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TÍTULO: Investigación comparativa de los puntos de vista de Borzuya, el médico, y de John Hick en el problema de la diversidad de las religiones y la coexistencia de sus seguidores.

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RESUMEN: Este artículo investiga los puntos de vista de Borzuya, el médico, y el de Hick, en el problema de la diversidad de las religiones y la coexistencia de seguidores de religiones en un método comparativo. El método consiste en comparar los datos obtenidos mediante el análisis documental y la revisión de obras accesibles y documentales históricos sobre Borzuya y las obras de Hick sobre sus puntos de vista en el problema de la diversidad de las religiones y el pluralismo. El terreno común de Borzuya con Hick es negar el exclusivismo y el inclusivismo, pensando en contraste con el incrédulo y su atención a la moralidad como resumen de todas las religiones, pero él no está de acuerdo con la religión real y la religión salvadora. Los resultados muestran que los seguidores de las religiones pueden entenderse entre sí por la moralidad y obtener una convivencia.

PALABRAS CLAVES: Borzuya, el médico; John Hick; diversidad de religiones; pluralismo, coexistencia entre los seguidores de religiones.

TITLE: Comparative investigation of Borzuya, the physician's and John Hick's viewpoints in the problem of diversity of religions and coexistence of followers of religions.

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ABSTRACT: This paper investigates Borzuya, the physician's and Hick's viewpoints in the problem of diversity of religions and coexistence of followers of religions in a comparative method. The method is to compare data obtained by documentary analysis and reviewing accessible works and historic documentaries about Borzuya and works of Hick on his viewpoints in the problem of diversity of religions and pluralism. Borzuya's common ground with Hick is in negation of exclusivism and inclusivism, thinking in contrast to unbelieving and his attention to morality as abstract of all religions, but he disagrees him in quiddity of real religion and savior religion. Results show that followers of religions can understand each other by morality and gain a coexistence.

KEY WORDS: Borzuya the Physician, John Hick, diversity of religions, pluralism, coexistence of followers of religions.

INTRODUCTION.

The issue of diversity of religions is one of the most important issues today. Religious wars, wide connections between followers of different religions, the advancement of communication and the Information explosion have made this issue more and more important. There are two fundamental questions in this problem. First, what is the relation between each of these religions and the truth? Are they all false, are they all true or the reality is something between these two assumptions? The second question is about salvation of these religions. Which religion can save us in the other word? The way we respond to these questions is very influential in the process of global peace and cultural

diplomacy among nations. A person who believes that only his religion can save him and other religions has no share from truth and salvation, look at the followers of other religions humorously, so this belief causes some problems in the peaceful coexistence of the followers of the religions.

Regarding this issue, some researchers consider the pluralist view of the issue of religious diversity as being unique to the West, while some scholars have pointed that this view existed in the East, too. In this topic, reviewing the Iranian tradition to find this issue in history and possibly discovering ways to solve it in Iranian studies has a great position. Borzuya the Physician is among the first people that talked about this problem and it can be useful for us, so in this research, his views have been compared to John Hick's views as one of the most prominent pluralist thinkers in the West.

Borzuya was a physician at the time of Khosrow I namely Anoushiravan, who was born in Marv or Nishapur (Chupanian, 2014: 36). Khosrow I searched for a wise and philosopher person who knows Pahlavi and Sanskrit at the same time to translate Panchatantra into Pahlavi (Ibn al-Muqaffa', 1980: 41). These features were gathered in Borzuya which had a journey to India -when he was young- to bring herbal medicines (Ibn al-Muqaffa', 1980: 54), so he traveled to India. Since Hindus did not publish their books to other nations, he introduced himself as a student of great professors there (Ibn al-Muqaffa', 1980: 54). After a great adventure, he brought Panchatantra, the chess game, some medical works and even a number of Indian physicians to the court of Khosrow I (Momtahan, 1975: 149). Ferdowsi and al-Tha'alibi believed that Borzuya only brought Panchatantra from India, but Ibn al-Muqaffa' refers to other books that one of them is probably Mahabharata (Mahjub, 1970: 54). In exchange for this service, Borzuya asked Khosrow I to order Bozorgmehr-e Bokhtagan to write a description of his mission at the beginning of the book (Ibn al-Muqaffa', 1980: 53). "Bab-e Borzuya" which means Borzuya's chapter was written in this way and placed in the translated book that we name it in Persian "Kalila va Demna".

However, there are other viewpoints about “Bab-e Borzuya”. De Blois believes that this chapter is written by Borzuya himself or a writer who has had complete information about him (Chupanian, 2014: 44). He also believed that in the early years, there was a significant tendency to consider Borzuya and the Bozorgmehr-e Bokhtagan as one person (De Blois, 1990, 48). Some other historians believe that “Bab-e Borzuya” has been written by Ibn al-Muqaffa', who has Related his philosophical beliefs to Borzuya (Bukhari, 1990: 18). In this article, we just study this chapter of the book *Kalila va Demna*.

In the case of Borzuya the physician and *Kalila va Demna*, many books and papers are written that can be exemplified in the book "Darbareye *Kalila va Demna*" written by Dr. Mohammad Ja'far Mahjub in Persian and the book "Burzoy's Voyage to India and the Origin of the Book of *Kalilah wa Dimnah*" written by Professor Francois De Blois in English. These books and papers are mainly about Borzuya's life story and the history of *Kalila va Demna* and its translations, but the content of the book and Borzuya's viewpoint rarely has been investigated. Accordingly, Investigating the viewpoints of Borzuya in the problem of diversity of religions is a necessary work.

The paper is aimed to determine viewpoint of Borzuya the physician in the problem of diversity of religions and compare it with John Hick's view in this regard. The main hypothesis of the research is that Borzuya has had a pluralist view in this regard, although he does not fully agree Hick's view, but with which he shares a lot.

In this research, documentary analysis and bibliographic sources reviewing have been used first, and it has been attempted to examine the theory of these thinkers in the problem of diversity of religions via analyzing the main texts, in particular the section of the contradictions of religions of Bab-e Borzuya. The statistical population of this paper is available sources and works and historical documents, such as the Arabic translation of *Kalila va Demna* by Ibn al-Muqaffa' and two Persian translations of it by Abu'l-Ma'ali Nasrallah and Mohammad bin Abdullah Bukhari. Furthermore,

some of the researches about Borzuya in Persian and English have been used for understanding his text and conditions better. Actually, this paper is a comparative study of these issues with John Hick's views on the diversity of religions. At the end, a rational judgment is made to determine how Borzuya's viewpoints relates to Hick's ideas.

Borzuya's view on the diversity of religions.

As mentioned above, the first attempt is to extract the view of Borzuya about the diversity of religions according to Bab-e Borzuya in the book *Kalila va Demna*. This chapter begins with these sentences by Borzuya: " Borzuya, the Pioneer of physicians of Pars, says that my father was a soldier, and my mother was from the home of one of scholars of Zoroastrian religion, and the first gift from God for me was friendship of my parents" (Nasrallah, 2004: 44).

In this chapter, Borzuya pointed out on the first page to the problem of diversity of religions. He said: "The science of medicine is commendable to all wise men and in all religions." (Nasrallah, 2004: 44). This shows that he had a positive view to what is recommended in all religions, so he practiced medical profession.

Borzuya's research and thinking about religions.

Borzuya's discussion on the diversity of religions begins with his doubt. He first doubted the religion of his predecessors and search about other religions, but soon he saw that others are inconsistent, too. Borzuya mentioned to this state in Bab-e Borzuya and said that none of followers of religions have a good reason for their beliefs. Some of them think like their predecessors, some others follow their kings and the rest want to gain gifts of this world via religion. However, all of them hold that their religion is the only true religion (Nasrallah, 2004: 48).

Borzuya decided to speak to clergies of all religions to see which religion is true, so he began his adventure (Bukhari, 1990: 61). After talking to religious leaders, he did not accept their arguments and described these proofs as nonacceptable for wise men. (Nasrallah, 2004: 48).

Borzuya did not allow himself to adhere his father's religion without reason, because if this act was moral, we cannot blame a person whose father is a magician for following him (Ibn al-Muqaffa', 1980: 60).

Problems of unbelieving in Borzuya's view.

It seems that Borzuya should be a paganist after this research, but this is not what happened. It is true that he has found all the religions of his time flawed and fanatical, but in his opinion unbelieving also has its own problems. He held that unbelieving might leads to an eternal pain. Borzuya believed in God based on probabilistic argument that is similar to Ghazali's probabilistic argument and Pascal's wager. He said suppose that a person only has two options. The first option is to pain one hundred years and to have eternal enjoyment life after that and the second one is to enjoy for one hundred years and to have eternal painful life after that. If this person be a wise one, he will choose the first option (Bukhari, 1990: 67).

In Borzuya's opinion, the next problem of denying religion and life of after death was the worthlessness of the life of this world. In his view, this world is like a salt water that if someone drink it, he will be thirstier than before. Another example for this world is a bone that smells the smell of meat, but it has not any meat on it (Ibn al-Muqaffa', 1980: 63). At the end of Bab-e Borzuya, he described the situation of human in the world as a person who grabs a string in a well and eats honeys that are on the wall of the well, while at the bottom of the well there is a dragon has opened his mouth to eat him. Furthermore, a black mouse and a white mouse eat that string (Ibn al-Muqaffa', 1980: 67-68). In fact, he has assumed death as dragon, the day and the night as black and white mice and this

worlds enjoyment as honey. He borrowed these symbols from Jainism (Kazzazi, 2009: 211). Borzuya pointed out that he preferred reward in other world to pleasure, wealth and fame of this world (Ibn al-Muqaffa', 1980: 56). He blamed himself for noticing too much to this world and its pleasures and treat poor patients free of charge (Ibn al-Muqaffa', 1980: 57).

Borzuya's conclusion.

The Conclusion of Borzuya at the end of his research is the most important clue for discovering his view on the diversity of religions. He did not follow the current religions or unbelieving, so he defined his duty to do the good acts that all religions asked people to do. He named these acts “abstract of religions” (Nasrallah, 2004: 50).

This view of Borzuya is relevant to the most visible criterion in *Kalila va Demna*, which is rationalism. In fact, in this book, reason is the criterion for distinguish between the right from falsehood (Sabzianpour & Hasanzadeh, 2013: 108).

He expressed some examples of these rational intuitions which is not to hurt, kill, steal, be pride, anger, grudge, hate, betrayal, lie, slander, gossip, be telltale, annoy others and deny resurrection (Ibn al-Muqaffa', 1980: 61). It is observed that Borzuya avoided to reject the resurrection in addition to avoiding immoral acts, so he is considered a religious person.

Borzuya's view on the coexistence of followers of religions.

As stated, Borzuya considered morality to be the most important part of religious affiliation, and believed that the followers of every religion should pay special attention to this part of their religion. In fact, the pluralism in relation to the diversity of religions that Borzuya held does not lead to moral relativism.

In the book of philosophy of religion in the twentieth century, Taliaferro believes that moral relativists believe in the existence of moral and immoral acts, but they hold that morality of these acts is depend to different conditions. On the other hand, moral realists believe that regardless of social customs or individual admiration and condemnation, some acts are wrong and some acts are correct (Taliaferro, 2003: 322). According to this definition, Borzuya is a realist, because He considers the nature and the reason as the criterion of good and evil (Nasrallah, 2004: 50), which is an objective and fixed criterion. Since it is not necessary to believe in relativism for peaceful coexistence with other religions belief in moral realism not only does not affect the coexistence of religions negatively, but also it helps the followers of religions to understand each other and to observe the unity of moral orders in all religions. In Borzuya's opinion, adherents of religions should not argue about the differences of religions, but they should pay attention to the subjects that they are in common and try to act in a moral way because it is the abstract of religions.

Hick's view on the diversity of religions.

Professor John Hick in the book "Religious pluralism" categorized the different views of diversity of religions into three main categories. The first, which we may call 'exclusivism', relates salvation exclusively to one particular tradition, so that it is an article of faith that salvation is restricted to this one group, and only this tradition is true. The second category is inclusivism that mean only one religion has true doctrines, but followers of any can salve in the other world. He called the last group pluralists which he himself is one of them. They believe that we can transit our existence from self-centered to the God-centered (Truth-centered) via all the great religious traditions of the world. In other words, there is more than one way for salvation and there is more than one true religious teaches about God (Hick, 1985: 31-34). To understand better, see Table 1.

Table 1 - Opinions on Religious Diversity.

diversity of religions theories	truth	salvation
Exclusivism	only one religion	only one religion
Inclusivism	only one religion	all religions
Pluralism	all religions	all religions

In Hick's view, all the mental and practical activities of the religious people in each religion is related to the god created by their own minds, and never refer to the true God or the Truth itself (Akbari, 2005: 82). This shows that he considers the features mentioned in the religions as formal and not real, and believes that the diversity of religions and difference between them created in this way (Akbari, 2004: 47). He extends the influence of experimenter's position in his interpretation into religious experiences (Akbari, 2004: 40).

Hick's view on the coexistence of followers of religions.

Hick considered different religions as an interconnected chain, so it is possible to count on the coexistence of the followers of religions. In his book of philosophy of religion, he says: "Instead of thinking of religions as existing in mutually exclusive systems, we should see the religious life as a dynamic continuum" (Hick, 1994: 111). This problem is stated in Hick's other works. He believed that the essence of religions is transition of human personality, so the religious teachings should not be emphasized too much (Rabbani Golpayegani, 1999: 63).

In fact, Hick knew the inner and moral transformation of human beings as the goal of religion and considered the debate about the teachings of a certain religion to be useless. In this regard, He says: "It is my strong intuitive conviction that if religious communities were brought together each would feel a deep affinity with the others" (Hick, 1997: 157). He also says: "In the course of this work I

went frequently to Jewish synagogues, Muslim mosques, Sikh gurudwaras, Hindu temples and, of course, a variety of churches. In these places of worship, I soon realized something that is obvious enough once noticed, yet momentous in its implications. This is that although the language, concepts, liturgical actions and cultural ethos differ widely from one another, yet from a religious point of view basically the same thing is going on in all of them, namely, human beings coming together within the framework of an ancient and highly developed tradition to open their hearts and minds to God” (Hick, 2001: 122).

It seems that Hick considered the truth as same as God and believed that human beings should change their personality via faith, and take steps towards God via morality. This process can be done via each religion, so the followers of religions are considered truth seekers and there is no reason to clash with each other.

A comparative study of Borzuya’s and Hick's views on diversity of religions.

After pointing out the views of Borzuya the physician and John Hick individually, we should investigate similarities and differences between these two perspectives. There are three similar points and two different points in the views of these two thinkers:

Rejecting Exclusivism and Inclusivism.

The first similarity in the viewpoints of Borzuya the physician and John Hick is rejecting the exclusivism and inclusivism. Hick considers everyone who believes that all religions except his religion are wrong to be a dogmatist (Yandel et al., 2013: 338). On the other hand, Borzuya considered arguments of the clerics of religions to prove their religion and to reject other religions to be an illusion (Nasrallah, 2004: 48). In fact, Borzuya and Hick not only believed that the salvation is not exclusively in a special religion, but also the truth is not exclusively in a special religion, so they believed that every religion has a share of the truth.

Opposition to Unbelieving.

Borzuya and Hick looked at unbelieving from two different viewpoints, but both concluded the same result, and that was opposition to unbelieving. In Borzuya's opinion, the world does not worth that human beings spend all of its power. Furthermore, probabilistic argument leads to be a believer. In Hick's theory, salvation means the transformation of human personality from self-centered to the God-centered, and this is not possible without aid of religion.

Morality as abstract of religions and key of coexistence between followers of religions.

The last similarity between Hick's theory and Borzouya's view is attention to morality. Hick has a great tendency to existential and transformative aspects of religion instead of religious apologies. Borzuya knew good acts as the compendium of religions (Nasrallah, 2004: 50), and the examples provided for it are all moral debates except accepting resurrection (Ibn al-Muqaffa', 1980: 61). It seems that the metaphor "dynamic continuum" used by Hick is largely close to the metaphor of "compendium of religions" used by Borzuya.

On the other hand, both thinkers consider moral living as key of coexistence between followers of religions. The golden rule in ethics, which is stated in many religions, says that humans should treat others as they would like others to treat them and they should not treat others in ways that they would not like to be treated. The works of these two thinkers refer to this rule and it is clear that if all the followers of every religion act according to this rule to followers of other religions, religious wars and conflicts will disappear from the world.

The true religion.

The first major difference between Borzuya's and Hick's ideas is their opinion about true religion. In this regard, Borzuya believed that the real religion will be gained via removing extra parts of the existing religions and abstracting them. He held that this abstract is morality that is in common among

all the religions. Hick had a different view on this issue, and believed that truth itself is beyond human's reach, and humans could only benefit from part of it via religions.

The savor religion.

Borzuya and Hick had different views about the religion that leads to salvation as a result of the difference in the true religion. The meaning of saving religion is a religion in which man must believe in it or act in its teachings to go to paradise. In this regard, Hick denied the possibility of access to the true religion, so he called on all of every religion to remain loyal to their religious tradition and at the same time not imagine that salvation is only via their religion (Akbari, 2005: 82). On the other hand, Borzuya, who considered morality to be the real religion, deterred his audiences from blind imitation (Ibn al-Muqaffa', 1980: 59) and invited them to practice the abstract of religions (Nasrallah, 2004: 50).

The similarities and differences between Borzuya's and Hick's views are briefly summarized in Table 2:

Table 2. The similarities and differences between Borzuya's and Hick's views.

Common problems		Borzuya's view	Hick's view
Similarities	Exclusivism and Inclusivism	Illusion	Dogmatism
	Opposition to Unbelieving	Probabilistic Argument	Human's Need to be God-centered
	Morality and Coexistence	Abstract of Religion	Essence of Religion
Differences	The True Religion	Common Moral Rules of Religions	Unreachable
	The Savor Religion	Common Moral Rules of Religions	Every Religion

CONCLUSIONS.

In his research, Borzuya concluded that the essence of religions is important, and that debate over the margins of religions that usually clerics concern it, is a useless debate. In his view, all religions have a part of truth and if their abstract, which is morality, be considered, they will lead to salvation. He is realistic in morality, but opposes blind imitation. John Hick was a pluralist philosopher, and considered the teachings of various religions to be margins of religions. He held that the truth of God is an unreachable thing that the followers of every religion described him in their language, so believing in any religion is believing in God.

In fact, Borzuya's views is close to Hick's pluralism theory, but it is different in some points.

He rejected exclusivism and inclusivism and opposed unbelieving and considered morality as the essence of religions like Hick, but disagreed him in the definition of the true religion and the saving religion. However, both of these scholars held that morality causes calmness and a peaceful life in this world and salvation in the other world.

There are other topics on the ideas of the Borzuya the physician that are suggested for further research. Among these topics, we can refer to Borzuya's views about this world, comparison of the probable reasoning of Borzuya, Ghazali and Pascal, and Borzuya 's view in the problem of evil and weakness of man. In addition, the views of other Eastern scholars (especially fans of the Perennial philosophy) with John Hick on the diversity of religions can be compared and kind of pluralism can be observed in their thoughts.

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