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Al-Shajarah is a refereed international journal that publishes original scholarly articles in the area of Islamic thought, Islamic civilization, Islamic science, and Malay world issues. The journal is especially interested in studies that elaborate scientific and epistemological problems encountered by Muslims in the present age, scholarly works that provide fresh and insightful Islamic responses to the intellectual and cultural challenges of the modern world. *Al-Shajarah* will also consider articles written on various religions, schools of thought, ideologies and subjects that can contribute towards the formulation of an Islamic philosophy of science. Critical studies of translation of major works of major writers of the past and present. Original works on the subjects of Islamic architecture and art are welcomed. Book reviews and notes are also accepted.

The journal is published twice a year, June-July and November-December. Manuscripts and all correspondence should be sent to the Editor-in-Chief, *Al-Shajarah*, F4 Building, Research and Publication Unit, International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilisation (ISTAC), International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), No. 24, Persiaran Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin, Taman Duta, 50480 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. All enquiries on publications may also be e-mailed to alshajarah@iium.edu.my. For subscriptions, please address all queries to the postal or email address above.

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Afifi al-Akiti & Aasim I. Padela, eds., *Islam and Biomedicine*, Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2022. 326 pp. ISBN 978-3-030-53800-2.

Reviewer: Irwan Hanish, Senior Lecturer, Department of Microbiology, Faculty of Biotechnology and Biomolecular Sciences, Universiti Putra Malaysia; and Researcher at the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC-IIUM). Email: irwanhanish@upm.edu.my.

The book, *Islam and Biomedicine*, initiates conversations at the junction between the rich Islamic intellectual tradition and the diverse disciplines of Biomedicine. The project has brought together scholars from diverse backgrounds to engage with a critical question: How do biomedical advancements might inform and work with Islamic theological and philosophical traditions?

As highlighted in Chapter 1, the project draws inspiration from al-Ghazālī's (d. 505/1111) engagement with the scientific tradition of his medieval world. Today, almost a thousand years after al-Ghazālī, the nature and sources of *naql wa-'aql* (revealed and rational knowledge) are better understood. Their complementarity is agreed upon by many, though disputed by some. This book presupposes a genuine complementarity between these two categories of knowledge, aiming to address the polarising challenges posed by *naql* and *'aql*.

Part I of the book sketches the historical intellectual territory, from Greek sources to Islamic conceptions of health and biomedicine, starting from Chapter 2 to Chapter 5. For instance, Chapter 2 describes the vibrant history of debates about medical methodology and epistemology in the Islamic tradition. There are historical instances of physicians using control groups to ascertain the medical efficacy of a treatment, testing the toxicity of substances on animals, and refining conditions under which drugs are tested. The concept of medicine as a 'knowledge of probabilities' (*ma'rifa akthariyya*) was discussed, which aligns with modern understandings of medicine. It testifies to the cross-cultural nature of scientific inquiry in the medieval Islamic world.

In Chapter 3, the Islamic view of health is analysed. Health is a divine gift and blessing, not a default state, and is to be preserved and

cultivated. This view agrees with the Galenic view of health as an active balance constantly under threat. Such an understanding of health leads to self-awareness and self-care. Medical and pietistic writings encourage Muslims to pay attention to their bodies and environment and protect their bodies and health. Moreover, health and piety are intertwined, with health acquiring a specific meaning within a pietistic cosmology. Both health and piety are characteristics of upstanding individuals in medieval Muslim society.

Chapter 4 proposes a synthesis of traditional Islamic biomedicine and contemporary biomedicine, with the challenge being to find an epistemological paradigm broad enough to integrate the two. The synthesis would involve unifying the foundational elements of 'soul biology' associated with Avicennian biomedicine and 'cell biology' associated with contemporary biomedicine. It identifies key concepts foundational to soul biology, including the Universal Soul, the human microcosm, God's Self-Disclosure principle and the human prototype. The incorporeality of the soul is not seen as an obstacle to the proposed synthesis. In traditional Islamic epistemology, knowledge of things in the invisible world can be gained by studying their properties and effects in the observable world. The chapter further explores why soul biology was abandoned in favour of the Newtonian mechanistic worldview for biology. This could help resolve some issues at the heart of the epistemological conflict between the soul and modern biology.

In Chapter 5, practitioners of the *fiqh* of medicine and Muslim 'bioethicists' are challenged to decide whether to continue as reactive apologists for biomedical science or to take a proactive stance. It elaborates on a proposed development of a proactive 'deep-*fiqh*' of medicine, which would involve conceptualising an Islamic Medical Research Programme (IMRP). This IMRP would be guided by critical, constructive engagement with tradition and modernity. This approach would free Muslims from the continuous onslaught of medico-moral dilemmas imposed by the rapid technologisation of medicine and healthcare.

In Part II, the book explores the meaning of life and death in Chapters 6-9. Chapter 6 explores the jurisprudential status of a human foetus. The scholars of the Way of Medina maintain that a

foetus at all stages is considered a living child, a view that has persisted without dissent to the present day. Most Mālikī scholars uphold the sanctity of life from inception onward, prohibiting any action that would lead to an abortion, even before forty days. Abortifacients were available in early Islam, but the permissibility of abortion was inconceivable to early Muslims. Avicenna records more than forty abortifacients in his medical compendium. However, he only recommends their use to save the mother's life. The chapter strongly proposed that abortion, with rare exceptions, must be seen for what it is: an assault on a sanctified life.

Chapter 7 explores the intersection between Islamic theology and psychiatric medicine. A mental disorder is defined in psychiatry as the absence of health, the presence of suffering, a pathological process, or a disturbance of functioning. From an Islamic perspective, a mental disorder is a disorder of perception, consciousness, and intentionality that impedes the primary, secondary, and tertiary purposes of the self: to perceive and know God, to adopt mental dispositions facilitating that experience, and to navigate the material world in a way that encourages ethical action and safety. An integrative Islamic approach to psychology cannot be separated from metaphysics or ethics and would be most accurately designated as metaphysical psycho-ethics. In pursuit of the conceptual bases of psychiatry, one arrives at the shores of metaphysics, questioning the nature of reality, life, and what it means to be human. Islam answers: reality is the manifestation of the Divine splendour, life is the opportunity to experience it, and the purified human soul is the locus of its ultimate fulfilment.

Chapter 8 concerns end-of-life healthcare decision-making. Advanced Care Planning, a normative biomedical tool for end-of-life care decision-making, raises challenges for Muslim patients, families, and healthcare professionals. Integrating biomedical knowledge and practice and Muslim theological understandings within end-of-life care are nuanced, not simply opposing or linearly concurrent. Muslim chaplains with expertise in clinical contexts and theological knowledge are relied upon to interpret clinical decisions. This is not just a post hoc rationalisation of clinical decisions. Rather, it is a sensitive and complex process that offers insights into

communication, language, knowledge, and trust-building resources. There is a growing need for experts who can navigate both the spheres of biomedical and Islamic knowledge, understanding, and practice. This dual expertise will enable the appropriate translation of values, beliefs, and practices of faith alongside the evaluation of scientific data and clinical goals.

In Chapter 9, the definition and discussion of medical death are investigated. Death is a process, not a singular moment in time, a concept deeply embedded in society through arts, literature, and law. As defined by Muslim theologians, the soul becomes 'independent' or 'separated' from the body when the death cascade has been initiated, and there is a permanent loss of capacity for higher-brain functioning. Further research is needed to determine more precisely how the soul ties into the content of consciousness of higher-brain functioning and to ascertain which diagnostic tests would accurately account for the absence of the 'soul-related functioning' of the cerebral cortex. Moreover, the boundary between life and death is not perfectly sharp. Whatever definition of death is adopted, the possibility of misdiagnosis will always remain. The chapter emphasises that the Muslim public's acceptance of when death behaviours can begin is ultimately important.

Beginning from Chapter 10, the Part III of the book examines the philosophical interface between biomedical knowledge and Islamic theology. Chapter 10 itself reorients the readers on the discourse of Islam and Science, proposing that the metaphysical commitments of scientific activity can be explored within the Islamic tradition, particularly within a school of Muslim theology or Kalām. One example is the Ash'arī theologian, 'Aḍud al-Dīn al-Ījī (d. 756/1356), who contested the Aristotelian conception of nature and the Ptolemaic picture of the cosmos from the perspective of Ash'arī doctrine of atomism. He did so without contesting the empirically observed phenomena of the natural world. The analysis of the dialogue between Islam and science should be taken as a model that presents a nuanced and positive 'Islamic' engagement with the deliverables of science, illustrating the futility of the conflict thesis. Nevertheless, fuller conceptions of 'Islam' and 'science,' which emphasise methodological and metaphysical commitments, are

required to move the investigation towards more substantial issues.

Chapter 11 explores the role of science in the framework of Islamic legal epistemology. Islam shows significant interest in the material existence of human beings, creating an opportunity for science and religion to complement each other in understanding humanity. There are three more components to a human in the Islamic model: the *qalb* (heart), *'aql* (mind/brain), and *nafs* (desire, appetite, ego), each of which has material and immaterial aspects. Islamic epistemology recognises an immaterial aspect to these three components, with the *qalb* being the locus of human emotions, the *'aql* being the locus of thoughts and analysis, and the *nafs* being the locus of desires, urges, and passions. Science can be conceptualised in the same manner as earlier Muslim scholars conceived *'aql* and *'urf* (societal customs) and can be used to better inform our understanding of both empirical and social realities without resulting in a confrontation with scriptural revelation.

Chapter 12 expanded that discussion with a focus on genetic and reproductive technologies. Responses to bioethical issues are often presented as forms of *ijtihad* (independent reasoning) due to the novel nature of the issues and the lack of exact historical precedents in the classical legal corpus. Muslim jurists aim to maintain the continuity of tradition by investigating interpretive possibilities of scriptural sources. They search for relevant precedents or selectively appropriate opinions from different legal schools within the Islamic tradition. For example, current scientific knowledge has been used to revisit classical legal rules, such as the juristic discussion concerning the average pregnancy duration. Other examples are the use of DNA testing for paternity or forensic verification and the use of medical-genetic testing to determine suitability for marriage. These are examples of how modern scientific knowledge and technical applications have been accommodated. Interestingly, Islamic bioethical discourses on genetic and reproductive technologies reveal different forms of interaction between Islamic law and ethics and modern scientific knowledge and applications.

The book closes with Chapter 13, promoting the integration of science and scripture to produce moral knowledge. The process of moral evaluation in Islamic law involves two steps: understanding

the present reality of the issue and evaluating whether the present or future state of the issue furthers the end goals of Islam. This process incorporates knowledge about both this world and the next. Ethico-legal verdicts on organ donation in Islamic law involve conceptions of worldly conditions, aiming to balance harms and benefits (*dar' al-mafāsīd wa jalb al-maṣāliḥ*). Within this context, jurists must identify and measure the harms and benefits of organ donation, aligning these with scriptural analogues of harm and benefit. The moral deliberation process should incorporate different techniques of knowing to disclose all relevant aspects of the issue at hand, including social, clinical, legal, biological, emotional, and other dimensions. Importantly, the endpoint of moral deliberation occurs when jurists conclude, to a reasonable degree of certainty, whether the benefits or harms of organ donation are preponderant. Here, the *maqāṣid al-sharī'a* frameworks provide a final 'rational' check, serving as principles by which the accuracy of a moral assessment can be examined.

Overall, the book does justice to the title by exploring the intersection of Islamic theological tradition and biomedicine. The threads that connect the chapters revolve around the challenges and potential solutions for integrating Islamic theology with contemporary biomedical sciences. It emphasises the need for a multidisciplinary approach involving theologians and scientists to address complex ethical issues.

For biomedical scientists, the book provides a deeper understanding of Islamic theology and its perspectives on scientific and ethical issues. It offers a framework for engaging with Islamic ethical considerations in their work, such as organ donation and reproductive technology. It encourages scientists to consider the broader social and religious implications of their work, promoting a more holistic approach to biomedical research and practice.

At the same time, Islamic theologians, jurists, and philosophers will also benefit from this book. It offers insights into the complexities of contemporary biomedical sciences, helping them to engage more effectively with these topics. It provides a model for integrating scientific knowledge with theological understanding, promoting a more nuanced approach to ethical deliberation. It

encourages Islamic scholars to engage with scientists and other experts, fostering interdisciplinary dialogue and collaboration.

The limitation of this book comes in the form of its accessibility. Reading through its chapters, it becomes evident that the book expects a reasonably high level of expertise in theology and science to engage with its content entirely. Additionally, the book's approach may not be universally accepted within the Islamic community, given the diversity of interpretations and beliefs within the religion.

Such limitations do not at all invalidate its multiple strengths. Firstly, the book provides a comprehensive exploration of the convergence of Islam and biomedicine. It also offers a practical framework for integrating Islamic theology with scientific knowledge. Most importantly, it promotes interdisciplinary dialogue and collaboration, encouraging Islamic scholars and scientists to work together to address complex ethical issues.

The book is undoubtedly the beginning of exciting future works in this area. Future works can be expanded to cover other areas of biomedical ethics, applying its framework to a broader range of ethical issues. They can also incorporate feedback and perspectives from a broader range of theologians, scientists, and other stakeholders in response to this book. Scholars and scientists who are involved in this project can develop additional resources to support the application of the book's framework in practice, such as educational materials or guidelines for ethical deliberation, especially for the public who do not share their level of expertise.

Islam and Biomedicine contains invaluable contributions to the far-reaching conversation between Islam and science. By bringing together theologians, clinicians, and intellectual historians, the book draws sustained attention to the shared intellectual space of Islam and biomedicine. It provides a foundation for dedicated research at this junction for many years to come.

TRANSLITERATION TABLE

CONSONANTS

Ar=Arabic, Pr=Persian, OT=Ottoman Turkish, Ur=Urdu

Ar	Pr	OT	UR	Ar	Pr	OT	UR	Ar	Pr	OT	UR	
ء	ب	پ	پ	ز	ز	ز	ز	گ	—	g	g	g
ب	ب	ب	ب	ژ	—	—	ř	ل	l	l	l	l
پ	پ	پ	پ	ژ	—	zh	j	م	m	m	m	m
ت	ت	ت	ت	س	s	s	s	ن	n	n	n	n
ث	—	—	ṭ	ش	sh	sh	ş	ه	h	h	h ¹	h ¹
ث	th	th	th	ص	ş	ş	ş	و	w	v/u	v	v/u
ج	j	j	c	ض	ḏ	ḏ	ž	ی	y	y	y	y
چ	—	ch	çh	ط	ṭ	ṭ	ṭ	ة	-ah	—	—	-a ²
ح	ḥ	ḥ	ḥ	ظ	ẓ	ẓ	ẓ	ال	al ³	—	—	—
خ	kh	kh	kh	ع	‘	‘	‘	—	—	—	—	—
د	d	d	d	غ	gh	gh	ğh	—	—	—	—	—
ڈ	—	—	d	ف	f	f	f	—	—	—	—	—
ذ	dh	dh	dh	ق	q	q	q	—	—	—	—	—
ر	r	r	r	ك	k	k/g	k/ñ	—	—	—	—	—

¹ – when not final

² – at in construct state

³ – (article) al - or l-

VOWELS

	Arabic and Persian	Urdu	Ottoman Turkish
Long	ا	ā	ā
	آ	Ā	—
	و	ū	ū
	ي	ī	ī
Doubled	ي	iy (final form i)	iy (final form i)
	و	uww (final form ū) uvv (for Persian)	uvv
Diphthongs	و	au or aw	ev
	ی	ai or ay	ey
Short	ا	a	a or e
	ا	u	u or ū
	ا	i	o or ö
	ا	i	i

URDU ASPIRATED SOUNDS

For aspirated sounds not used in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish add h after the letter and underline both the letters e.g. جھ jh گھ gh

For Ottoman Turkish, modern Turkish orthography may be used.

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