

## Religious Free Thought in the Fourth Century AH: Characteristics and Principles

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### Abstract

The fourth century (A.H) is considered as the most brilliant period of Islamic history and civilization, for its variety of thinking and responsible free thinking. We can call this period, the age of scientific and philosophical circles far from dogmatism and known demarcations in the religious societies, and in the same time, different from some scientific circles in the new age which consider free thinking against commitment to the religion and divine relevance. If we accept the humanism and rationalism as the cononical core of free thinking, we should call the fourth Islamic century, as one of the most liberal periods of human history which appeared centuries before western Rennaisens with orientation of human concerns and rational approaches, but did not see any controversy between this open mind and commitment to the religion. Therefore, we can accept the idea of some idiographers of fourth century that the humanism of that period was religious one with signs of philosophy and literature, and its rationalism was feeded by divine data as well as human heritage and the knowledge of ancestors. It didn't refuse dialogue with non-religious and atheist peoples. This article tries to discover the dimensions of this religious free thinking and its characteristics and theoretical bases including humanism and rationalism which are the most important bases.

**Keywords:** Religious Free Thinking; Fourth Islamic Century; Humanism; Rationalism; Scientific Circles; Cultural Plurality.

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