly you in a plane. Drinking can take lives in more ways than one. A little liquor goes a long way; don't let too much of it wind up in unhappiness or death. Deter people from excessive drinking." Obviously the two views on alcohol are not identical, but many Scientologists do not drink alcohol and would be very much at home in a Muslim alcohol-free environment.

This is simply an example of a code in life that both religions share in some degree, and observe so their fellow man can better survive. In this respect they have compatibility.

However, the main practice of Scientology is the practice of *auditing*, which is a practice to raise one to the spiritual state of Clear and OT. Of course there are no written claims by Scientology that one could in fact contact the state of Ghaib where the Imam Zamam exists. To attain such a spiritual state in Islam it is said one would have to fast and pray, but this state is not considered the same as Clear or OT by Scientologists.

The state of Clear, and above it, OT, is attained through auditing. Auditing is the practice whereby, with the assistance of one who is well-trained, known as an *auditor* (meaning *one who listens*, from the Latin *audire*, to listen), Scientology addresses the actual spiritual being, or *thetan* as it is called in its own terminology. The person, who is the thetan, with help from the auditor and his years of patient study and skill, is able to locate in the person's memory times when he has lessened himself as a spiritual being, reduced his ability and perception as a spiritual being and thus reverse what is termed the downward spiral of existence. Initially it will be found that much of what has reduced a spiritual being's (or thetan's) abilities is occluded from memory and appears lost. This is the case of most people. However, with the aid of the auditor, the person who is receiving auditing is soon able to recount his past and regain otherwise lost memories and spiritual abilities and begin the upward passage on The Bridge to Total Freedom. It is this Bridge, which is also represented diagrammatically as an *awareness and gradation chart* of a person's passage to full OT (Operating as a Thetan) which shows the relative position of each person as he travels this spiritual path to greater abilities. As a thetan, a being is able to regain otherwise lost awarenesses, perceptions and abilities.

On The Bridge to Total Freedom each step is clearly marked out with the expected return of each ability written beside each level. The results of travelling up this Bridge are known beforehand and thoroughly predictable.

It is with this increased perception and awareness that this writer can expect that the state of Imam Zamam can be reached. From the study of both religions this writer can expect that the Imam Zamam is directly accessible through Scientology auditing.

VII. THE APPEARANCE OF THE MAHDI—ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE AIMS OF SCIENTOLOGY

Allamah Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Tabatabai wrote this about the Mahdi:

Therefore by reason of inner necessity and determination, the future will see a day when human society will be replete with justice and when all will live in peace and tranquillity, when human beings will be fully possessed of virtue and perfection. The establishment of such a condition will occur through human hands but with divine succor. And the leader of such a society, who will be the savior of man, is called in the language of the hadith, the Mahdi.

In different religions that govern the world such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, Zoroastrianism and Islam there are references to a person who will come as the savior of mankind. These religions have usually given happy tidings of his coming, although there are naturally certain differences in detail that can be discerned when those teachings are compared carefully. The hadith of the Holy Prophet upon which all Muslims agree, 'The Mahdi is of my progeny,' refers to the same truth.

Mr. L. Ron Hubbard wrote, "The goal of Scientology is making the individual capable of living a better life in his own estimation and with his fellows and the playing of a better game."

In 1965, Mr. Hubbard wrote The Aims of Scientology:

A civilization without insanity, without criminals and without war, where the able can prosper and honest beings can have rights, and where Man is free to rise to greater heights, are the aims of Scientology.

First announced to an enturbulated world in 1950, these aims are well within the grasp of our technology.

Nonpolitical in nature, Scientology welcomes any individual of any creed, race or nation.

We seek no revolution. We seek only evolution to higher states of being for the individual and for society.

We are achieving our aims.

After endless millennia of ignorance about himself, his mind and the universe, a breakthrough has been made for Man.

Other efforts Man has made have been surpassed.

The combined truths of fifty thousand years of thinking men, distilled and amplified by new discoveries about Man have made for this success.

We welcome you to Scientology. We only expect of you your help in achieving our aims and helping others. We expect you to be helped.

Scientology is the most vital movement on Earth today.

In a turbulent world the job is not easy. But then, if it were, we wouldn't have to be doing it.

We respect Man and believe he is worthy of help. We respect you and believe you too can help.

Scientology does not owe its help. We have done nothing to cause us to propitiate. Had we done so we would not now be bright enough to do what we are doing.

Man suspects all offers of help. He has often been betrayed, his confidence shattered. Too frequently he has given his trust and been betrayed. We may err, for we build a world with broken straws. But we will never betray your faith in us so long as you are one of us.

The sun never sets on Scientology.

And may a new day dawn for you, for those you love and for Man.

Our aims are simple if great.

And we will succeed, and are succeeding at each new revolution of the Earth.

Your help is acceptable to us.

Our help is yours.

For the future of Scientology, Mr. Hubbard wrote,

With Scientology, Man can prevent insanity, criminality and war.

...the primary race of Earth is not between one nation and another. The only race that matters at this moment is the one being run between Scientology and the atomic bomb. The history of Man, as has been said by well known authorities, may well depend upon which one wins.

L. Ron Hubbard never pretended to be anything other than a man. Yet if his work comes to fruition then it would fulfill the prophecies of Mahdi. As to the other religions, Buddhism refers to the return of Metteyya. Again, this prophecy is of the return of a man who would complete the works of Buddha. The timing of the return of Metteyya has been established in the Pali to be about 2,500 years after the death of Buddha. That was about the year when *Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health* was released in 1950. It was a few short years after that when Mr. Hubbard wrote his poem, *The Hymn of Asia*, where he asked in the opening line, "Am I Metteyya?" Since then the Scientology movement has grown to 8 million members worldwide, and it continues to swell. It has established schools, drug rehabilitation programs, criminal rehabilitation programs and worldwide commissions for the elimination of the causes of insanity. On top of this it is continually raising the abilities, the awarenesses and the intelligence of the people who undertake the challenge that Mr. Hubbard has thrown before them.

Since Mr. Hubbard departed from his body in 1986, he and Scientology organizations have literally received thousands upon thousands of proclamations, awards and recognitions from governments and organizations and individuals the world over.

CONCLUSION

Islam and Scientology have some similarities. The pursuit of knowledge and wisdom are highest amongst them. They both wish to elevate and free man. Both have the deep and most-respected beliefs of other religions and sectarian practices. Both have been persecuted in the media

unfairly with blatantly false information spread about them. Both have prospered in the face of this. However, it is the belief that man can be helped that brings these two religions into study by this writer, and this writer believes that both religions have not only much to offer to mankind but to each other as well.

HAJI MUHAMMAD AL-QAAIM SAFA SAWADA

April 4, 1996

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Haji Muhammad al-Qaaim Safa Sawada has studied Eastern and Western religions for half a century. He has been accorded the venerated Islamic title of Haji, having completed a pilgrimage to Mecca. He is president of the Ahlul-Bait (A.S.) Center in Japan.

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