

Paradgan

Preface

This discourse shows a path to a happy, hopeful and useful life. This path is called the “Rahani way” or “Rahanism”.

This discourse contains five sections, each of which is called a “Parad”.

- The first Parad is about the relationship of a human being with the universe.
 - The second, third and fourth Parads are about the relationship of a human being with society.
 - The fifth Parad is about the relationship of a human being with herself/himself.
- The whole of this discourse is called “Paradgan”.

Rahanism is a way of life that is based on a set of beliefs and viewpoints. This set of beliefs and viewpoints is called the “Rahani philosophy”. The Rahani philosophy includes three fundamental beliefs, each of which is called an “axiom”. These three axioms are described in the first, second and fifth Parads.

In writing the Paradgan, the author has been inspired by the great body of philosophical, cultural and scientific knowledge that has been amassed over a long period of time. All people have been involved in creating this body of knowledge, amongst whom there have been thousands whose contributions are impressive.

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First Parad: The Universe and Transcession

I am a tiny part of a vast system that is called the universe. The building materials of the universe are in different forms (such as hydrogen, calcium, water, wood and light). However, each of these materials is formed from primitive constituents. For example, water is formed from atoms of hydrogen and oxygen, and each of these atoms is formed from more primitive constituents. The most primitive of such constituents are the primary building blocks of the universe, and are referred to as “primon”. In other words, primon is the primary building material of any thing that includes any form of matter and/or energy.

The universe is shaped by primon, space, time and the set of all natural laws and each of these four agents is referred to as a “radicon”. Radicons are not independent of each other and are highly interrelated.

Everything in the universe, other than radicons, is a “phenomenon”. A pebble is a phenomenon and so is a drop of rain, the Earth and every galaxy. Light is a phenomenon and so is a rainbow. A tree is a phenomenon and so is every leaf of the tree and every cell of every leaf of the tree. A bird is a phenomenon and so is the call of the bird, the flying of the bird and the living of the bird. Hope is a phenomenon and happiness is a phenomenon.

A phenomenon is either an assembly of primon that has taken form in space and time in accordance with natural laws (like a pebble, a tree and a bird) or is an effect of such phenomena,

without involving any primon (like the living of a bird which is an effect of the bird and feelings of hope and happiness which are effects of the brain of a living being). Radicons are responsible for the formation of all phenomena. However, the existence of radicons is not separate from that of phenomena. Radicons exist within phenomena.

Every phenomenon has a beginning and an end, but radicons that are the fabric of the universe and the universe itself, which contains all the radicons and phenomena, have no beginning and no end. I am a phenomenon that began to live at a moment in time and my life will come to an end at another moment in time. For so many times in the past, every particle of my body has taken part in the formation of other phenomena, and this process will happen again and again in the future. I am a little thread in the expanse of the web of life, which is spun in the span of time. I am a result of the evolution of living things over a long period of time.

Every phenomenon is interrelated with many other phenomena in different ways. Every phenomenon is in a state of constant change and the universe is an interwoven, self-propelling and self-regulating system that is continuously changing. The term “transcession” is used to refer to this process of self-propelling, self-regulating and continuous change of the universe.

The essence of the above points can be described in terms of an axiom that is called the “axiom of universe”:

Axiom of Universe: The universe, which is the arena of radicons and the stage of transcession, is a churning ocean of changing phenomena and I am a tiny drop in this ocean.

The axiom of universe is the expression of my feelings towards the universe. In utter fascination with the splendour of transcession, I am thrilled that I am a part of this hustle and bustle. The axiom of universe gives me a reassuring sense of belonging. I have a deep feeling of closeness with nature and I respect nature.

Second Parad: Human Societies and Hamdad

Human societies continuously evolve and change along meandering paths. Some aspects of this evolutionary process in one society are specific to that society while other aspects are similar to those in other societies. One common characteristic of all human societies is that, in the course of time, in relation to human rights, access to facilities and social justice and security, they are evolving in the following ways:

- Educational, health, medical, cultural, sport, leisure, ... facilities increase and become more widely and fairly available to people.
- Scientific, technical, industrial, agricultural, economic, ... capabilities increase and material amenities become more widely and fairly available to people.
- The degree of social care for children, the elderly and people with special needs increases.
- Equality of rights for men and women and for people of different ethnicity and race becomes more widely accepted, and respect for the individuality of people increases.
- Freedom of thought and expression and freedom of political, social, religious, cultural, ... activities become more widely accepted.
- Independence of the media, freedom of the press to reflect public opinion, freedom of publication of books and the spread of ideas and information through any means of communication become more widely accepted.
- Social corruption and, in particular, the abuse of power, improper use of influence and bribery decreases.

- Governments, laws, judicial systems and police forces become more humane and the degree of observance of human rights increases.
- Social conscience of people and respect for morality and the law increase.
- The need for the protection of the environment becomes more widely accepted.
- ... etc.

These trends of social change take form, as a result of human endeavours in the course of time, and gradually make the human societies more just and humane. The general direction of these changes is indicated by a concept called "Hamdad". Hamdad is defined as an ideal social system that is in a state of absolute perfection in relation to human rights, access to facilities and social justice and security. Hamdad is a social system towards which every human society is progressing, but no society will ever completely reach it. Hamdad represents the essence of a just and humane society, without its details being known or relevant.

The movement of human societies towards Hamdad is not at all regular or straightforward but is taking place along paths full of ups and downs and twists and turns. If the movement of a society towards Hamdad is investigated within a relatively narrow time window of a few years or even a few decades, in many cases, it may appear that the society, far from tending towards Hamdad, is moving away from it. However, once viewed through a wider window of time, the movement of the society will always be seen to be oriented towards Hamdad. To explain, the path of social changes can be likened to a meandering mountainous road. In this case, the directions of travel along short sections of the road cannot normally indicate the overall direction of the road. Another important point, that should be considered in investigating the general direction of movement in a human society, is that changes in various aspects of the society take place at different speeds and in non-harmonious ways.

It is people who effect the movement of societies towards Hamdad. This is brought about through advances in knowledge and culture and through social struggle. In every era, within the context of that era, people strive to change the social system in ways that they believe will improve the living conditions in the society. However, not every change that at a time seems promising, will necessarily give rise to a satisfactory outcome. Also, different strata of people in a society differ in their choice of ways in which they want the social system to change. These differences of opinion, which are mainly class related, cause continuous struggles that sometimes take place with relative calm and sometimes turn into bitter and violent conflicts. These struggles, on the one hand, result in continuous strife in human societies and, on the other hand, create a fertile ground for social changes. These social changes are full of fluctuation and oscillation but their long term resultant tends towards Hamdad.

Rapid progress towards Hamdad is impractical. The reason is two-fold. Firstly, path finding towards Hamdad is mainly through trial and error and experience and this requires time. Secondly, the possibility of progress towards Hamdad in a society depends on suitable levels of available facilities and amenities as well as a suitable level of culture and progress in these areas, in particular progress in culture, normally takes place only gradually. Progress towards Hamdad can take place along different paths, just as climbing the summit of a mountain can be by different routes. Human societies are not isolated from each other and influence the social developments of one another in various ways. In particular, in the course of time, human societies benefit from each other's experience in progressing towards Hamdad.

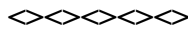
The essence of the above discussion can be expressed in terms of an axiom that is called the "axiom of Hamdad":

Axiom of Hamdad: Human societies are moving towards Hamdad along paths with many ups and downs and twists and turns.

I believe in the axiom of Hamdad. This belief fills me with hope. This belief motivates me to take part in Hamdad-seeking activities. At a philosophical level, I try to spread the Rahani ideas and at a socio-political level I am an active person working towards aims that, in my opinion, have “Hamdadial” orientations. Rahani philosophy is a guiding light for living and for indicating social ideals, whereas socio-political activities are attempts at improving existing social conditions. My socio-political endeavours are with patience, knowing that the journey towards Hamdad involves many twists and turns.

Social changes accompany widespread socio-political activities. These activities normally take place within the framework of political parties and activist groups (such as human rights and environmental groups). I would like to be well informed about socio-political events and activities and to have an effective role in this arena. It is up to me to choose the organisations that are suitable for my socio-political activities, and to decide on the levels of my involvement in these activities. I endeavour to take part in socio-political activities that I believe have appropriate orientations, in areas and at levels that are compatible with my circumstances and inclinations.

Hamdad-seeking socio-political endeavours of people play a key role in the evolution and progress of human societies even if, in the short term, these endeavours appear to have been fruitless and wasted. The socio-political endeavours of every person form a drop in the stream that turns the wheel of the water-mill of history.



At an international level, I support cooperation, friendship and close relations between the peoples, nations and countries of the world. I support international organisations that represent all the people of the world for carrying out necessary international activities such as:

- protection of individual human rights,
- protection of the environment,
- protection of the rights of peoples, nations and countries,
- assisting countries that need help to overcome problems in their social development,
- helping countries in emergency situations,
- helping to resolve disputes between countries,
- development and evolution of international laws,
- dealing, in appropriate forms, with governments that violate international laws and
- management of an international judicial system and police force, where every country will also have its own judicial system and police force but no country will be allowed to have military forces.

Third Parad:

Morality, Law, Customs and Human Relationships

I have relationships with other people at different levels and in various ways. At a personal level, I have relationships with my family and friends and, at professional and social levels, I have relationships with many other people. At a personal level, I try to have a loving, loyal and trusting relationship with my family and to have a caring and sincere relationship with my friends. At a professional level, I try to carry out my professional duties in terms of amicable relations with others. At a social level, in the context of socio-political, cultural, art, sport, ... activities, I try to be a useful and trustworthy person in my group relationships.

In the wider social arena, I have a deep feeling of attachment to the people and culture of my homeland. At an international level, I have a feeling of friendship with all peoples, cultures and nations. I am a member of the human race and my life finds meaning in the context of cooperation, sympathy and empathy with other people.

Human behaviour, activities and relationships are influenced by customs and by moral and legal principles. Moral principles are guidelines for proper human behaviour. These principles are concepts such as: honesty, modesty, conscientiousness, faithfulness, Moral principles have evolved over thousands of years of human experience. The evolution of moral principles has been brought about by the social desire to encourage friendly human relationships, to keep the family environment free from quarrel and tension, to discourage harsh behaviour and cruelty, to disapprove of greed and wastefulness, This social desire continues to effect the gradual evolution of moral principles in accordance with changing circumstances. Morality does not only concern relations between humans but its domain includes the behaviour of human beings towards other living things and the environment.

Moral principles are ingrained in people, through family and social education, and this will influence their behaviour. Increase in the level of respect for morality in a society will enhance the readiness of that society for Hamdial progress and I endeavour to follow moral principles to the best of my ability and to advocate respect for these principles. In some cases, different groups of people have different views regarding a moral issue. For example, some people believe that eating meat is unethical, but others do not share this view. In such cases, with consideration of different viewpoints, I form my opinion on the basis of my own understanding of the issue.

Legal principles play a vital role in the organisation of human societies and in the maintenance of order, security and social justice. Legal principles are defined through collections of written rules about the rights, duties, powers and constraints of individuals as well as governmental and non-governmental organisations at local, provincial, national and international levels. Legal principles have evolved in response to the needs of human societies over a long period of time, and they continue to evolve in accordance with changing needs and conditions.

The level of respect for the law in a human society is an important indicator of the readiness of that society for Hamdial progress. However, general respect for the law does not imply that every part of the law necessarily deserves respect. In fact, at any stage of the development of a human society, there are sections of the law that are incompatible with the prevailing conditions and are in need of change. Such changes are brought about sometimes peacefully and sometimes under intense pressure from people. I consider it my duty to respect the law but, if needed, I am prepared to be active in support of any necessary changes in the law. Such an activity is of a socio-political nature and the manner in which it should be conducted depends on the prevailing circumstances.

Many aspects of human life are based on customs. They are the customs that determine how people dress, what they eat, how they eat, how they express their friendship, how they grieve, how they show their respect, how they raise their children, how they marry, how they make love, Customs are shaped over the course of time in response to human needs, in the context of possibilities and the prevailing climatic conditions. Some aspects of customs of different cultural groups are similar, but the customs of every cultural group have many features that are specific to that culture. These specific features often provide cultural identity and people feel emotional attachment towards them. Customs are not static and unchanging but are constantly evolving, influenced by changing circumstances and through contact with the customs of other cultures.

I accept most customs and live with them, although, depending on the circumstances and as appropriate, I tend to refine the customs by making them more humane, more beautiful, more

straightforward, healthier and free from superstition. However, there are customs that are unacceptable to me, such as those customs that are in conflict with human rights, harmful to the environment, damaging to health and those customs that violate moral principles.

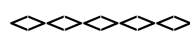
Fourth Parad: Knowledge, Art and Sport

Human knowledge is a precious heritage for society. This knowledge has been accumulated over a long period of time and has many branches in the areas of science, technology, arts, medicine, industry, economics, social sciences, Human knowledge is instrumental in increasing general facilities, improving the standard of living, advancing culture, expanding general knowledge and reducing superstitious beliefs in human societies, and in providing a better understanding of natural laws and the universe. Human knowledge is a key factor in facilitating Hamdial progress and allowing a deeper appreciation of the sublime beauty of transcession.

Art is a means for the expression of human beliefs, wishes, thoughts, feelings, fantasies, worries and hopes in pleasing and exciting forms, and a means for the creation of devices and implements and the performance of many day to day tasks in elegant and delightful ways. Art has many branches in the fields of poetry and literature, music and singing, dance, painting and sculpture, graphic and decorative arts, theatre and performing arts, cinematic arts, photography, calligraphy, handicraft, cosmetic arts, The degree of appreciation and support for art in a society is a measure of the level of culture in that society. On the other hand, art has a valuable role in enriching the culture of the society. Art is of central importance in human life. Art is the spice of life and the arouser of the best human sentiments. Art is the resonant and exhilarating song of the Hamdial trek.

Sports activities are beneficial for human health and well-being, and provide a suitable context for healthy and exciting leisure pursuits. Sports activities encourage the spirit of cooperation and friendly competition and play an important role in the lives of human beings. Sport is a refreshing and invigorating breeze in the heat of the journey of life.

I value human knowledge, art and sport and I respect knowledgeable people, artists and sports-people. I believe that human societies should provide the necessary facilities and conditions to allow knowledge, art and sport to flourish. I am a supporter of widespread international cooperation in the areas of human knowledge, art and sport.



Human knowledge is expanding continuously and the volume of known facts is increasing. However, the volume of unknowns (the things that we know we do not know) is also increasing all the time. In the course of progress in knowledge, the finding of explanations for unknowns goes hand in hand with the appearance of new unknowns. I am not afraid of unknowns and I know that I will always have many unknowns. There are numerous unknown, or incorrectly known, points that have found clear explanations over the course of time. However, until an unknown point has found a clear explanation, I prefer to accept it as an “unknown” rather than settling for a doubtful explanation. On the other hand, if I realise that I have a mistaken belief, I am prepared to reconsider my belief and rectify it in an appropriate way.

Fifth Parad: Human Beings and Resilience

I am a result of the evolution of living things over a long period of time. My body is a delicately organised assembly of parts that are engaged in various activities. My body has the

ability to heal itself, to combat diseases, to acclimatise itself and to go through the stages of childhood, youth and old age in an orderly manner. My brain is the seat of an amazing phenomenon which is my mind. Within my mind I think, I desire, I reason, I make decisions, I feel familiarity and I feel homesickness,

I have many mental abilities that are ingrained in me. Among these, there are those abilities that help me in having endurance and stability in life: I can bring myself to feel calm and hopeful when I am in a state of distress and anxiety, I can trek through complex routes patiently to reach my goals, I can counsel and advise myself, I can criticise and punish myself, I can prepare myself to face difficulties bravely, I can brace myself to bear pain and sorrow with patience, With the aid of these mental abilities, I can go through the twists and turns of life with self-confidence, self-reliance, hopefulness and dignity.

I use the term “resilience” to refer to the capability of leading a stable life with reliance on mental abilities and I express the essence of my feelings in this relation in terms of an axiom that is called the “axiom of resilience”:

Axiom of Resilience: With reliance on my mental abilities, I can lead a dignified and stable life and find suitable ways of dealing with difficulties and complexities.

I believe in the axiom of resilience. This belief is my pillar of strength in the ups and downs of life and is a source for hope and tranquillity and for acquiring strength to face worry, fear, illness, depression, I live with reliance on my mental abilities and, in particular, I use them in the context of two mental processes, namely, “meditation” which is a process for gaining peace of mind and tranquillity and “cogitation” which is a process for finding ways of dealing with difficulties in life.

Meditation is the total concentration of the attention on an object, a concept, an action, a feeling, a tune, a sentence, Meditation is the freeing of mind from any engagement other than utter concentration on one thing. I meditate on the feeling of being a drop in a lake, I meditate on the feeling of being a relative of a flower bush, I meditate on the feeling of being in flight with the swallows, I meditate on the feeling of being a beam of light, I meditate on the feeling of being a handful of dust, I meditate on a piece of music. I meditate by reading or listening to a piece of poetry or prose. I meditate by singing or listening to a song or melody. I meditate by the mental repetition of a word such as calm, calm, calm, ... or a sentence such as be patient, be patient, be patient, I meditate by slow and rhythmic movement of my body. I meditate by stroking a leaf, by watching the sunset, by touching the dew at dawn, by holding a pebble in my hand, I meditate by the mental exploration of my body: by focusing my attention on a part of my body and by a slow and gradual movement of the centre of my attention from one point to another point of that part of my body.

I meditate while lying down, while sitting, while standing, I meditate before going to sleep, in the freshness of awakening, as I am walking, as I am washing up the dishes, as I am waiting in a queue, The length of my meditation depends on the circumstances and my need and readiness. My meditation can be as brief as a few moments or it may go on for hours.

I have no specific time, specific duration, specific mode, specific place or specific number of times for meditation but my life is intertwined with meditation. I can meditate in many different ways but among these there are those that, by experience, I have found to suit me best. These forms of meditation are compatible with my mentality and conditions and I use them more often. The ability to focus my attention on meditation and to maintain this focus throughout the meditation requires the total engagement of my mind. I can improve this ability by experience and perseverance.

Meditation endows me with peace of mind and freshness and spreads the light of hope in my heart. Meditation helps me to rid myself of mental fatigue and accumulated nervous tension. Meditation enables me to feel relaxed and free from everyday worries and conflicts. Meditation allows me to look at life from a distance and have a better understanding of the relative importance of things. Meditation is a pillar of resilience and enables me to restore my strength and be ready for the journey along the meandering path of life.

Meditation may be done in a group. One form of “group meditation” is for the members of the group to meditate individually. The other form of group meditation is for all the members of the group to meditate in a coordinated manner, led by one person. In either form of group meditation, the combination of meditation and the reassuring feeling of togetherness creates a profound effect on people.

The life of a human being is interspersed with happy and peaceful events as well as worrying and painful events, with successes and failures, with growing and becoming strong and with waning and becoming impaired, In my journey of life, with its happy and sad episodes, I need guidance for coping with difficulties. I benefit from my cultural heritage which conveys the wisdom of ages regarding appropriate ways of living. I learn from my personal experience. I make use of consultation with other people. And, I have a method through which I can be my own adviser. This method is called cogitation.

Cogitation is the use of one's power of thinking to work out ways of dealing with problems in life. I cogitate by focusing my thoughts on the problem for which I need help. I try to explore the problem from different angles, calmly and patiently, in the depths of my mind. I try to examine the roots of the problem and to find a way of dealing with it. My mind has the ability to be itself and its own adviser at the same time. I can be in a state of cogitation for hours and I may need to cogitate a number of times to resolve a problem. Cogitation is a pillar of resilience and is an effective aid in facing the difficulties and complexities of life.

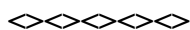
I cogitate when I am in doubt and confused. I cogitate when I am frightened and worried. I cogitate when I am depressed. I cogitate when I have done something unworthy of me and I want to examine it, learn from it and put it right, if possible. I cogitate when I need to mentally prepare myself for carrying out a difficult task. I cogitate when I need help in accepting the conditions of an incurable illness, a disability or impairment and in finding ways of carrying on with a happy and useful life, in spite of my health shortcomings.

A person is often engaged in scattered thinking about various subjects such as planning for activities to be carried out, remembering events, finding ways of resolving problems, Cogitation is a focused and self-conscious mode of this normal mental process.

One may cogitate in written form. In this case, the mental process of cogitation carries on as usual, but one writes down the thoughts that pass through the mind during cogitation. What is written down need not be coherent or neat. This material is not for reading or keeping and is best thrown away after cogitation. The advantage of written cogitation is that the process of writing helps with concentration and the depth of cogitation.

My body is a highly complex assembly that has taken form over billions of years. My life and my health are dependent on many internal activities of my body that take place in an orderly and harmonious manner. These life-giving activities of my body can, in different ways and for various reasons, be disrupted endangering my health and life. Human knowledge has a huge volume of solutions for bodily and mental disorders and this volume is increasing all the time. If I am ill and in need of medical care, I can be helped by surgical operation, medicine, advice, However, to be effective, all forms of medical help require that the defensive, healing and regulating processes of the body are active in facing the illness. These health-restoring powers of the body are at work all the time, but I can have an important role in the degree of their effectiveness. If I do not yield to the illness and am full

of hope for my recovery, I create a suitable environment in my body for the efficient working of the health-restoring powers. I must, whilst observing medical advice, face the illness with calm and patience and with faith in the effectiveness of the health-restoring powers of the body. In this manner of encountering illness, I make use of meditation. In particular, I meditate with a deep feeling of hope for recovery while focusing my attention on those parts of my body that are affected by illness. I use the term “admentation” to refer to this kind of meditation as well as any other kind of meditation that is for help in recovery from illness.



I love life – not an imaginary life which is devoid of difficulties – but life as it is. I love life with all its pleasant and unpleasant turns. I try to gain energy from each pleasant turn of life, so that I can endure its unpleasant turns with patience. I try, to the best of my ability, to have a useful and constructive role in every aspect of my life and I am full of hope for success. However, I accept the outcome, at whatever level it may be, as the actual result of my endeavours. I refer to this attitude towards life as “endeavour – hope – acceptance”.

I appreciate the blessings of life. I feel grateful for every desirable aspect of life: for having the love of my mother and father, for the affection of my spouse, for having children, for having any level of health, for being able to learn, for the faithfulness of a friend, for hearing a song, for a pleasant meal, for the scent of a flower in the garden, I feel contented when I am in desirable situations. What is contentment? Contentment is a feeling. One is contented if one feels contented.

I like to share in people's happiness but I share their sorrow too. I try to use the happy occasions to sweeten life and to face the difficulties and sad situations with patience and dignity. I value the gift of life but I am not afraid of death. Death is the end of my journey of life, while the effects of my life will remain in different ways. Death is the silence at the end of a song. Death is the return of the particles of my body to nature.

What is the purpose of life? The purpose of life is “to live” and it would be good if one's living is Rahani-wise. What is the purpose of being? The purpose of being is “to exist” and it would be good if one appreciates the splendour of the existence of the universe and feels a part of it.

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