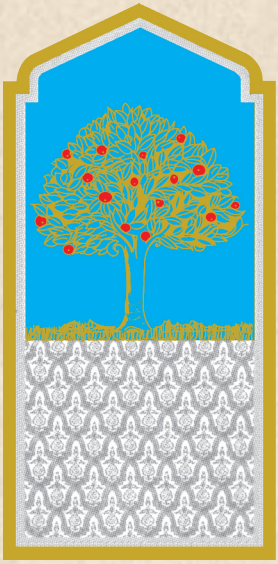


AL-SHAJARAH

ISTAC Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization

Published by IIUM Press
2025 Volume 30 Number 1

AL-SHAJARAH

EDITORIAL BOARD

INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD

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.

Contributions: Submissions must be at least 5,500 words long. All submissions must be in English or Malay and be original work which has not been published elsewhere in any form (abridged or otherwise). In matters of style, *Al-Shajarah* uses the *University of Chicago Manual of Style* and follows the transliteration system shown on the inside back cover of the journal. The Editor-in-Chief reserves the right to return accepted manuscripts to the author for stylistic changes. Manuscripts must be submitted to the Editor-in-Chief in Microsoft Word. The font must be Times New Roman and its size 12. IIUM retains copyright to all published materials, but contributors may republish their articles elsewhere with due acknowledgement to *Al-Shajarah*.

ISSN 1394-6870

EPISTEMOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS IN CLASSICAL ARABIC TEXTS: REASSESSING CONTEMPORARY EPISTEMOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

Abdelkader Bouarfa[1]

Abstract

This article examines the epistemological foundations embedded in classical Arabic texts and evaluates their relevance to contemporary epistemological debates. It argues that revisiting these intellectual traditions, through figures like al-Fārābī, Ibn Sīnā, Ibn al-Haytham, al-Jāḥiẓ, and Ibn Khaldūn, offers a necessary reconfiguration of knowledge frameworks that extend beyond the constraints of modern Western paradigms. The study highlights the key epistemological values such as justice, neutrality, ethical commitment, and methodological pluralism. By interpreting these classical insights within their historical and civilizational contexts, the paper aims to contribute to a broader, more inclusive epistemological discourse-one that bridges between civilizations and reorients the humanities and social sciences towards ethical and imaginative inquiry.

In this context, we will attempt to interpret Arabic texts within their historical and intellectual frameworks, maintaining scientific neutrality in line with research ethics. Ultimately, the study aims to pose a series of thought-provoking questions, beginning with the inquiry: "Why not?"

Keywords: Epistemology, Texts, Arabic, Science, Contemporary.

1.0 Introduction

Before laying out the question of method and discourse in the social sciences, it is appropriate for us, at the beginning of the study, to break free from the question: Can social sciences become a science?

[1] Director, Research Unit (URSH), University of Oran 2 and Professor, Department of Philosophy, University of Oran, Algeria. Email: bouarfah9@gmail.com.

That is, no matter how accurate and rigorous their method is, they will not become a science, for they are by nature far from certainty and constancy, which means the opposite orientation suggested by positivists to direct philosophy, sociology, and psychology. Logical Positivism claims that science is the only mental activity for searching, so that the single activity (planned) is divided into linked activities of scholars applying the synthetic method (observation, collection, hypothesis, testing), and the activity of philosophers replete with logical analysis. The first aims to translate the sensory data therefore arriving at conclusions, the second seeks to help scientists in developing science and opening its field to logical possibilities.

This logical positivist conception has led to considering philosophy as a science as it starts from the science and ends with it. However, the only difference between science and philosophy is that the latter establishes the logical rules for the experimental scientific activity and gives it the possibility of continuing through what it presents in terms of possibilities and probabilities, while science gives results and laws. The social discourse after World War II tended towards liberation from narrow scientific tendencies. Philosophy, for example (a model of the social and human sciences) in its essence, is related to suffering, astonishment, strangeness, criticism, consideration, action, etc. and multiple questions in its field may be derived from the same answer. All these features lead us to say that philosophy is too great to be reduced to the question of method:

> The method is not just a systemic construction or just a deaf machine that protects the mind from falling into slips and exaggerations when it is taken into account. Rather, it carries a philosophy and hidden dimensions related to the knowing subject and the subject. We do not choose the method because it is a machine or a technique, but rather we choose it because it fulfils deep desires within us. [2]

[2] Abdelkader Bouarfa, "The Problem of the Method in Islamic Studies," *Al Kalima Magazine*, no. 72 (2011): 69.

Epistemology attempts, as much as possible, to restore the value of the self-knowing, which has been overshadowed by the subject and then dominated by technology. Perhaps the most prominent contribution that epistemology can make today is to reshape the cognitive landscape based on the requirements of postmodernity, which Christopher G. Preston tried to review when he considered "epistemology" to be the study of what happens when we claim to know something about the world.[3]

When postmodernity calls for an epistemic stance, it relies on the work done in the late twentieth century, which began to uncover modernist views on how we know the world.

According to what has been mentioned above, we emphasize the need to liberate the philosophical and social discourse from the rationalities that have dominated it for a long time. No Cartesian or Hegelian rationalism or other tendency can direct the social discourse towards completeness and efficacy. Edmund Husserl showed that Descartes had been transformed over time into an intellectual idol by excellence, which made philosophical thought captive to his mental approach. This, later, turned out to be a flexible approach that could not tolerate the rigor with which it was described for centuries, where Friedrich Nietzsche revolted against these major patterns, describing all great philosophers such as Kant and Hegel as idols.[4]

Husserl acknowledges Descartes' importance; He recognizes Descartes as a great philosopher who sparked a significant "cognitive revolution."

However, Husserl criticizes the tendency to elevate Descartes to an "intellectual idol par excellence." This excessive reverence, according to Husserl, restricts philosophical thought.[5]

Just as scholars have rejected the domination of inductive rationality and critical rationality throughout science, we must

[3] Christopher J. Preston, *Grounding Knowledge: Environmental Philosophy, Epistemology, and Place* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2010), xi.

[4] See Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale and Walter Kaufmann (North Charleston, SC: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2014).

[5] See E. Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations*, 7th ed., trans. Dorion Cairns (Martinus Nijhoff; Publishers London, 1982).

liberate social thought from these formalist rationalities, which in their entirety, express ideologies more than they express epistemic principles.

Social sciences are more creative when they come out of the cage of alleged rationalities. The philosopher and the sociologist are more flexible than the experimental and abstract world, for their subjects are not defined in terms of quantity or quality, and they are not subject to a strict and precise approach. Rather, philosophy finds itself more refreshed when it engages in what is called unreasonable. Plato, for example, is still present to this day through his utopian theories, which, in every age, are characterized by the unreasonable and the imagination.

To liberate the social and human sciences from the influence of a strict, one-pointed approach, we must rely on some Arab and Islamic visions, which express the epistemic presence at a time when they were not scientifically framed. Rather, they are attempts to moralize science, and then model it within open frameworks subject to the possible and probable flexibility. The epistemic presence of Arab and Muslim scholars can be monitored through the following epistemic pauses:[6]

2.0 Theoretical and Methodological Framework

Modern epistemology—especially within the social sciences—often inherits a legacy of methodological closure, shaped by positivist assumptions that prioritize uniformity, determinism, and objective neutrality. This legacy, while influential, fails to account for the plurality and contingency inherent in human experience. In response, this study articulates an alternative framework: an open epistemological methodology grounded in classical Arabic thought and oriented by pluralism, ethical deliberation, and the imaginative capacities of the human mind.

2.1 Epistemological Premises

This study builds upon the principle of *al-imkān* (*possibility*), central to the intellectual projects of Ibn Khaldūn and Ibn Rushd. Both

[6] See Abdulkader Bouarfa, *Epistemological Reflection on the Social Sciences* (Republic of Moldova: Lambert Academic Publishing, 2021).

thinkers rejected rigid epistemological schemes in favour of interpretive flexibility. In his *Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldūn distinguishes between the necessary (*ḍarūrī*), the accidental (*ʿaraḍī*), and the impossible (*mustaḥīl*), emphasising plausibility and critical evaluation over mere transmission. For him, the historian must scrutinise social narratives not only for their factual accuracy but for their inner coherence with the laws of society and nature.

Ibn Rushd complements this view through his theory of *al-quwwah* (potentiality) which recognises epistemic openness as a condition for rational inquiry. Rather than seeing possibility as epistemic weakness, Ibn Rushd understands it as a site of unfolding—akin to modern notions of fallibilism—in which knowledge emerges through trial, hypothesis, and imaginative reasoning.

2.2 Methodological Implications

This study adopts content analysis as the most appropriate methodological approach, due to its ability to explore and interpret the underlying meanings embedded in diverse texts, written, visual, or oral. This method enables a critical engagement with the epistemological structures present in the selected corpus through the following stages:

2.2.1 Content Description: The study begins with a focus on the *introductions* of the selected classical works, as introductions in Islamic heritage texts often function as theoretical gateways and epistemological preludes. In many cases, these introductions—such as Ibn Khaldūn's *Muqaddimah*—surpass the main text in conceptual depth and theoretical framing.

2.2.2 Meaning Interpretation: This involves decoding the connotations and latent significations behind terms and statements, contextualizing them within their broader epistemic frameworks.

2.2.3 Impact Evaluation: The influence of each selected text is critically assessed in relation to the central research questions.

2.2.4 Textual Comparison: The study conducts a comparative analysis of diverse textual patterns, especially focusing on how introductory sections reflect epistemological orientations and intellectual priorities.

The content analysis process incorporates the following analytical dimensions:

- Linguistic Analysis: Exploring the dialectic between meaning and expression.
- Structural Analysis: Investigating the internal relations within the text.
- Critical Analysis: Uncovering the assumptions and ideological underpinnings of the discourse.

In addition, the study integrates a framework for identifying epistemic beliefs across four core dimensions of knowledge that distinguish cognitive approaches among individuals. These dimensions are:

- Certainty of knowledge
- Simplicity of knowledge
- Source of knowledge
- Justification of knowledge

This model allows for a deeper understanding of the fundamental differences within epistemological theories, particularly as structured within Islamic intellectual traditions.

The following table summarizes the selected textual models analyzed in the study:

Work	Author	Epistemological Features
Risālah fī al-Manṭiq Iḥṣā' al-'Ulūm	Abū Naṣr al-Fārābī	Demonstrates the intimate link between logic and philosophy, presenting logic as a foundational tool for understanding philosophical issues, avoiding fallacies, and practicing principled neutrality.

Work	Author	Epistemological Features
Al-Bad' wa Al- Tarikh	Ṭāhir al-Maqdisī	The first chapter addresses the problem of knowledge, its limitations, obstacles, mediators, and the notion of possibility.
Kitāb al-Manāther	Ḥasan ibn al- Haytham	Its introduction stands as a prime example of epistemological clarity, establishing conditions for knowledge and articulating the methodology of "the knowing subject".
Mīzān al-'Amal	Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī	Aims to purify the intellect from illusions and obstructions to truth, clarifying the interplay between sense, reason, and spiritual intuition
Mā Ba'd al-Ṭabī'ah Manāhij al-Adillah	Ibn Rushd	Engages in rationalizing knowledge through overcoming epistemic obstacles and proposing methods of inference and verification grounded in objectivity.
Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam Bulghat al-Ghawwāṣ	Muḥyī al-Dīn Ibn ʿArabī	Explores illuminative knowledge, modes of unveiling, and the unity of the knower with the cosmos through the metaphor of spiritual diving.
Al-Muqaddimah	Ibn Khaldūn	Offers a comprehensive epistemological prologue discussing the nature, limitations, errors, and reform of human knowledge. It also introduces the notions of possibility.

3.0 Epistemological Shifts in Classical Arabic Thought

The classical Arabic intellectual tradition did not embrace knowledge as a neutral or purely technical enterprise. Rather, it underwent a series of profound epistemological shifts that questioned dominant paradigms and offered nuanced frameworks for understanding reality. These shifts may be outlined as follows.

3.1 From Mono-Method to Methodological Pluralism (plurality, diversity, and possibility)

Social thinking limited to a single method often fails, as it typically serves ideological ends rather than human needs. The monolithic

approach can become a "cemetery of ideas," as exemplified by the Marxist reliance on historical materialism, which ultimately collapsed in various fields, notably psychology.

Instead, social research should embrace methodological pluralism, choosing the approach that fits each subject's unique nature. Ibn Khaldūn emphasized this need for diversity, urging scholars to distinguish between what is essential, accidental, or impossible in human social organization (*al-'umrān*):

> As for news about incidents, it must be true and correct from considering its occurrence, and that became more important than modification and advance to it, as the benefit of the construction is taken from it only, and the benefit of the news from it and from the outside in conformity, if that is so, then the law in distinguishing truth from falsehood in news is possible and impossible to do that We look at the human social organization (*al-'umrān*), and We must distinguish the conditions that attach themselves to the essence of civilization (*al-'umrān*) as required by its very nature; the things that are accidental (*to al-'umrān*) and cannot be counted on; and the things that cannot possibly attach themselves to it. [7]

Ibn Khaldūn examines social phenomena from the perspective of the potential rather than the static or the fixed. Each societal phenomenon, in his view, has a distinct approach suitable to its nature. Therefore, it is imperative to meticulously analyze, contemplate, understand, and delve deeper. Consequently, one can potentially attain the truth following his claims:

> If we do that, we shall have a normative method for distinguishing right from wrong and truth from falsehood in information (News) by means of a logical demonstration that admits of no doubts. Then, whenever we hear about certain conditions occurring in *al-'umrān*,

[7] Ibn Khaldūn, *Al-Muqaddimah*, 2nd ed., vol. 1 (Beirut: Cultural Books Foundation, 1996), 39.

> then we would know what to take as accepted or as falsified.[8]

The term ability (*al-imkān*) used by Ibn Khaldūn and other Muslim scholars opens the mind of man to the possible (why not). This was explained by Ibn Rushd, considering that the possible is the closest form of force that is preparing to be:

> The meaning, for which the name of power is referred when introducing, is the same intended by saying it is possible.[9]

The relationship between the possibility and the possible in mental consideration is developed through the ability of the soul to realize that the knowledge God has placed in the universe has made it between the limits of possibility and impossibility. Whereas the impossibility requires us to prepare to understand it through the possible, which is, according to Ibn Rushd, the strength of the readiness that is in the thing, the possibility is 'Which is when it exists'.[10]

Adopting this idea of the possibility ability (*al-imkān*) and the possible makes us believe that the methods are multiple and the approaches are various, and this expresses our human nature. Ibn Khaldūn says when explaining the concepts of the possibility and the possible:

> Therefore, a person should look at his sources and rely upon himself. With a clear mind and straightforward, natural (common sense) he should distinguish between the nature of the possible and the impossible. Everything within the sphere of the possible should be accepted, and everything outside it should be rejected. (In using the

[8] Ibn Khaldūn, *Al-Muqaddimah*, vol. 1, 40.
[9] Ibn Rushd, *Mā Baʿd al-Ṭabīʿah (Au-delà de la nature)* (Beirut: Maison de la Pensée Libanaise, 1994), 100.
[10] Ibn Rushd, *Mā Baʿd al-Ṭabīʿah*, 102.

> word "possible") we do not have in mind "possible" in the absolute sense of what is intellectually possible.[11]

Exploring the realm of possibilities offers a refreshing perspective in scrutinizing phenomena, as delving into the unknown expands the horizons of understanding. The more rigidly we confine our research methodologies, the narrower our scope of knowledge becomes. Conversely, embracing diversity in our approach broadens the avenues for deeper comprehension. Embracing the unfamiliar holds the promise of unlocking new realms of knowledge and enriching our understanding of the world around us:

> That covers a very wide range, so that it cannot be used to determine what is possible in actual fact. What we have in mind is the possibility inherent in the matter that belongs to a given thing. When we study the origin of a thing, its genus, (specific) difference, size, and strength, we can draw conclusions as to (the possibility or impossibility) of the data (reported in connection with it). We adjudge to be impossible everything outside the sphere of (the possible, in this sense).[12]

The historian al-Maqdisī called for an open approach to studying human phenomena and facts, relying also on the term possibility, as belief in the idea of the possible opens science to broad horizons and allows research from different angles, so truth does not have only one face, and without that feature, the human being would have no moral existence. In this context, he wrote:

> I say that all things are in the minds in three types: a duty, a negative and a possible.[13]

3.2 From Certainty to Relativism

In *Al-Manāẓir* (The Optics), Al-Hasan Ibn al-Haytham emphasized a critical epistemological stance: scientific knowledge, no matter how

[11] Ibn Khaldūn, *Al-Muqaddimah*, vol. 1, 193.
[12] Ibid.
[13] al-Maqdisī, al-Muṭahhar ibn al-Ṭāhir, *Al-Badʾ wa al-Tārīkh*, vol. 1 (Egypt: Religious Culture Library, n.d.), 28.

accurate, never reaches absolute certainty. He affirms:

> Thus, perplexity prevails, certainty is hard to come by, and there is no assurance of attaining the object of inquiry.[14]

His view anchors knowledge in relativism, recognizing that judgments-moral, social, and cognitive-are shaped by cultural contexts. As cultures shift, so too must our claims to truth. Every judgment is thus valid only within its proper domain.

Ibn al-Haytham deepens this view by noting the inherent fallibility of human inquiry:

> For the truths are obscure, the ends are hidden, the doubts manifold, the minds turbid, the reasonings various; the premisses are gleaned from the senses, and the senses (which are our tools) are not immune from error. The path of investigation is therefore obliterated and the inquirer, however diligent, is not infallible.[15]

In social research, the multiplicity of meanings and perspectives makes certainty even more elusive. The researcher's findings remain partial and contingent, illuminating only fragments of a broader reality. Truth, then, becomes a moving horizon- an ideal, not a fixed destination.

Karl Popper echoes this in his philosophy of approximation:

> The idea of approximation to the truth, like the idea of truth as a regulative principle, presupposes a realistic view of the world. It does not presuppose that reality is as our scientific theories describe it, but it does presuppose that there is a reality and that we and theories – which are ideas we have ourselves created and are therefore always idealizations- can draw closer

[14] Ibn bn al-Haytham, *Al-Manāẓir (The Optics)*, trans. A. I. Sabra (London: The Warburg Institute, University of London, 1989), 2.
[15] Ibn al-Haytham, *Al-Manāẓir*, 2.

> and closer to an adequate description of realty, if we employ the four-stage method of trial and error.[16]

Abū al-ʿAlāʾ al-Maʿarrī takes a more radical stance. For him, life is chaotic and full of illusion; certainty is but a temporal construct. He writes:

I imagined good in time and its people
And it was a fantasy that is not right to delusional
As for the light is not shining, and the dawn is not a river
The sun is not a Dinar, nor a full moon is a Dirham

Al- Maʿarrī went further when he believed that most human knowledge is closer to lying than the truth, and that this tendency dominates man until the end of the world:

Reason forbade me many things which,
Instinctively, my nature was attracted to;
And a perpetual loss I feel if, knowing,
I believe a falsehood or deny the truth.

3.3 From the System to Contextual

The reliance on the "system" in social research, in particular, makes it research that overturns the nature of the social sciences themselves, as they tend towards the horizon context more than the horizon system. This can be explained by the fact that the context makes the social discourse more flexible and dynamic, and it becomes multiple explanations and interpretations, which opens the horizon of meaningful dialogue and debate.

It is known that despite the contextual view being related to the method, it is flexible and diverse compared to the systemic view. This approach prompts the researcher to deal with the topic in the following contexts:

3.3.1 Linguistic context: It follows the outcome of the use of words and signs within the same sentence system, when it coincides with other words and phrases, and

[16] Karl Popper, *All Life is Problem-Solving* (Routledge: London & New-York, 2013), 21.

> opens the mind for discovering new meanings and connotations, and it can be said that it gives the researcher more capabilities. This is what we find in most of al-Jāḥiẓ,'s books, he believes that:
>
> The meaning is not honor to be one of the private meanings, nor is it clear that it is among the general meanings. Rather, the focus of honor is on the right and the attainment of benefit with the approval of the situation, and what is required is for each maqam (status) to have a statement (to every context a saying).[17]

Al-Jāḥiẓ's statement reinforces that the system does not reflect the truth, because every maqam has a statement, this means that searching for the context is what leads to understanding the intended meaning.

3.3.2 Affective context: Refers to the determination of the nature of the use of words between their objective connotations that benefit the general public, and their emotional connotations that benefit the individual. So, the researcher discovers through it the degree of strength and weakness in emotions. Thus, he can probe the depths of the self and dive into its places, which makes the researcher able to discern several turns that were not visible through the systemic look.

We have found this in the writings of Ibn ʿArabī who considered the emotional context to be more important than all other contexts and systems, starting with that the human being is inner, not apparent, and that the world itself is not known through its outwards but through his interior, which is perceived only through taste (*al-dhawq*) and emotional disclosure:

> A preceptor and a perceptive one each on two paths, a preceptor knows and has the power of imagination, and

[17] al-Jāḥiẓ, *Al-Bayān wa al-Tabyīn*, vol. 1, ed. ʿAbd al-Salām Muḥammad Hārūn (Beirut: Dār al-Jīl, n.d.), 132.

a preceptor knows what has the power of imagination.

A perceptive is on two paths, a perceptive with an image that informs of his image who has no power of imagination and does not perceive it. And he knows and imagines who has the power of imagination. And a perception without an image only knows.[18]

3.3.3 The *Maqāmic* context: It is related to the temporal and spatial relationships from which the speech emerged as an intellectual load, so the *maqāmic* context is a symbolic suggestive context rather than a direct expressive context for the subject.

The research takes that human whiff, which tries to choose words that are euphemistic and expressive at the same time about a situation. If we deal with it systematically, it will have inhumane outcomes.

The philosopher Abū Ḥayyān al-Tawḥīdī excelled in his book "*The Pleasure and Sociability*", and he arranged the forty nights in the fantastic context of *maqami*, so that the researcher can, during his tracing, discover the relationship between the subject, time, place, and people.

3.3.4 The civilized context: It reveals the cultural connotations according to the word outputs, which is related to the horizon of ethnic, religious, political, and geographic belonging, and those contextual outputs in the field of civilized meditation can open the horizons of understanding the analogous relations that control the production and creativity of the text. This could be seen as an intellectual feature in the writings of Malek Bennabi, who considers the cultural context as necessary data to know the network of social relations.

It may seem to some that we contradict the introductions of our research by branching out the theory of context. Some may understand that we have returned to the closed curriculum, but we

[18] Ibn ʿArabī, Muḥyī al-Dīn, *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, 2018), 11.

just wanted to show through this aspect that we are not against the open, diverse method, but rather we are against the closed curriculum.

3.4 From the Limits of the Mind to the Spaciousness of the Imagination

Imagination is a divine gift, often stifled when confined within the rigid bounds of rational frameworks. Contrary to claims by methodologists, imagination does not undermine inquiry- it expands its horizons. What appears unreasonable today may, through imagination, become plausible or even real tomorrow.[19]

In the social sciences, imagination plays a foundational role, enabling us to transcend both the "realistic rational" and the "rational realism." The unreasonable coexists with the reasonable. History shows an inverse relationship: what was once rational becomes irrational when surpassed, and vice versa, as human understanding evolves. The shift from Aristotle's geocentric model to Galileo's heliocentrism reflects not a change in reality, but a transformation in human conceptual tools.

Ibn Khaldūn, despite his structured methodology, acknowledged the role of imagination in discovery. He advocated for what he called "unfamiliar alternatives," such as intuitive and imaginative methods. He writes:

> The power of imagination is strong in augurs, and they exert that power in their researches, while depending on the help given by things they have seen or heard. This gives them some supernatural perception. The power of imagination acts here as it does in sleepers. When the senses are asleep, (the power of imagination) intervenes among the things seen in the waking state, and combines them with the products of its own thinking. Thus, the power of imagination brings about vision.[20]

[19] al-Fārābī, *Kitāb fī al-Manṭiq*, 1st ed. (Cairo: Egyptian General Book Organization, 1986), 9.
[20] Ibn Khaldūn, *Al-Muqaddimah*, vol. 1, 116.

Similarly, Ibn ʿArabī redefines knowledge itself. For him, method does not deliver truth, but merely a version of it that we assume to be real. He notes:

> Science is not the perception of the known, nor is it the meaning that conceives the known, for it is neither every known nor every world is conceivable, because the perception of the world is from being imagined, and the image of the known is to be in a state that can be attained by imagination. Thus, there is information that cannot be reached by imagination at all, so it is proved that they have no image.[21]

For Ibn ʿArabī imagination bridges the visible and the hidden. Truth always appears through its shade, never in full clarity. He illustrates:

> The Real is, in relation to a particular shadow, small or large, pure or purer, as light is in relation to what veils it from the onlooker through colored glass which tints it. At the same time, it has no color.... If you say that the light is green by the greenness of the glass, you will have spoken the truth as your sensory vision testifies. If you say that it is not green and has no color as evidence accords you, you will have spoken the truth as sound logical consideration testifies.

This is light projected across the shadow, and it is the same as the glass which is a luminous shadow because of its purity. It is the same for one of us who has realized the Real. His form manifests itself in him more than it manifests itself in another. [22]

3.5 From the Status of the Scientist to the Station of the Knower

Many Sufis and supporters of the gnosis tried to differentiate between two denominators, the status of the scientist and the knower, for the scientist is who knows things from its appearances, and uses inferential methods that oscillate between the sensory and the

[21] Ibn ʿArabī, *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam,* 50.
[22] Ibn ʿArabī, *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*,104.

evidentiary. He also believes that he knows what is available to him as a means of investigation, but his place is the status of the beginning and the threshold. The position of the knower is greater than him because the acquaintance is more encompassing than the scientist for its characteristics, such as a variety of paths, the power of imagination, and high energy which is the basis of science: By illusion, every human being creates in the power of his imagination, he does not exist except in it, and this is the general matter. The knower creates by the enthusiasm of what he has presence from outside the position of enthusiasm, this still preserves it.[23]

Ibn ʿArabī tries to establish knowledge on a subjective and not objective basis because he believes that science does not develop unless there is high energy that drives the knowing subject to research, and that when motivation weakens, knowledge is absent, and it is overcome by tradition and repetition:

> Know that one of the greatest of them is: the people of beginnings look at the conditions of the people of the endings, and they themselves (the people of beginnings) demand their conditions (the people of the endings), so it becomes difficult for them, and they exclude that, and their motivation weakens ...[24]

The position of the scientist differs from that of the knower[25], and it is the same when we compare between Prophet Moses (the scientist) and the Khidr, the knower because despite the status of Moses' prophethood, he was ignorant of the facts and events that occurred to him with the righteous man, and he could not be patient with the station of companionship. This is what Ibn Khaldūn talked about:

> No one would deny to himself (the existence of) certain knowledge. In addition, competent recent Sufis say that during the removal (of the veil), the Sufi novice often has a feeling of the oneness (of existence). Sufis call that

[23] Ibn ʿArabī, *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*, 73.
[24] Ibn ʿArabī, Muḥyī al-Dīn, *Bulūgh al-Ghawāṣ* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, 2010), 121.
[25] Abdulkader Bouarfa, *Epistemological Reflection on the Social Sciences* (Republic of Moldova: Lambert Academic Publishing, 2021), 92.

> the station of "combination". Butt hen, he progresses to distinguish between existent things. That is considered by the Sufis the station of "differentiation" (*farq*). That is the station of the competent Gnostic[26]

3.6 From the Truth Unity to the Truth Composite

Many Muslim scholars are convinced that there is a single truth. The truth is multi-faceted; it has various kinds, and accordingly, it manifests itself in different ways, and its manifestation is often according to the equation on which the place of recognition is based, and from this point, many Muslim scholars divided the truth into the outward and inward. The truth of text (Revelation) and the truth of the mind. Ibn al-Haytham concludes that the truth must be thought as a composite according to the nature of the sciences, and that this discrepancy between the sciences makes it difficult to say with certainty. Rather, science in itself developed as a result of this combination that occurs between the sciences:

> Our subject is obscure and the way leading to knowledge of its nature difficult; moreover, our inquiry requires a combination of the natural and the mathematical sciences.[27]

3.7 From the Objectivity to the Justice

Western epistemology was famous for a set of basic principles, especially the principle of objectivity, which has become an epistemic requirement par excellence. However, after more than a century, science critics discovered in particular that adherence to the strict method does not achieve objectivity as promoted by the scholars of the twentieth century, but rather objectivity must be searched for other mechanisms that can be achieved in a world, in which the "knowing subject" is still the center. This refers us to texts written by Muslim scholars, stating that objectivity in science is achieved only through "the self" in the event that it adheres to the

[26] Ibn Khaldūn, *Al-Muqaddimah*, vol. 1, 167.
[27] Ibn al-Haytham, *Al-Manāẓir*, 4.

principle of justice. Here, justice is not intended in the legal sense, but rather the scientist submits himself to personal justice, the basis of which is a lack of inclination and following whims and desires (ideology). Ibn Al-Haytham said in this regard:

> Our aim in all that we make subject to inspection and review being to employ justice, not to follow prejudice, and to take care in all that we judge and criticize that we seek the truth and not to be swayed by opinion. We may in this way eventually come to the truth that gratifies the heart and gradually and carefully reach the end at which certainty appears; while through criticism and caution we may seize the truth that dispels disagreement and resolves doubtful matters[28]

3.8 From Technical Strength to Human Power

Modernist epistemology has almost been drawn into the reverence of technical power, as it is the most important mechanism that helps man to acquire knowledge and control it. The world is currently moving towards the generalization of technology in all areas of life, which lets the machine marginalizes man, and represents him in many major roles and perhaps many Western philosophers warn of the tragic fate of man if the human mind succumbs to the accelerated technology.

Muslims believed that science, regardless of its methods of accuracy and immunity, remains deficient and incomplete, and it always needs what Ibn al-Haytham called "the human power" to guide it and pilot it, and this human power was absent from the proponents of the centrality of science, and this was reflected negatively on the knowledgeable subject.[29]

The truth is not without the "distress of humaneness" and we also add the "Technology imperfection" which makes the cognitive situation oblige scholars to always use human power to rationalize and direct science in accordance with what guarantees the interest of

[28] Ibn al-Haytham, *Al-Manāẓir*, 6.
[29] al-Fārābī, *Iḥṣāʾ al-ʿUlūm*, 1st ed. (Cairo: Maṭbaʿat al-Saʿādah, 1931), 15.

man in the world, and this is what postmodern societies call for. Ibn al-Haytham says:

> For all that, we are not free from that human turbidity which is in the nature of man; but we must do our best with what we possess of human power.[30]

4.0 Conclusion

The concept of an open method should not be dismissed as idealistic or naïve. When methodology becomes diversified and open, it gains in flexibility and productivity. Unlike rigid frameworks, it avoids reductionism and excessive complexity while allowing for coherence by integrating reason, imagination, and intuition.

This approach is not exclusive to the social sciences; it is applicable to experimental and abstract sciences as well. The liberation of research from rigid methodological constraints can foster innovation and move scientific inquiry beyond its historical entanglement with ideological reproduction.

In this light, even the idea of "no-method" becomes significant. It challenges the hegemony of the knowing self and unsettles the ideologies embedded in much of social research. Scholars in the humanities and social sciences should abandon the belief that success depends solely on rigid, technical protocols. These disciplines, with their cultural and civilizational particularities, require a more situated and responsive epistemology.

As one scholar noted:

> The dual stance of the concept of science, both objective and utilitarian, focuses extremely on the social sciences and on relations between basic research and applied research, as it's a human tradition, and the subject of its works itself make it shy towards applied research and resistance to what is easily transformed into attempts to address and prescriptions. However, the sudden expansion of the social sciences in the climate of applied science and its desire to be recognized for its scientific

[30] Ibn al-Haytham, *Al-Manāẓir*, 6.

> standing and finally the many problems that real life poses, force it to take a stand.[31]

Thus, any new epistemological foundation for the human sciences must acknowledge the cultural context as a central epistemic source. As Mona Tarif al-Khouli writes:

> The aim of human sciences, and the solution to their problems is to solve many problems of the civilized world .... The cultural context and its values are a necessary tributary to the cognitive content in the human sciences, if not is the source, it is itself the core of its subject and the theatre of its phenomena, but its enrichment, and the solution of its problem and many problems for it, require a proper fruitful interaction between them.[32]

Muslim scholars historically initiated such open inquiry through the empowering question: "Why not?"—a methodological spirit grounded in both reason and openness to the unseen. The Qur'ān itself speaks in different levels of certainty, suggesting that full, divine certainty lies beyond human grasp. Human knowledge progresses from empirical certainty, to rational certainty, to intuitive certainty, yet the ultimate truth remains with the divine.

Revisiting the works of al-Fārābī, Ibn Sīnā, Ibn al-Haytham, Ibn Khaldūn, Ibn Rushd, and al-Bīrūnī may offer the foundations for a renewed epistemological project. Their intellectual legacy, if re-engaged critically, can provide the tools to address persistent challenges in curricula, scholarly autonomy, and the deeper aims of human inquiry.

---

[31] Madeleine Grawitz, *Methods for the Social Sciences*, trans. Sam Ammar (Damascus: The Arab Center for Arabization, 1993), 178.

[32] Youmna Tarif El-Khouly, *The Problem of the Human Sciences* (Cairo: Hindawi Foundation, 2012), 136.

A REAPPRAISAL OF AL-GHAZĀLĪ'S INTELLECTUAL PRESTIGE: HISTORICAL, ETHICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL PERSPECTIVES

Emrah Kaya[1]

Abstract

Abu Hamid al-Ghazālī's prestige and authority among the Muslim public and scholars are undeniable. In the relevant literature, numerous books and articles praise his personality and scholarly depth. Besides these sources, it is also possible to find some scholars and works that focus on his contradictory statements and his similarities with opponents. However, it is almost impossible to find works criticizing him regarding scientific ethics. This article aims to open a new window to study al-Ghazālī through such a critique of scholarly ethics. To achieve this aim, we have followed the following steps: His political network, which is very influential on al-Ghazālī's thinking, his attitude towards the use of Ḥadīth, his relationship with philosophy, and his ethical attitude in scholarly works.

Keywords: Islamic Philosophy, al-Ghazālī's Authority, Scholarly Ethics, Critical Approach.

[1] Associate Professor, Department of Islamic Philosophy, Sakarya University, Sakarya, Turkey. Email: emrahkaya@sakarya.edu.tr. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8889-5587

1.0 Introduction

One of the most important and influential figures in the history of Islamic thought is Abu Hamid al-Ghazālī (d. 1111). We know him by the honorific titles of *Ḥujjat al-Islām* (the proof or authority on Islam) and *Imām* (the leader). These titles indicate al-Ghazālī's highly authoritative reputation among Islamic scholars.[2] Indeed, it is impossible to say that every scholar, without exception, accepts his authority. However, the fact that al-Ghazālī is known in every place of the Muslim lands and that his works have been translated into many languages proves a tremendous favor to him.[3] As we will discuss later, politics played a role in his having such an excellent reputation. In addition, the fact that he wrote comprehensive works on Islamic morality based on Sufism and on essential parts of Islamic thought such as theology, philosophy, and jurisprudence, is also effective in forming this reputation. Therefore, al-Ghazālī is a scholar who will never lose his importance to the Islamic world.

The purpose of this article is to critically evaluate al-Ghazālī's prestige from various angles. We will make this critical evaluation within the framework of scientific ethics. It is crucial to note that this framework differs from a subject-based critique. Al-Ghazālī's subject-based criticism was made centuries ago, and his right and wrong views have been analyzed one by one in a reasoned manner. In the early days, Ibn Rushd (d. 1198) had written his famous *Tahāfut al-Taḥāfut al-Falāsifa* responding to al- al-Ghazālī. Likewise, an influential scholar like Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328), though not in a systematic refutation, addressed some of al-Ghazālī's claims about philosophy, theology, and mysticism one by one in his various

[2] Muhammad ʿĀbid al-Jābirī, *al-Turāth wa al-Hadātha* (Beirut: Merkezu Dirāsat al-wahdat al-ʿArabiyya, 1991). 165.18. For example, Professor Ejder Okumuş characterizes al-Ghazālī as an authoritative scholar in fiqh, language, logic, ethics, mysticism, philosophy, Ḥadīth, politics, and education. See, Ejder Okumuş, "Gazâlî'nin Siyaset ve Yönetim Yaklaşımı," Marife 21/2 (2021), 705–726; Frank Griffel, *Al-Ghazālī's Philosophical Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 61–87.

[3] See, Frank Griffel, "Al-Ghazālī," The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, ed. Edward N. Zalta, 2020; Patrick Harris, "Power, Piety, and Rebellion in Al-Andalus: The Reception and Influence of Al-Ghazālī's Political Philosophy in Islamic Iberia," *The Hilltop Review* 5 (2012), 23–36.

works.[4] Today, for example, Fatih Toktaş evaluates al-Ghazālī on individual issues in his work entitled *İslam Düşüncesinde Felsefe Eleştirileri*.[5] Such works are easy to find. However, it is not easy to find a comprehensive study concerning the scholarly attitude of al-Ghazālī from an ethical point of view. Researchers prefer to gloss over this problem with a few sentences. What we want to do in this article, therefore, is not to evaluate al-Ghazālī's claims on individual issues and to explain where he was right and where he was wrong. What we want to do is to show that al-Ghazālī's scholarly precision and loyalty to science are weak. With this provocative study, we would like to enable an evaluation of al-Ghazālī from these aspects as well. Instead of building the ground for discussing scholarly ethics by referencing modern academic understanding, we create this ground with al-Ghazālī's approach. The attitude that cannot be excused in any way in the contemporary academic understanding is also inexcusable from his perspective. Al-Ghazālī talks about some ethical calamities that scholars face. He states that moral weaknesses such as hiding what one knows, not wanting the truth of others to be revealed, and being displeased when the truth is revealed through the tongue or pen of scholars one disagrees with are among the spiritual diseases of scholars.[6] This article uses this understanding of al-Ghazālī as the framework of scholarly ethics.

The conclusion we want to reach here is to ask whether al-Ghazālī's prominence as a scholar is based on a scholarly justification. The first perspective that this questioning will give the reader is to realize that the fame of scholars does not always stem from scholarly competence. This perspective will strengthen our critical view of the scholars. The second perspective the reader will have is that it is problematic that even today, al-Ghazālī as an

[4] Taqī al-Dīn Ibn Taymiyya, *Kitāb al-Radd ʿalā al-Manṭiqiyyīn*, ed. ʿAbd al-Ṣamad Sharaf al-Dīn al-Kutubī (Beirut: Muʾassasat al-rayyān, 2005); Ibn Rushd, Tahāfut al-Tahāfut al-Falāsifa, ed. Sulaymān Dunyā (Cairo: Dār al-Maʿārif, 1964).

[5] Fatih Toktaş, *İslam Düşüncesinde Felsefe Eleştirileri* (İstanbul: Klasik Yayınları, 2013).

[6] Abū Ḥāmid Ghazālī, *Iḥyā'u 'ulūm al-Dīn* (Beirut: Dār al-Maʿrifa, 1982), 1/44-48, 3/351, 354, 370.

authoritative influence on the understanding of religion in many Islamic countries.

In the following pages, we will briefly examine the impact of al-Ghazālī's political mission on this reputation. Then, we will deal with al-Ghazālī's approach to Ḥadīth. The subject of Ḥadīth, the basis of Islamic sciences, is essential here because he stands out with his identity as an Islamic scholar. We will then proceed with two subheadings on his relationship to philosophy and the ethical analysis of al-Ghazālī's attitude toward science.

2.0 Al-Ghazālī's Political Mission

Al-Ghazālī's political engagement began when he attended the Nizamiya Madrasa, founded by the Seljuk vizier Nizam al-Mulk (d. 1092). Al-Ghazālī, who took lessons from Imām al-Ḥaramayn Abū al-Maʿālī al-Juwaynī (d. 1085) at the Nizamiya Madrasa in Nishapur, was appointed to the Nizamiya Madrasa in Baghdad in 1091 by Niẓām al-Mulk after the death of al-Juwayni. Al-Ghazālī was very popular here; he attracted attention as a brilliant scholar, and the political authorities used him to serve their purposes. However, we know from al-Ghazālī's statements that al-Ghazālī was close to Malik Shah (d. 1092) in Isfahan before he came to Baghdad and even served as an envoy between the Sultan and the Caliph.[7]

Nizam al-Mulk and the Seljuk administration, who were instrumental in making him famous, asked al-Ghazālī to write works against the Bāṭinīyyah, whom they considered a political danger.[8] According to Muhammad ʿAbid al-Jabiri, these works were written following the policy of the Seljuk state. Moreover, according to him, even the famous four groups of truth seekers mentioned by al-Ghazālī in his *al-Munqidh* is an approach dictated by the Seljuk

[7] Griffel, *Philosophical Theology*, 32; Muḥammad ʿĀbid al-Jābirī, *Takwīn al-ʿAql al-ʿArabī* (Beirut: Markaz Dirāsāt al-waḥda al-ʿarabiyya, 2009), 280.

[8] Abū Ḥāmid Ghazzālī, *al-Munqidh min al-Ḍalāl*, ed. Ahmad Shamsaddin (Beirut: Dār al-kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1988), 48, 75. In these sentences, al-Ghazālī also expresses the danger of falling into disfavor if he disobeys his orders. Griffel quotes al-Ghazālī's student Abū Bakr Ibn ʿArabī as claiming that al-Ghazālī was commissioned by Malik Shah to write a work against the *Bāṭiniyyah*. See, Griffel, *Philosophical Theology*, 32.

state.[9] It is no secret that al-Ghazālī was commissioned by the state. He says, "The holy and worthy emir al-Mustaẓhir Billah requested him to write a refutation of the Bāṭiniyyah."[10] The aim here was to gain the support of the scholarly community for the Seljuk state's struggle against the Bāṭiniyyah. In scholarly circles, the representation of the Bāṭiniyyah was known with Ismāʿilī thought, and the primary motivation of al-Ghazālī's attitude, known as anti-philosophy, was to strengthen the belief of the Ahl al-Sunnah against the Bāṭiniyyah and to shield the Seljuk state with this belief. Though scientific concerns came to the fore, the real struggle was political. While the Seljuk state defended the Sunnī (Ahl al-Sunnah) understanding of Islam, it also waged a vital battle against another rival, the Ismāʿilī thought and philosophy that the Fāṭimīs adopted.[11]

In conclusion, as Fehrullah Terkan notes, al-Ghazālī's motivation was political. His primary goal was to restore the unity of the ummah that had been shattered in his time.[12] The way to do this is through religion. For this reason, al-Ghazālī harshly criticized religious groups and sects that opposed his understanding of religion, and he even made *takfīr* of some of them. Had he not pursued a political agenda, al-Ghazālī's attitude toward dissenting opinions might have been more moderate and scholarly.

3. Al-Ghazālī's Approach to Ḥadīth

We know that al-Ghazālī wrote works in many fields of Islamic sciences. Especially in his works on morality and mysticism, he made much more use of Ḥadīth. It is because Ḥadīth are the foundation of Islamic sciences. When giving a fatwa, a jurist must know what the

[9] Jābirī, *Takwīn al-'Aql al-'Arabī*, 275, 280–283.
[10] Abū Ḥāmid Ghazālī, *Faḍā'iḥ al-Bāṭiniyyah*, ed. 'Abd al-Raḥmān Badawī (Cairo: Muassasa dār al-kutub al-thaqāfiyya, 1964), 3.
[11] According to Fehrullah Terkan, al-Ghazālī's main criticism of the philosophers in *Faḍā'iḥ al-Bāṭiniyyah* stems from his belief that they provide intellectual support to the Bāṭinīs who produce arguments against the Sunnī tradition. In other words, according to al-Ghazālī, philosophers weaken the arguments of the Sunnī tradition. Fehrullah Terkan, "Üç Mesele -2: Tanrı ve Cüz'îlere Dair Bilgisi," Gazzâlî Konuşmaları, ed. M. Cüneyt Kaya (İstanbul: Küre Yayınları, 2017), 89.
[12] Terkan, "Tanrı ve Cüz'îlere Dair Bilgisi," 88.

Prophet said on the subject. When interpreting a verse, a commentator must know what the Prophet said on the subject before expressing his own opinion. In formulating his moral teachings, a Sūfī must be in agreement with the Prophet's Ḥadīth. In short, we can say that it is possible only to rise to a position of competence in Islamic sciences by reaching a certain level in the science of Ḥadīth. Moreover, al-Ghazālī considered the *mutawātir sunna* and the Qur'ān equally binding.[13] In addition, according to al-Ghazālī, one of the fundamental sciences, which he calls the sciences of the hereafter, is the science of Ḥadīth.[14] Therefore, we may rightly expect that a scholar considered a proof (*ḥujjat*) in religion should be sensitive to Ḥadīth, distinguish authentic Ḥadīth from weak and fabricated narrations, and show the necessary sensitivity before attributing a narration to the Prophet.

Now, do we see this sensitivity in al-Ghazālī's works? When we look at al-Ghazālī's works, in which he uses many *Ḥadīth* narrations, we see that he does not show this sensitivity. *Iḥyā' al-'Ulūm al-Dīn* and *Mīzān al-'Amal* are the most important of these works. In these works, al-Ghazālī references Qur'anic verses as well as Ḥadīth narrations not included in the authentic books. As 'Irāqī has shown us, the number of narrations in the *Iḥyā'* narrated with weak *sanad* is more than two hundred, the number of narrations that we cannot find in reliable Ḥadīth sources is more than one hundred and twenty, and the number of narrations considered fabricated is more than twenty.[15]

[13] Abū Ḥāmid Ghazālī, *al-Mustaṣfā' min 'Ilm al-Uṣūl*, ed. Ahmad Zaki Hammad (Riyadh: Sidra, no date), 711.

[14] Ghazālī, *Iḥyā*, 1/56.

[15] Zayn al-Dīn ʿIrāqī, *al-Mughnī ʿan Ḥaml al-Asfār fī al-Asfār fī Takhrīj mā fī al-Iḥyā' min al-Akhbār* (Beirut: Dār Ibn Ḥazm, 2005). There are differences in these numbers. Some have been overlooked and added later, as well as different classifications of Ḥadīth scholars. It is impossible to say that every narration without a source is fabricated. Some of the narrations that are considered weak are also disputed. However, these discussions are a matter for ḥadīth researchers. We are trying to draw attention here to the fact that al-Ghazālī was not careful in his use of ḥadīth narrations. See, M. Yaşar Kandemir, "Irâkî, Zeynüddin," Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi, 1999.

More recent studies say similar things. For example, a study of the Ḥadīth narrations in *Mīzān al-'Amal* shows that twenty-four of the eighty-one narrations used in this work are *ṣaḥīḥ*, seven are *ḥasan*, twenty-six are weak, and thirteen are fabricated narrations. In addition, some sayings that cannot be found in the sources are cited as Ḥadīth. At the same time, forty-seven of these Ḥadīth are also found in the *Iḥyā'*. According to the research, fifty of these narrations in *Mīzān al-'amal* are in the rejected (*mardūd*) category, while thirty-one of them are in the acceptable (*maqbūl*) Ḥadīth category.[16]

The information provided by another study is in the same direction. It states that the *Iḥyā'* contains many fabricated Ḥadīth, which belong to the category of *mardūd* Ḥadīth.[17] However, it is not possible that al-Ghazālī did not know the famous hadith narration, "Whoever knowingly attributes a lie to me, let him prepare for his place in the fire." As someone familiar with the methodology of Ḥadīth, al-Ghazālī has theoretical knowledge of how to determine the authenticity of a narration. On the other hand, al-Ghazālī, who considers the *mutawātir sunna* as evidence equal to the Qur'ān, and who knows that fabricating a Ḥadīth is a great offense that will lead to the punishment of hell, does not have sufficient sensitivity on that matter.

This attitude of al-Ghazālī towards Ḥadīth has long been known. He has faced severe criticism from the *'ulamā* since his own time. He openly admits that he is not on a good level in Ḥadīth.[18] Ibn Taymiyya was one of those who criticized him in this regard. According to him, al-Ghazālī was well-intentioned but extremely ignorant about Ḥadīth. Although al-Ghazālī's *Iḥyā'* contains much valuable information in accordance with the Sunnah, it also contains many fabricated and weak narrations. Al-Ghazālī includes so many fabricated and weak narrations because he relies on Sūfī sources and

[16] Büşra Sultan Özdemir, *Gazâlî'nin Mîzânu'l-Amel Adlı Eserindeki Hadislerin Tahrici ve Değerlendirilmesi* (Konya: Necmettin Erbakan University, Master's Thesis, 2015), 94–97.

[17] Halil Kaya, "Gazzâlî'de Haber ve Hadis Kavramları," *Hadis Tetkikleri Dergisi* 14/2 (2016), 52–53.

[18] Abū Ḥāmid Gazālī, *"el-Kânûnu'l-Küllî fi't-Te'vîl,"* trans. Mahmut Kaya, M. Cüneyt Kaya, Kelam ve Halk: İlcâmu'l-Avâm an Ilmi'l-Kelâm - El-Kânûnu'l-Küllî Fi't-Te'vîl (İstanbul: Klasik Yayınları, 2018), 115.

lacks the knowledge to distinguish the Ḥadīth in these sources.[19] Ibn Taymiyya is not alone in his criticisms. Abu al-Faraj Ibn al-Jawzi (d. 1201), who wrote on many fields of Islamic sciences, said that al-Ghazālī's *Iḥyā'* was full of weak and fabricated narrations and that al-Ghazālī took whatever he heard as Ḥadīth.[20] Similarly, al-Dhahabi (d. 1348) said that although the *Iḥyā'* has excellent benefits, it also includes many false narrations of Ḥadīth.[21]

Although it is clear that al-Ghazālī was either less knowledgeable or less sensitive about Ḥadīth, some scholars consider this case acceptable for different reasons. For example, Mehmet Görmez, a professor of Ḥadīth, has the following to say on the subject: "All of these criticisms against al-Ghazālī have been made with regard to his famous work *Iḥyā' al-'Ulūm al-Dīn*, which has gained a great reputation in the Islamic world. However, although there are weak and fabricated Ḥadīth in the *Iḥyā'*, the number of Ḥadīth that would be considered *munkar* in terms of content and whose attribution to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) could be seen as an exorbitant mistake at first glance is relatively small."[22] Another professor of Ḥadīth, Erdinç Ahatlı, points out that many weak narrations are also found in the works written for the public by scholars such as Qadi 'Iyaḍ, al-Dhahabi, and Ibn al-Jawzi and notes that this is to some extent unavoidable in books of preaching and advice.[23] The authenticity of the narration to which al-Ghazālī refers

[19] Taqī al-Dīn Ibn Taymiyya, *Majmūʿ Fatāwā Shaykh al-Islām Aḥmad Ibn Taymiyya,* ed. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad ibn Qāsim, Muḥammad ibnʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad (Riyadh: Maṭābiʿ al-Riyāḍ, 1961), 4/71-72; Taqī al-Dīn Ibn Taymiyya, *Bayān Talbīs al-Jahmiyya fī Taʾsīs Bidaʿihim al-Kalāmiyya,* ed. Yaḥyā b. Muḥammad Al-Hunaydī (Madina: Majmaʿ al-Malik Fahd li-tibāʿat al-muṣḥaf al-sharīf, 2005), 6/125-127.

[20] Abū al-Faraj ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntazam fī Taʿrīkh al-Muluk wa al-Umam*, ed. Muḥammad 'Abd al-Qādir 'Aṭā, Muṣṭafā 'Abd al-Qādir 'Aṭā (Beirut: Dār al-kutub al-ʿilmiyya, 1995), 17/124-127.

[21] Abū 'Abdillāh Shams al-Dīn al-Dhahabī, *Siyaru Aʿlām al-Nubalāʾ* (Beirut: Muassasa al-risāla, 1982).

[22] Mehmet Görmez, Gazâlî'de Sünnet, *Hadis ve Yorum* (Ankara: Otto Yayınları, 2014), 60. In the following pages of his book, Görmez is also helpless in the face of fabricated narrations, especially in al-Ghazālī's Mukāshafa al-Qulūb.

[23] Erdinç Ahatlı, "Vaazlarda Ayet ve Hadislerden Yararlanma Adlı Oturumun Müzakeresi" (Vaaz ve Vaizlik Sempozyumu 17-18 Aralık 2011, Ankara: Diyanet

is not essential here. What is important is that the fabricated or weak narration does not contain an exorbitant error of meaning and that it is considered common in the scholarly tradition to say such things when addressing the public. Nevertheless, Sıtkı Gülle, who has made a careful translation of the *Iḥyā* into Turkish, admits that this work contains absurd narratives.[24]

The fact that al-Ghazālī was accepted as an authority despite his lack of sensitivity to Ḥadīth can only be seen as a reflection of his political power and mission in scholarly circles. The main reason for emphasizing this flaw is to show in the following lines that al-Ghazālī's opposition to philosophy on religious grounds cannot have a sound basis.

4. His Relationship with Philosophy

When considering his relationship to philosophy, it is crucial to ask whether al-Ghazālī's approach conforms to the scientific method. The scientific method aims to reveal the truth about a relevant subject. In doing so, the ideas held to be false are refuted individually, and the claim that cannot be refuted can be accepted as valid. On the other hand, the idea claimed to be true is confirmed by supporting it with all possible arguments so that it cannot be challenged. It is also possible to use these two approaches together. In the scientific method, however, it is essential to be unprejudiced, focus on the claim rather than the claimant, and aim at revealing the truth.

On this basis, let us examine al-Ghazālī's motivation toward philosophers. At the very beginning of his most important work, *Tahāfut al-Falāsifah*, in which he strongly criticizes philosophy in the person of al-Farabi (d. 950) and Ibn Sina (d. 1037), he uses aggressive and accusatory language against these philosophers. Al-Ghazālī's most basic allegation against philosophers is this: philosophers claim that their teachings, especially in metaphysics, are based on demonstration and are certain, but their claims in this field

İşleri Başkanlığı Yayınları, 2013), 393–400.

[24] Abū Ḥāmid Gazālī, *İhyâ'u Ulûmi'd-Dîn*, trans. Sıtkı Gülle (İstanbul: Huzur Yayınevi, 2008), 3/577 n. 20.

are based on conjecture and supposition. If they were based on conclusive evidence, they would agree on metaphysical matters just as they agree on mathematics and would not contradict each other.[25] This assertion of al-Ghazālī is not unjustified and unwarranted. However, al-Ghazālī, while presenting his views, did not prefer to offer persuasive proofs and used aggressive language that overshadowed his thoughts against the philosophers.

According to al-Ghazālī, the position of al-Farabi and Ibn Sina is heresy rather than a philosophical error.[26] Moreover, they preferred to adopt the creed of unbelief to consider themselves superior and more virtuous than the common people.[27] Therefore, according to al-Ghazālī, philosophers such as al-Farabi and Ibn Sina should be fought with the support of other sects because they attack the fundamental principles of religion. It is noteworthy that al-Ghazālī, by saying that "hatred and enmity disappear in times of need," even called on the Mu'tazilah, Karramiyyah, and Waqifiyyah sects, whom he often criticized, for help.[28]

In this article, we will not discuss al-Ghazālī's reasons for the *takfīr* of the philosophers. Whether or not differences of opinion on these issues can cause *takfīr* is a matter of debate. While *takfīr* is a religious concept, can it be a concept applied to a result of rational reasoning? If a conclusion reached through rational methods is wrong, the person is accused of being ignorant or wrong, not an unbeliever. Since al-Ghazālī's opposition to the philosophers went beyond scholarly sensibilities, it also prevented him from adopting an objective attitude. According to Ibn Rushd, who was sometimes very critical of these philosophers, al-Ghazālī forced them to accept what they claimed to be impossible and often attributed to them things that the philosophers had not said.[29]

The most important example is the claim that God does not know the particulars, which is one of the reasons for the *takfīr* of al-

[25] Abū Ḥāmid Ghazālī, *Tahāfut al-Falāsifa*, ed. Sulaymān Dunyā (Cairo: Dār al-maʿrifa, 1966), 76.
[26] Ibid., 76.
[27] Ibid., 74, 81.
[28] Ibid, *Ta.hāfut*, 82.
[29] Ibn Rushd, *Tahāfut*, 249, 270, 874.

Farabi and Ibn Sina. For those who learned al-Farabi and Ibn Sina through al-Ghazālī's passages, this claim is almost entirely valid. However, both al-Farabi and Ibn Sina included statements refuting this accusation in their most fundamental books that al-Ghazālī could not have been unaware of. For example, al-Farabi, in his work *al-Siyāsa al-Madaniyya*, states that all existence comes from God through emanation and that God, knowing His essence, hence actually knows all existence and nothing is hidden from Him.[30] Similarly, in *al-Madīna al-Fāḍila*, when he talks about the process of revelation from God to man, he says that the person who receives revelation will be a warner with this revelation in matters of the future and of the particulars. In order to be able to inform about the things that already exist, this revelation must contain information about them. Therefore, God, the source of this revelation, must also have knowledge of these particulars.[31] If we read carefully, al-Farabi makes many statements that indicate that God knows the particulars, but it is not easy to say that God does not know them. It must be admitted that it is possible, albeit difficult, to interpret al-Farabi's words along the lines of al-Ghazālī because they are not very clear.

However, in the case of Ibn Sina, we face more explicit statements. Understanding these statements along the lines of al-Ghazālī requires serious manipulation and bias. For example, Ibn Sina says: "On the contrary, the Necessary Being knows everything in a universal manner, but nothing is hidden from Him. Nothing in the heavens and the earth is hidden from Him. It is one of those interesting matters that require an innate keenness of intellect and understanding to comprehend."[32] Likewise, in his book *al-Ishārāt*, Ibn Sina clearly states that God knows the particulars and says, "Although God's knowledge of the particulars transcends time and

[30] Abū Naṣr al-Fārābī, *Kitāb al-Siyāsa al-Madaniyya al-Mulakkab bi-Mabād al-Mawjūdāt*, ed. Favzi Najjār (Beirut: al-Matbaʿat al-kātūlīkiyya, 1964), 34.

[31] Abū Naṣr al-Fārābī, *el-Medînetü'l-Fâzıla: Tanrı-Âlem-İnsan*, trans. Yaşar Aydınlı (İstanbul: Litera Yayıncılık, 2019), 198.

[32] Ibn Sīnā, *Kitâbu'ş-Şifâ: İlâhiyât, Metafizik*, trans. Ekrem Demirli, Ömer Türker (İstanbul: Türkiye Yazma Eserler Kurumu Başkanlığı Yayınları, 2014), 2/342-344; M. Cüneyt Kaya, "Sadreddin Konevî'nin Metafizik Eleştirisi: İbn Sînâ'da Zorunlu Varlık'ın Cüz'îleri Bilmesi Sorunu," Felsefe Arkivi 36/2 (2012), 29.

genius, God knows the particulars in a sacred way."[33] Despite these and many similar statements, the matter that al-Ghazālī underlines as a reason for *takfîr* of the philosophers has become perhaps one of the most well-known issues in the history of Islamic thought.

Under the influence of his campaign against the philosophers, al-Ghazālī violated scientific ethics. Moving away from objectivity with his interpretations, al-Ghazālī tried to blame and discredit the scientific disciplines themselves based on the false conclusions of the philosophers. His criticism of al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, and the Ikhwan al-Safa' went beyond philosophers to philosophy. He even considered a branch of science we need at every point in the universe, such as mathematics, harmful. Under the influence of Neo- Pythagoreanism, Islamic philosophers, especially al-Kindi (d. 865) and the philosophers of the Ikhwan al-Safa', have attached great importance to mathematics. According to these philosophers, mathematics is the only science that shows us the meaning of the verse, "We created everything with a measure" (al-Qamar 54/49). For this reason, al-Kindi and the Ikhwan al-Safa' argued that mathematics would lead one to realize God's art and to monotheism. According to al-Kindi, it is through philosophy that we gain knowledge of God, the First Cause. The study of philosophy should begin with mathematics because philosophy cannot be understood without knowledge of mathematics.[34] Similarly, Ikhwan al-Safa' said that the mathematical sciences are essential for learning the natural sciences and that we can understand God's art through these sciences. The natural sciences are one of the ways through which we can know God. Therefore, the science of mathematics is at the beginning of the path that leads us to the knowledge of God.[35]

---

[33] Ibn Sīnā, *el-İşârât ve't-Tenbîhât: İşaretler ve Tembihler*, trans. Muhittin Macit et al. (İstanbul: Litera Yayıncılık, 2017), 145, 165–169; Rahim Acar, "Allah'ın Cüz'îleri Bilmesi: Klasik İbn Sînâ Yorumunun Değerlendirilmesi," Divan: Disiplinlerarası Çalışmalar Dergisi 20 (2006), 116; Ibn Sīnā, *al-Ta'līqāt*, ed. 'Abd al-Raḥmān Badawī (Beirut: Dār al-Islāmiyya, no date), 24–29.

[34] Kindī, "Aristoteles'in Kitaplarının Sayısı Üzerine," trans. Mahmut Kaya, *Kindî: Felsefî Risâleler* (İstanbul: Klasik Yayınları, 2018), 272–278.

[35] Ikhwan al-Safa', *Rasāilu Ikhwan al-Safa' wa Khullān al-Wafā'* (Qum: Maktab al-iʿlām al-islāmī, 1985), 1/75. For an example of explaining that there is a ratio/measure in everything that God has created, see, Ikhwan al-Safa', *Rasāil*,

Despite his knowledge of the fundamental dynamics of this approach, al-Ghazālī opposed the science of mathematics. According to him, mathematics is neither commanded nor forbidden by religion. There is no clear *nass* on this subject. On the other hand, a certain amount of mathematical science is necessary to fulfill the commands of the Shari'ah, such as calculating the amount of *zakāt*, which is obligatory, and determining the times of prayer. Furthermore, rejecting the science of mathematics is not a service to religion either.

On the other hand, according to al-Ghazālī, those who want to delve deeper into the science of mathematics should be prevented.[36] According to him, mathematics is the science on which the science of the heretical philosophers is based. Therefore, those who study mathematics at an advanced level will be infected with the evil of the philosophers. In this regard, al-Ghazālī said that there are very few people who engage in this science and do not fall away from religion.[37] In another work, he characterizes mathematics, geometry, and astronomy, which he considers among the sciences that religion does not directly favor, as deceptive conjectures and useless true knowledge.[38] With this attitude, we see that al-Ghazālī's opposition to the philosophers went beyond individuals and turned to sciences such as philosophy and mathematics, which are the capital and wealth of humanity. However, this attitude has no scientific basis or explanation. It is unacceptable that he considered mathematics, which he admitted was based on conclusive evidence and did not pose a

1/223.

[36] In this regard, Ömer Mahir Alper, probably based on a reading of the Iḥyā', has suggested that the people we should keep away from these sciences are those who act with imitation. However, according to al-Ghazālī, everyone who wants to delve deeper into these sciences should be prevented because we cannot know in advance who will be harmed by these sciences. Moreover, according to his statements in al-Mustaṣfā', even if these sciences are true, they are useless. In fact, al-Ghazālī points out the need to refrain from them by saying, "I seek refuge in God from useless knowledge." See Ghazālī, al-Mustaṣfā', 4; Ghazālī, Iḥyā, 1/22; Ömer Mahir Alper, "Gazzâlî'nin Felsefî Geleneğe Bakışı: O Gerçekten Bir Felsefe Karşıtı Mıydı?," Darulfunun İlahiyat 4 (2001), 94.

[37] Ghazālī, *al-Munqidh*, 39.

[38] Ghazālī, *al-Mustaṣfā'*, 4. For an article on al-Ghazālī's negative view of the sciences, see Hasan Aydın, "Gazzâlî'nin Aklî/Felsefî Bilimlere Yönelik Eleştirileri ve Bilim Tarihindeki İzdüşümleri," Kebikeç 48 (2009), 83–100.

religious problem, as dangerous because it could lead one to the sciences of the philosophers. His criticism of philosophy and mathematics in the name of a narrow defense of religion to meet the demands of the political atmosphere in which he found himself is extremely problematic from a scientific point of view. He also used the defense of religion as a tool in the political struggle of the Seljuk Empire against the Fatimids. However, people who do not know al-Ghazālī's political mission and motivation and who know him only through his books have thought that al-Ghazālī's condemnation of philosophical sciences was purely scientific. It is the situation in which we find ourselves as an Islamic society. In conclusion, we believe that al-Ghazālī's negative attitude toward philosophers and his use of their essential elements of thought without naming them is an ethical problem rather than an unconscious contradiction.[39]

5. His Ethical Attitude in Science

Al-Ghazālī wrote works on almost all fields of Islamic sciences. However, it is difficult to claim that these works are original. Whether al-Ghazālī was original is a problem, but we will not focus on it. Our problem is not al-Ghazālī's originality but the incompatibility of his attitude with scholarly ethics. This is because al-Ghazālī did not always disclose the sources and people he used. Moreover, it is a much more difficult ethical problem for him to belittle, *takfīr*, and accuse these people of heresy in his various works.

We need the following brief explanation to clarify the matter. In Sufism, for example, the fact that al-Ghazālī followed Abu Talib al-Makki's *Qūt al-Qulūb* and al-Muhasibi's *al-Riāya* almost verbatim

[39] Jābirī, on the other hand, sees an apparent contradiction in al-Ghazālī's position. However, it is strange to accept that a scholar like al-Ghazālīwould fall into such simple contradictions because the situations mentioned above are neither rare nor unimportant. Therefore, it is more likely to be a conscious choice than an unconscious contradiction. Such a choice, in turn, has led to an ethical violation. As Jābirī points out: al-Ghazālī's political mission influenced this choice. Perhaps the reason for al-Ghazālī's anger at his engagement with politics is that politics drove him to this violation. See al-Jābirī, al-Turāth wa al-Hadātha, 172–174.

should lead us to question his originality in Sūfī thought.[40] Similarly, in theology, the claim that he added nothing new to the problems discussed by his teacher al-Juwayni should lead us to question al-Ghazālī's originality in theology.[41] Although al-Ghazālī has an important place in the methodology of Fiqh, the claim that al-Ghazālī did not stand at a very different point within the existing tradition and that what already existed was presented in a different form by al-Ghazālī should be investigated more closely.[42] Each of the issues mentioned here requires a separate study. However, this lack of originality is not an ethical problem but a quality problem because al-Ghazālī has mentioned the sources he used in these areas. However, it is an ethical problem when the sources of the ideas used are not mentioned or even denigrated. We can illustrate this claim with a few examples.

The first example of this is the disputes over *Maqāṣid al-Falāsifah*. As is well known, al-Ghazālī's most important work on philosophy is *Tahāfut*, in which he criticizes the philosophers on twenty subjects. According to al-Ghazālī, in order to understand these criticisms and *takfīr*, these issues must be explained in detail. For this purpose, al-Ghazālī wrote *Maqāṣid*. Al-Ghazālī, who despised the method of philosophy and accused philosophers of blasphemy, claimed to have made it a habit from childhood to learn

[40] Ghazālī, *al-Munqidh*, 57; Ekrem Demirli, "Gazzâlî ve Tasavvuf," Gazzâlî Konuşmaları, ed. M. Cüneyt Kaya (İstanbul: Küre Yayınları, 2017), 279.

[41] İlhan Kutluer, "Gazzâlî ve Felsefe," *Gazzâlî Konuşmaları*, ed. M. Cüneyt Kaya (İstanbul: Küre Yayınları, 2017), 14. Frank Griffel has explained at length the ways in which philosophy influenced al-Ghazālī's theological thought. See, Griffel, Philosophical Theology. It can also be said that al-Ghazālī did not make a thematic contribution to the science of kalam; his contribution-some would say a corruption-was to include logic. This is a methodological contribution. See, M. Sait Özervarlı, "Gazzâlî," TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi, 1996. Ismail Haji Abdullah, however, argues in his doctoral dissertation that al-Ghazālī followed in the footsteps of al-Juwaynī not only in matters of theology but also in modes of expression, but that al-Ghazālī's fame caused these similarities to be overlooked. See, Ismail Haji Abdullah, The Influence of Imam Al-Juwayni on the Theology of Imam al-Ghazālī (University of St. Andrews, Ph.D. Dissertation, 1996).

[42] H. Yunus Apaydın, "Gazzâlî ve Fıkıh Usulü," Gazzâlî Konuşmaları, ed. M. Cüneyt Kaya (İstanbul: Küre Yayınları, 2017), 175, 219.

every thought he encountered down to the finest detail.[43] As a result of this habit, al-Ghazālī claims that he reached a depth that even those considered authorities in the field of philosophy could not reach and recognized errors and dangers they could not see. He reached this depth in less than two years, without any help from anyone, simply by reading philosophical books. Finally, he claimed he spent a year reviewing his received information. Thus, he could distinguish without hesitation between those aspects of philosophy based on deception and fraud and those that were true.[44]

As a result of this preoccupation with philosophy, al-Ghazālī, who wanted to criticize it and protect Muslims from the dangers of philosophy, felt that it was necessary to present information about philosophy before presenting his criticisms in his book *Tahāfut*. Accordingly, he wrote *Maqāṣid* as an introduction before his book of criticism and refutation, *Tahāfut*.[45] According to Alparslan Açıkgenç, who studies Islamic thought, the philosophy treated in *Maqāṣid* is Aristotelian philosophy, on which Peripatetic thought is primarily based. According to Açıkgenç, one of al-Ghazālī's important aims in writing this work was to show that he was competent enough to understand and explain Aristotelian philosophy, which is difficult to understand. According to him, *Maqāṣid* is a successful work that explains Aristotelian philosophy as it is, and it will be clearly seen when compared with Ibn Sina's *al-Najāt*.[46]

Sulayman Dunya, in his introduction to *Maqāṣid*, says that although al-Ghazālī points out that the issues he mentions in *Maqāṣid* are themes he will later criticize in *Tahāfut*, there is no criticism of logic in *Tahāfut*. However, the reason for writing *Maqāṣid* was to give preliminary information about what he would criticize in *Tahāfut*. Al-Ghazālī even excluded the mathematical sciences from *Maqāṣid*, saying that there was nothing to criticize since they did not contain anything contrary to reason and religion. Al-Ghazālī, who

[43] Ghazālī, *al-Munqidh*, 23–25.
[44] Ghazālī, *al-Munqidh*, 34–35.
[45] Abū Ḥāmid Ghazālī, *Maqāṣid al-Falāsifa*, ed. Sulaymān Dunyā (Egypt: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1961), 31–32.
[46] Abū Ḥāmid Ghazālī, *Felsefenin Temel İlkeleri: Makasıd el-Felasife*, trans. Cemaleddin Erdemci (Ankara: Vadi Yayınları, 2002), 15.

mentions logic, which contains a small amount of error, in *Maqāṣid*, did not criticize this science in *Tahāfut*, even though he considered it erroneous. This critical detail pointed out by Dunya shows that al-Ghazālī was not faithful to the explanation-criticism system he introduced between these two works.[47]

According to Dunya, the information presented in al-Ghazālī's *Maqāṣid* is much more than the topics he criticizes in *Tahāfut*. However, al-Ghazālī did not include mathematics because there was nothing to criticize rationally and religiously. Therefore, the topics that al-Ghazālī would not criticize in logic, metaphysics, and natural sciences should not have been included in *Maqāṣid*. However, they are included. Dunya argues that this inconsistent attitude stems from al-Ghazālī's desire to demonstrate his knowledge in these fields. It would have prevented a possible criticism that al-Ghazālī rejected subjects he did not know.[48]

After these explanations, let us come to the substantial similarity of *Maqāṣid* with Ibn Sina's *Dānishnāma*. Murat Demirkol, who translated the Persian *Dānishnāma* into Turkish, points out the significant similarity between *Dānishnāma* and *Maqāṣid* in his preface to the work and gives examples.[49] Seyyed Hossein Nasr had previously pointed out this similarity and claimed that *Maqāṣid* is almost identical to *Dānishnāma*.[50] In addition to Nasr, Jules Jansenns, who compares *Dānishnāma* and *Maqāṣid* in detail, argues that although *Maqāṣid* is not a literal translation of *Dānishnāma*, it is entirely inspired by it. According to Jansenns, al-Ghazālī's contribution to *Maqāṣid* is almost nothing except for a few summaries and the concretization of some abstract ideas.[51]

Coming back to Demirkol, according to him, even the figures drawn in *Maqāṣid* are very similar to each other, except for some

[47] Ghazālī, *Maqāṣid*, 13–14.
[48] Ghazālī, *Maqāṣid*, 20–23. 20-23.
[49] Ibn Sīnā, *Dânişnâme-i Alâî: Alâî Hikmet Kitabı*, trans. Murat Demirkol (İstanbul: Türkiye Yazma Eserler Kurumu Başkanlığı Yayınları, 2013), xxii, n. 19.
[50] Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Three Muslim Sages: Avicenna, Suhrawardī, Ibn 'Arabī* (New York: Caravan Books, 1997), 148, n. 5.
[51] Jules Jansenns, "The Dânesh-Nâmeh of Ibn-Sînâ: A Text to Revisit? Le Dânesh-Nâmeh d'Ibn Sînâ: Un Texte à Revoir?," trans. Sophie Lee, *Bulletin de Philosophie Médiévale* 28 (1986), 163–177.

bringing forward and postponements in the logic section. We know that the order of logic, nature, and metaphysics in the philosophical works was changed to logic, metaphysics, and nature in *Dānishnāma* for some reason. Al-Ghazālī, who claims that his primary purpose in *Maqāṣid* is to convey the philosophers' teachings as they are, did not imitate the general practice of philosophy but imitated Ibn Sina's unusual order by using the same justification that Ibn Sina provided. However, following al-Ghazālī's claim to convey philosophical teachings as they are, the order in the work should have been in accordance with the general acceptance of philosophy, not Ibn Sina, who is an exception. According to Demirkol, the similarity of *Maqāṣid* to *Dānishnāma* is even greater than that of Ibn Sina's *al-Ishārāt* to *Dānishnāma*. According to Demirkol, who considers it normal for works written in close periods to have similar aspects, there are examples of this in history. When we look at these examples, we see that the authors of the later work refer to the earlier work, while al-Ghazālī does not mention Ibn Sina and *Dānishnāma* in *Maqāṣid*. For Demirkol, this is not acceptable. In conclusion, Demirkol cautiously summarizes the situation by saying, "I do not want to consider the similarity between *Maqāṣid* and *Dānishnāma* as a case of copying or plagiarism, but further studies are necessary."[52]

What this information and studies show us is very clear: Al-Ghazālī's work, which he wrote to demonstrate his knowledge of the basic principles of philosophy before criticizing it and to show his mastery of philosophy, his understanding of it at the deepest level, even better than those who are considered authorities in philosophy, is almost identical to Ibn Sina's work, and there is no originality worth mentioning. Is it reasonable for a person who has truly mastered philosophy at the level of those considered authorities to repeat and imitate a work to such an extent?

The second example concerns the science of logic, which al-Ghazālī tried to present as such, although he was not original in his thinking. The philosophical sciences are broadly divided into logic, mathematics, natural sciences, and metaphysics. Al-Ghazālī's attitude towards philosophers in metaphysics is quite harsh. He has

[52] Ibn Sīnā, *Dânişnâme*, xxii–xxvii.

no definite objection to mathematics and natural sciences since no religious prohibition exists. However, he pointed out some secondary dangers despite the absence of any religious prohibition. He has very positive thoughts about the science of logic. In the introduction to his work *al-Mustaṣfā*, in which he begins with explanations of the topics of logic, he states that these topics are an introduction to all sciences and that the knowledge of the person who does not understand them cannot be trusted.[53] According to al-Ghazālī, logic is a science that examines the ways of forming evidence, the methods of syllogism, the conditions of conclusive proofs, and how to make the correct definition. Moreover, there is nothing in religion that requires the rejection of this science.[54] As a result of al-Ghazālī's positive approach to logic, he explicitly included it in the methodology of Fiqh.[55]

Although al-Ghazālī considers logic necessary, he wants to show that he did not receive it from Aristotle. According to him, the science philosophers call logic is known in theology as "*kitāb al-naẓar*." He says he uses the names "*kitāb al-jadal*" and "*madārik al-'uqūl*" for this science. According to him, people who want to appear intelligent despite their limited intelligence use the concept of logic as an exaggerated name. They assume that logic is known only to philosophers and that theologians do not know this science.[56] Whether it was taken from Aristotle or already known to theologians, al-Ghazālī adopted this science, which he learned almost entirely from the works of Ibn Sina and based it directly on the Qur'ān. According to al-Ghazālī, who discusses this issue in detail in *al-Qisṭās al-Mustaqīm* (The Just Balance), the criterion (*mīzān*/balance) needed to test correct arguments and knowledge is explicit in the Qur'ān. In this work, al-Ghazālī claimed that the syllogisms used in logic are already found in the Qur'ān and cited some verses as references. The purpose of the work is to respond to the claim of a

[53] Ghazālī, *al-Mustaṣfā'*, 16–17.
[54] Ghazālī, *al-Munqidh*, 40.
[55] 'Azmī T. al-Sayyed Ahmad, *Al-Ghazālī's Views on Logic* (Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh, Ph.D. Dissertation, 1981), 187; Ghazālī, *al-Mustaṣfā'*, 4; Abū Ḥāmid Ghazālī, *Mi'yār al-'ilm fī al-Manṭiq* (Beirut: Dār al-kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 2013).
[56] Ghazālī, *Tahāfut*, 85.

member of the Shi'ī Tālimī sect.[57] Moreover, al-Ghazālī clearly states that the caliphate commissioned him to write a book against such ideas.[58]

In this work, al-Ghazālī seeks God's protection from resorting to opinion (*ra'y*) and analogical reasoning (*qiyās*) to arrive at true knowledge, describing them as the devil's balance (*mīzān*).[59] According to al-Ghazālī, who refers to the Qur'anic phrase "measure with the right criterion",[60] five criteria were revealed to people in the revelation.[61] According to him, some used these criteria under other names before him. However, he was the first to identify these criteria in the Qur'ān and the first to use these names. It is possible to see that these criteria were used in some societies before Prophet Muhammad and Prophet Jesus, and they learned them from the scriptures of Prophet Abraham and Prophet Moses.[62] In addition to this statement, al-Ghazālī claims that with the mentioned Qur'anic criteria, he can measure religious knowledge as well as knowledge of sciences such as mathematics, engineering, and medicine and distinguish the true from the false in all sciences.[63]

So which aspect of these statements is not compatible with the ethics of science? The problem here is that although al-Ghazālī received the principles of this science from the philosophers, he did not express them explicitly. This attitude of al-Ghazālī was first clearly criticized by Ibn Rushd. According to Ibn Rushd, al-Ghazālī took most of his ideas from the works of philosophers and thus became a respected scholar among his contemporaries. Instead of saying that he had benefited from them, he went so far as to say that

[57] Michael E. Marmura, "Ghazālī's Attitude to the Secular Sciences and Logic," *Essays on Islamic Philosophy and Science*, ed. George F. Hourani (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1975), 102.
[58] Ghazālī, *al-Munqidh*, 48.
[59] Abū Ḥāmid Ghazālī, *al-Qisṭās al-Mustaqīm*, ed. Iḥsān Zunūn al-Thāmirī (Amman: The Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Center, 2014), 19.
[60] al-Qur'ān 17:35; 26:182.
[61] These five balances are as follows: Mīzān al-ta'ādul (It includes three balances: al-mīzān al-akbar, al- mīzān al-awsaṭ, al-mīzān al-aṣghar), Mīzān al-talāzum, and Mīzān al-ta'ānud. Ghazālī, al-Qisṭās, 25; Ghazālī, al-Munqidh, 52.
[62] Ghazālī, *al-Qisṭās*, 52.
[63] Ghazālī, *al-Qisṭās*, 74.

he had taken the science of logic, particularly from the Qur'ān. However, even if all the ideas of the philosophers were wrong and their knowledge of logic only was accepted as accurate, they would deserve praise and thanks. Instead, al-Ghazālī chose to denigrate all philosophers.[64] According to Ibn Rushd, who says he does not know why al-Ghazālī took such an attitude, this is entirely ugly.[65]

We see a similar ethical critique in Ibn Taymiyya. In this context, he states: "Al-Ghazālī called his book *al-Qisṭās al-Mustaqīm* and based it on the teachings of the prophets. However, he learned them from Ibn Sina, and Ibn Sina learned them from the books of Aristotle".[66] İbrahim Çapak, a contemporary professor of logic, confirms a similar criticism. According to him, al-Ghazālī's treatment of syllogism, and especially the way he expresses it in his work *al-Qisṭās al-Mustaqīm*, although different in content, is similar in form to Aristotelian and Stoic logic.[67] However, it is noteworthy that al-Ghazālī's attitude, which we present here as an ethical problem, is characterized as a revolution by İlhan Kutluer. According to Kutluer, the science of logic was deliberately presented by al-Ghazālī as a balance extracted from the Qur'ān to Islamicize knowledge at a time when even the mention of the word logic was met with a reaction.[68] In our opinion, Kutluer's well-intentioned interpretation would be acceptable were it not for the many points that al-Ghazālī took from other scholars and presented as his own ideas. However, as we discuss in our article, al-Ghazālī's attitude, which we see as an ethical problem, is not only related to the issue of logic.

The third example is that al-Ghazālī, despite his opposition to Ibn Sina and the Ikhwan al-Safa', benefited greatly from them. There are significant similarities between the thoughts of Ibn Sina and those

[64] In this respect, Ibn Rushd is right, for al-Ghazālī clearly states that for al-Farabi and Ibn Sīnā in particular, and philosophers in general, *takfîr* should be openly proclaimed. See, Ghazālī, *al-Munqidh*, 35–36; Abū Ḥāmid Ghazālī, *Fayṣal al-Tafriqa bayn al-Islām wa al-Zandaqa*, ed. Maḥmūd Bayjū (Damascus, 1992), 56.
[65] Ibn Rushd, *Tahāfut*, 546.
[66] Ibn Taymiyya, Kitāb al-Radd ʿalā al-Manṭiqiyyīn, 56.
[67] Abū Ḥāmid Ghazālī, *el-Kıstâsü'l-Müstakîm: Dosdoğru Ölçü*, trans. İbrahim Çapak (İstanbul: Türkiye Yazma Eserler Kurumu Başkanlığı Yayınları, 2016), 40 (Intro).
[68] Kutluer, "Gazzâlî ve Felsefe," 16–17.

of the Ikhwan al-Safa'. We know that Ibn Sina influenced al-Ghazālī. Therefore, al-Ghazālī's similarity to the Ikhwan al-Safa' can be considered indirect. However, although al-Ghazālī harshly criticized the Ikhwan al-Safa', he was also influenced by ideas present in the Ikhwan al-Safa' but not in Ibn Sina.[69] Therefore, we may say that al-Ghazālī benefited from Ikhwan al-Safa' directly. At this point, it is remarkable that he was influenced by Ibn Sina and the Ikhwan al-Safa' and, at the same time, accused both of heresy.

Al-Ghazālī's harsh criticisms of Ibn Sina and his utilization of Ibn Sina while making many criticisms, especially in metaphysics, show that he violated scholarly objectivity and condemned himself to the agenda and direction of politics. We have briefly explained some of this through the similarity between *Maqāṣid* and *Dānishnāma* and the similarity of al-Ghazālī's *al-Qisṭās al-Mustaqīm* to Aristotelian logic. In addition, al-Ghazālī's *Mishkāt al-Anwār* shows that he followed Ibn Sina more closely. *Mishkāt al-Anwār* is one of al-Ghazālī's most important philosophical works. While in his other works, he describes traditional Sufism, in this work, he presents a more philosophical Sufism. In this work, metaphysics/theology dominates, and al-Ghazālī's explanations are highly philosophical.

As Ibn Rushd points out, *Mishkāt al-Anwār* is the work that most clearly demonstrates al-Ghazālī's extensive use of philosophers in metaphysics.[70] As Richard Frank points out, al-Ghazālī benefited from philosophers in general, Ibn Sina's philosophy in particular, and adapted many of their elements to his system.[71] For example, Ibn Sina's concepts, such as *al-awwal*, the celestial intelligences, and the active intellect, were transformed in al-Ghazālī into *nūr al-anwār*, the supreme lights (*al-anwār al-'aqliyya al-ma'nawiyya*), and the

[69] While it is clear that Ibn Sīnā influenced al-Ghazālī on issues such as the soul, epistemology, and ethics, aspects that are absent in Ibn Sīnā but present in the Ikhwān show that al-Ghazālī also benefited from the Ikhwān. Griffel has summarized these similarities with various references without going into detail. Since we will give an important example of how the Ikhwān influenced him in the following pages, there is no need to mention the same sources here. For sources see, Griffel, *Philosophical Theology*, 199–200, 283.

[70] Ibn Rushd, *Tahāfut*, 209.

[71] Richard Frank, "Al-Ghazālī's Use of Avicenna's Philosophy," *Revue Des Études Islamique* 55–57 (1989 1987), 273–285.

supreme divine light, respectively. Similarly, the distinction between existence (*wujūd*) and non-existence (*'adam*) is transformed in al-Ghazālī into the distinction between light and darkness.[72] In addition, it is clear that Ibn Sina influenced al-Ghazālī in matters such as the hierarchy of existence, the explanation of the relationship between the sensible world and the divine world, and the conception of the best possible world.[73] In Ibn Sina's doctrine of the soul, al-Ghazālī directly borrowed some of Ibn Sina's concepts of orders of theoretical faculties, such as the *hayūlānī, bilmalaka, bilfi'īl, mustafād*, and *qudsī* intellects, and combined them with the concept of the soul to classify perceptions according to their functions.[74] *Mishkāt al-Anwār* is apparently reminiscent of Ibn Sina's statements. It follows an emanationist doctrine, albeit with minor differences. Al-Ghazālī, who in *Mishkāt al-Anwār* defends the metaphysics of light (*nūr*), adopts a corresponding epistemology. We can trace these similarities in many works. It is also possible to find many studies on the topics on which al-Ghazālī benefited from Ibn Sina.[75] The details of these similarities that we have outlined are not our subject. Our

[72] İlhan Kutluer, "Felsefe Ile Tasavvuf Arasında: Gazzâlî'nin Mişkâtü'l-Envâr'ında Entelektüel Perspektifler," 900. Vefat Yılında Uluslararası Gazzâlî Sempozyumu (7-9 Ekim 2011 İstanbul), Milletlerarası Tartışmalı İlmi Toplantı Bildirileri (İstanbul: Marmara Üniversitesi İlâhiyat Fakültesi Vakfı Yayınları, 2012), 519.

[73] Kutluer, "Gazzâlî ve Felsefe," 29, 46.

[74] Binyamin Abrahamov, "Ibn Sīnā's Influence on al-Ghazālī's Non-Philosophical Works," *Abr-Nahrain* 29 (1991), 5, 8–12; Abū Ḥāmid Ghazzālī, *Mishkāt Al-Anwār* (Beirut: 'Ālam al-kutub, 1986), 142–143, 165–166; Ibn Sīnā, *en-Necât: Felsefenin Temel Konuları*, trans. Kübra Şenel (İstanbul: Dergâh Yayınları, 2018), 169–171. In al-Ghazālī, these concepts are *ḥissī, khayālī, 'aqlī, fikrī,* and *qudsī/nabawī* souls. According to him, all these are the light. Concerning this issue, we see that the concept of the *qudsī* intellect/soul was used in different ways before Ibn Sīnā and the Ikhwan al-Safa'. For example, in *al-Siyāsa al-madaniyya*, al-Farabiused the *qudsī* soul in the sense of the Active Intellect (Gabriel). In another work, similar to Ibn Sīnā's usage, he used it as the power of the human soul. See, Adnan Gürsoy, "İbn Sînâ'nın Nübüvvet Teorisinde Kutsî Akıl," Uludağ Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi 23/2 (2014), 4–6; Adnan Gürsoy, "İbn Sînâ Felsefesinde Sezgi ve Sezgisel Bilgi," Hikmet Yurdu 8/16 (2015), 153–180.

[75] W. H. T. Gairdner, "Al-Ghazālī's Mishkāt al-Anwār and the Ghazālī-Problem," *Der Islam* 5 (1914), 121–153; A. J. Wensinck, "Ghazālī's Mishkāt al-Anwār (Niche of Lights)," *Semietische Studien: Uitde Nalatenschap*, (1941), 192–212; Kutluer, "Gazzâlî'nin Mişkâtü'l-Envâr'ında Entelektüel Perspektifler," 519–533.

criticism is that al-Ghazālī took Ibn Sina's metaphysics and used it in his works while at the same time claiming that Ibn Sina did not rely on demonstration in metaphysics and was against religion. In fact, according to al-Ghazālī, the position of philosophers like Ibn Sina is not a simple defect but a conscious effort to deceive Muslims.[76] Kutluer is aware of this unethical attitude of al-Ghazālī, especially when he discusses Ibn Sina's influences in *Mishkāt al-Anwār*. However, according to him, we cannot consider al-Ghazālī's attitude as a contradiction because al-Ghazālī's aim in *Tahāfut* is to discredit philosophers in the eyes of Muslims. In other words, we cannot say that al-Ghazālī fell into an unconscious contradiction in this regard.[77] It is noteworthy that although researchers focus on whether al-Ghazālī's attitude is contradictory, his unjust and deliberate denigration of philosophers is not discussed as an ethical problem.

There are many examples in which al-Ghazālī largely followed the thought of Ibn Sina. Some of these examples we showed in the similarity of *Dānishnāma* and *Maqāṣid*, some of which we showed in *al-Qisṭās al-Mustaqīm*, and some of which we showed in *Mishkāt al-Anwār*. Some are also seen in *Mīzān al-'Amal* and *al-Najāt*. The idea that the soul has two aspects, one directed to the higher realm from which it receives the knowledge of the truth, and the other directed to the body from which it performs actions following its nature, is almost identical to Ibn Sina's distinction of the theoretical and the practical intellect.[78] It is also clear that al-Ghazālī's statements about

[76] Ghazālī, *Tahāfut*, 84.

[77] Kutluer, "Gazzâlî ve Felsefe," 46; Kutluer, "Gazzâlî'nin Mişkâtü'l-Envâr'ında Entelektüel Perspektifler," 509–511. In his article 'The Method of Understanding al-Ghazālī', Gürbüz Deniz, who approaches the issue from a different perspective, claims that what seems to be a contradiction in al-Ghazālīis actually due to his aim to address all segments of society at different levels. See, Gürbüz Deniz, "Gazâlî'yi Anlamanın Usulü," 900. Vefat Yılında Uluslararası Gazzâlî Sempozyumu (7-9 Ekim 2011 İstanbul), *Milletlerarası Tartışmalı İlmi Toplantı Bildirileri* (İstanbul: Marmara Üniversitesi İlâhiyat Fakültesi Vakfı Yayınları, 2012), 17–41. From Ibn Rushd's point of view, however, al-Ghazālīclearly contradicted himself. For a study analyzing Ibn Rushd's view see, Atilla Arkan, "Bir Meşşâî Filozofun Gazzâlî Algısı: İbn Rüşd'ün Gözüyle Gazzâlî," *Sakarya Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 15/27 (2013), 121–142.

[78] Abū Ḥāmid Ghazālī, *Mīzān al-'Amal*, ed. Sulaymān Dunyā (Egypt: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1964), 265; *Ibn Sīnā, en-Necât*, 169; Griffel, *Philosophical Theology*, 66–

the faculties of the animal soul are surprisingly similar to Ibn Sina's statements and classification.[79] Since our topic is not the Ibn Sina-Ghazālī similarity, it would be better to leave it here.

We may establish another kind of similarity with the Ikhwan al-Safa'. The Ikhwan al-Safa' is a secret community of thought that emerged in Basra in the tenth century. We know the ideas of this community from the fifty-two treatises that have come down to us. It is almost certain that this community was Shi'ī, but it is also likely that they were Ismā'ilī. As Shi'ī-Ismā'ilī-Bāṭinī, they directly confront the Sunnī thought in which al-Ghazālī was involved. As mentioned, the *'ulamā* also played a role in the Seljuks' struggle against the political danger of the Bāṭinīyyah ideas. In this regard, al-Ghazālī was commissioned to write works against Bāṭinīyyah ideas. Therefore, we can easily assume that al-Ghazālī's view of the Ikhwan al-Safa was unfavorable from the beginning.

However, al-Ghazālī's own statements are binding on this issue. In *al-Munqidh*, he mentions the Ikhwan al-Safa' by name. Al-Ghazālī says that the Ikhwan al-Safa' continued the Pythagorean philosophy and that this philosophy was worthless, inadequate, and extremely weak. Therefore, he claims that the philosophy of the Ikhwan al-Safa' can only be a crumb of philosophy.[80] Not content with this, al-Ghazālī goes on to argue that the authors of the treatises of the Ikhwan al-Safa' used verses, Ḥadīth and the eloquence of the Sūfīs to lure the hearts of the fools into superstitious ideas.[81] In other words, according to al-Ghazālī, just as al-Farabi and Ibn Sina deceived Muslims, the Ikhwan al-Safa' wanted to deceive hearts with verses and Ḥadīth.[82]

We will not criticize any of these claims in this article. However, the fact that al-Ghazālī benefited from the thoughts of the Ikhwan al-Safa', whom he accused in this way, especially in metaphysics, soul, and epistemology, should be questioned. We cannot consider this as a disciple being influenced by his master. The

71.

[79] Ghazālī, *Mīzān al-'Amal*, 201–203; *Ibn Sīnā, en-Necât*, 166–168.

[80] Ghazālī, *al-Munqidh*, 55.

[81] Ibid., 46–47.

[82] Ibid., 44; Ghazālī, *Tahāfut*, 76, 84.

disciple admires his master, and it is reasonable for him to follow him. However, it is an ethical problem to take a significant system from those you insult and accuse of heresy and being deceptive, especially on metaphysical and epistemological issues that are central parts of philosophy.

For example, according to the Ikhwan al-Safa', there are fifteen degrees of souls. Seven of those degrees are above the human soul, and seven of the degrees are below it. However, scholars have expressed them in five degrees from bottom to top: vegetative, animal, human, angelic (*malakī*), and holy (*qudsī*). Here we see that the holy soul is the highest level among human souls.[83] As a result of the relationship between the human holy soul and the Universal Soul (*kullī nafs*), divine knowledge comes into question. In order to better understand this relationship, it is necessary to summarize the Ikhwan's hierarchy of existence. As we know, the Ikhwan adopted the Neoplatonic theory of emanation. Ikhwan's interpretation of the theory of emanation differs from that of al-Farabi and Ibn Sina. In the emanation theory advocated by al-Farabi and adopted by Ibn Sina, there are ten intelligences and nine heavenly planets, and the First Intelligence (*al-ʿaql al-awwal*) emanates from God.[84] However, the Ikhwan al-Safa was more faithful to Plotinus' emanation scheme. Instead of talking about the ten intelligences, he followed the order of the One, the First Intelligence, the Universal Soul, the Universal Matter (*hayūlā*), the First Body (*al-falak*), and then the planets and the Earth as we know it. In this interpretation, the First Intelligence, also called the Universal Intelligence (*al-'aql al-kullī*) and the Active Intellect (*al-'aql al-af'āl*), is the first created by God's unique creative act. The emanation accepted in all other beings started from the First Intelligence.[85] In this hierarchical explanation of existence,

[83] See, Ikhwan al-Safa', *Rasāil*, 1/311.
[84] Fārābī, *Medînetü'l-Fâzıla*, 80–85.
[85] Ikhwan al-Safa', *Rasāil*, 4/198-212. By the way, although the Ikhwān use the term emanation on a few occasions for the emergence of the Universal Intellect, their general statement declares that God created the Intellect. See, Ikhwan al-Safa', *Rasāil*, 3/184, 187, 238; Brandon Zimmerman, "Does Plotinus Present a Philosophical Account of Creation?," *The Review of Metaphysics* 67/1 (2013), 55–105.

the Universal Soul has a lower status than the Universal Intelligence.[86]

According to the Ikhwan al-Safa', the Universal Soul penetrates the planets with God's permission, and thus different characteristics emerge from each planet. For example, the information, inspiration, and dreams that come out with the influence of the planet Mercury are in fact through the influence of the Universal Soul.[87] In addition, although the Ikhwan al-Safa' generally mentions inspiration, revelation, and dreams together, they also distinguish between inspiration from angels and revelation from God.[88] According to the Ikhwan al-Safa', the knowledge given to the prophets is universal, rational, and based on *rabbānī* (divinely) teachings.[89] However, in the divine wisdom that comes to the human soul, whether it comes to the prophets or the soul-purified saints, there is the enlightenment of the Universal Soul to the human soul.[90]

As for al-Ghazālī, he also slightly differentiated a similar system. We see that al-Ghazālī, in his *Mishkāt al-Anwār*, also classifies the soul into five categories and that the highest one is the holy (*qudsī*) soul.[91] It is also possible that this fivefold classification was taken from Ibn Sina. What is important here is the meaning and function attributed to the holy soul. In order to understand the function of the holy soul, it is first necessary to summarize the emanationist scheme accepted by al-Ghazālī. We see that al-Ghazālī accepts the Neoplatonic hierarchy, which is much more similar to the Ikhwan al-Safa' than to al-Farabi. In *al-Ma'ārif al-'Aqliyya*, al-Ghazālī states that the intelligence is the first being created directly

[86] Ikhwan al-Safa', *Rasāil*, 3/185.
[87] Ikhwan al-Safa', *Rasāil*, 4/212-213, 222.
[88] Ikhwan al-Safa', *Rasāil*, 4/105, 120.
[89] Ikhwan al-Safa', *Rasāil*, 4/330, 412.
[90] Ikhwan al-Safa', *Rasāil*, 2/10-11. Since the Ikhwan al-Safa' advocates a hierarchical structure and the Universal Intellect is higher than the Universal Soul, we can say that all knowledge comes first from the Universal Intellect. In other words, the Universal Soul is an important step in the transfer of knowledge to the human soul, rather than being the primary source. See, Emrah Kaya, "Reason and Rationality in the Epistles of Ikhwan al-Safa'," *İlahiyat Tetkikleri Dergisi* 52 (2019), 155–172.
[91] Ghazālī, Mishkāt al-Anwār, 165–166.

by God, the intelligence is more valuable than the soul, and the soul is the first being subject to influence.[92] This statement is the understanding of emanation based on the One - Intelligence - Soul that we see in the works of the Ikhwan al-Safa'. According to Ahmet Kamil Cihan, who translated al-Ghazālī's work into Turkish, al-Ghazālī's table of being and the relationship between beings and numbers overlap with the explanations of the Ikhwan al-Safa', a follower of Pythagoreanism, except for minor differences.[93]

After these explanations, we can give an example of how al-Ghazālī was influenced by the Ikhwan al-Safa', whom he accused of heresy. According to al-Ghazālī, the sciences are acquired through human learning or divine teaching. In human learning, one either receives knowledge from a person outside oneself, which is *ta'allum*, or from within oneself, which is contemplation (*tafakkur*). Inward knowledge is the soul's taking advantage of the Universal Soul. According to al-Ghazālī, a capable human soul can benefit from a little contemplation much more than an ordinary human soul can benefit from much contemplation. He says most theoretical and practical knowledge is acquired this way.[94]

The second way, the *rabbānī* teaching, is either revelation or inspiration. According to al-Ghazālī, the Universal Intelligence is the teacher, and the holy soul is the student. The holy soul acquires all sciences without the human ways of learning, which consist of study or contemplation. Thus the prophets receive all knowledge directly from God. Inspiration is the warning (admonition) of the Universal Soul to the lesser human soul according to the capacity and ability of that soul. The knowledge that comes from revelation is called prophetic knowledge (*waḥy*), and the knowledge that comes from inspiration is called *ladunnī* knowledge. In this knowledge, too, there is no intermediary between the soul and God, i.e., it is not knowledge learned from someone else.[95]

---

[92] Abū Ḥāmid Ghazālī, *al-Ma'ārif al-'Aqliyya*, ed. 'Abd al-Karīm al-'Uthmān (Damascus: Dār al-fikr, 1963), 29, 45.
[93] Abū Ḥāmid Ghazālī, *el-Meʿârifu'l-Akliyye: Düşünme, Konuşma ve Söz Üzerine*, trans. Ahmet Kamil Cihan (İstanbul: İnsan Yayınları, 2017), 25 (Intro).
[94] Abū Ḥāmid Ghazālī, *al-Risāla al-Ladunniya* (Mısır, 1910), 23–25.
[95] Ibid., 26–29.

Al-Ghazālī mentions a hierarchy here. According to this hierarchy, al-Bāri' Ta'ālā (God) is at the top, followed by the Universal Intelligence, the Universal Soul, and other creatures. The knowledge from the Universal Intelligence is a revelation, and the knowledge from the Universal Soul is an inspiration.[96] Since the Universal Intelligence is superior to the Universal Soul, the prophet who receives knowledge from the Universal Intelligence is superior to the saint who receives knowledge from the Universal Soul. In the same way, revelation from the Universal Intelligence is superior to inspiration from the Universal Soul. This hierarchical order and the epistemological function attributed to the concepts of the Universal Intelligence and the Universal Soul come from the Ikhwan al-Safa. According to al-Ghazālī, the intellect has no function in the metaphysical realm, and rational thinking in this area can even be misleading. The main reason for al-Ghazālī's criticism of the philosophers was that in metaphysical matters, they acted entirely on conjecture and pretended to be based on demonstration.[97] Where, then, did al-Ghazālī get the knowledge of this hierarchical order, which cannot be obtained by human reason and possessed by the heretical philosophers? It is clear that such a structure does not exist in the Qur'ān or the authentic Ḥadīth.

The influence of the Ikhwan al-Safa on the thought of al-Ghazālī is quite apparent to those familiar with both fields.[98] The statements in this article do not aim to make such a comparison but to show that al-Ghazālī profited greatly from the Ikhwan al-Safa', whom he denigrated, belittled, and even called heretical, without quoting any sources. As can be seen from the example, the themes used are not ordinary conceptual quotations but elements that have an important place in his system of thought. It is also important to note

[96] Ibid., 29–32.
[97] Ghazālī, *Tahāfut*, 76.
[98] Abdullah Özkan's Ph.D. dissertation, completed in 2016, provides essential information on this topic. This thesis, which takes a comprehensive view, is important for comparison, as it also benefitted from the previous literature. Concrete examples of how the Ikhwan al-Safa' influenced al-Ghazālī can be found in abundance. However, we should know that there is no ethical questioning here either. See, Abdullah Özkan, "Al-Ghazālī and Rasā'il Ikhwan al-Safa': Their Influence on His Thought" (University of California, Doktora Tezi, 2016).

that a significant part of these elements come from the metaphysical subjects that were the cause of al-Ghazālī's attack. Therefore, it is clear that al-Ghazālī's attitude is incompatible with scientific ethics.[99]

Conclusion

Al-Ghazālī is an influential and essential Islamic thinker who has always been the subject of academic studies. With his comprehensive and consequential works on different fields of Islamic sciences, al-Ghazālī's influence has been alive for centuries. However, there are relatively few works that criticize him. It is possible to find studies on his works' inconsistencies and other sources' intense influence on al-Ghazālī. Some inconsistencies are recognized as changes in al-Ghazālī's thought over time. On the other hand, al-Ghazālī's verbatim quotations from other sources can be considered a normal influence within the tradition. It is also possible to read about al-Ghazālī's relations with state officials in many sources. However, there are not enough studies on the negative effects of al-Ghazālī's close relationship with politics on his works, nor are there any studies that evaluate the receptions characterized as interaction as an ethical problem. This article focused on the ethical questioning of al-Ghazālī's attitude in his scholarly activities rather than addressing the inconsistencies in his works or the similarities with other scholars one by one.

To this end, after providing brief but concrete information about al-Ghazālī's closeness to politics, we pointed out his inattentiveness in the field of hadith, which cast a shadow over his reputation as an authority in Islamic sciences. We then explained that the negative atmosphere he created against philosophy covered up the truth. Finally, we pointed out how al-Ghazālī used philosophy,

[99] In addition to all these, many studies briefly point out that al-Ghazālī benefited from Ibn Sina and the Ikhwan al-Safa', especially in the field of ethics and even in interpreting some verses of the Qur'ān, without naming them. In particular, the works of Richard Frank and Binyamin Abrahamov provide satisfactory information. Also see, Mesut Okumuş, "Gazzâlî'nin Kur'an Yorumlarında İbn Sînâ'nın Etkileri," *İslâmî Araştırmalar Dergisi* 13/3–4 (2000), 341–353; Emrah Kaya, *İslâm Düşüncesinde Bilginin Aklîliği* (Ankara: Fecr Yayınları, 2022).

which he despised and denigrated, even in metaphysical matters, without citing sources.

In summary, we draw the following conclusions. First, al-Ghazālī's scholarly originality is doubtful, especially in the philosophical field. Even if his expression is original in terms of new classifications or forms, there is nothing in terms of subject matter and approach that would make him stand out from ordinary scholars and warrant the title of authority. Second, al-Ghazālī's approach to philosophy was politically motivated and not based on a pure scholarly concern. Third, this attitude of al-Ghazālī has not been sufficiently criticized from an ethical point of view in studies on al-Ghazālī. The importance of this critical article can be better understood since al-Ghazālī is still regarded as an authority in Islamic countries, and many of his works are read repeatedly in scholarly circles.

It should not be forgotten that al-Ghazālī's attitude towards philosophy, in particular, was born out of a desire to preserve the traditional Sunnī understanding of religion at a time when Shiʿī-Bāṭınī ideas were politically dangerous. His views on these issues should not influence the way Muslims view philosophy today when political conditions have changed. However, it is also crucial for researchers to note that approaching scholarly issues with political or other motivations without paying attention to scholarly ethics may save the day but will lead to the blurring of the truth in the future.

THE SHEPHERDING NOTION OF *AL-IMĀRAH*: ABSTRACTING THE AUTHORITATIVE WORLDVIEW OF THE SEMITIC ROOT *'MR* OF PRE-ISLAMIC AND ISLAMIC ARABIA

Hafiz Abdul Karim[1]*, Osman Bakar*[2] *and Khairil Husaini bin Jamil*[3]

Abstract

The normative impression of al-imārah often epitomizes this concept as an Islamic invention. Viewed from this particular epistemic standpoint, the authoritative worldview of al-imārah and its Arabic root 'mr (أمر) invariably symbolizes human-political order, essentially and practically throughout Islamic history. Semantically, however, the root 'mr in itself seems to offer a greater understanding of its authoritative worldview, particularly in consideration of the fact that it is a common root attested within many Semitic languages, transcending the Arabic semantical field of that root. With a comparative aim, this study seeks to examine the authoritative worldview of al-imārah semantically through its Semitic root 'mr, attested within two specific temporal frames: the pre-Islamic Arabia period and the Islamic Arabia period. For pre-Islamic Arabia's attestation of the root, this study utilizes documentary and literary sources, while the Islamic-Arabic lexicon is the main source for the latter period. Attestations of this root in the documentary sources are indicative of two particular worldviews, either solely for the divination context (Ancient South Arabian) or secular-shepherding context (Ancient North Arabian), while the literary sources of Jāhiliyya poetry hinted at an early combination of both contexts. Meanwhile, the Islamic-Arabic lexicon also indicates the same fusion

[1] Ph.D. Candidate, International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC-IIUM). Corresponding author: hafizkarim28@gmail.com.

[2] Emeritus Professor; Rector, International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM); and Al-Ghazali Chair of Epistemology and Civilizational Studies and Renewal, ISTAC-IIUM, Kuala Lumpur.

[3] Associate Professor, AbdulHamid AbuSulayman Kulliyyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences, International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM).

but differs from the literary sources in terms of its Islamic influences and its semantical range, which are more extensive. In many ways, all of them share the essential authoritative-shepherding worldview of guiding and protecting the interests of their respective dominions of either the divine, the secular, or the combination of both.

Keywords: *Al-Imārah*, Semitic Root *'mr*, Semantic, Worldview, Pre-Islamic Period, Islamic Period.

1. Introduction

Al-imārah has often been linked to the Islamic legal-political concept. A.A Duri argued that it is a product of the Islamic-Arabic language, most often *via* the word *amīr*, a known derivation of the former that often came in early Islamic tradition to convey meanings symbolizing the head of certain political structures (commander, governor, or prince).[4] Pushing through this exclusivity, some would even deny the existence of this concept before the arrival of Islam, locating other political institutions that were purportedly more suitable for the segmental society of pre-Islamic Arabs. Such institutions employed other titles instead, such as *sayyid al-qawm*, *zaʿīm al-qabīlah* (leader of the clan/tribe), or *shaykh* (elder).[5] The most common definition for *al-imārah* found mainly within Islamic legal-political literature also points to the same trajectory, suggesting this concept as collateral that came along with the advent of Islam. At its most evolved form, this literature associated this concept with the caliphate system, continually as the appointment of reign to a person (*amīr*) by the Caliph in a certain province or town.[6] Such a detailed

[4] A. A. Duri, "Amīr" in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, edited by H.A R Gibbs, H. Kramers, E. Levi Provencal, J. Schahcht (Leiden: E.J Brill, 1986) Vol. 1, 438.

[5] Arab Encyclopedia, "Al-Imārah", <https://arab-ency.com.sy/ency/details/1502/3> (accessed 16 June 2024).

[6] It often comes as part of the classical Islamic state structure delegating the caliph in reigning the latter's territory. See for example Al-Māwardi, Abu al-Hasan ʿAli b. Muhammad, *Al-Ahkām al-Sulṭāniyyah* wa al-Wilāyat al-Dīniyyah (Cairo: Dār al-Hadīth, n.d) 62. See also Al-Qādhi al-Farrā', Abū Yaʿla Muhammad b. al-Farrā', *Al-Ahkām Al-Sulṭāniyyah* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, 2000) 34. See also Al-

association of *al-imārah* to the latter seems to suggest the specific and intricate position of the former within the whole Islamic legal-political compendium, securely positioning its place as part of the Islamic political concept and institution – no more and no less.

This study offers another angle of postulation of *al-imārah*, a kind that bypasses this normative Islamic-legal political framework through the utilization of semantics as the discursive strategy. Although *al-imārah* is beyond any doubt a word of Arabic origin, the semantics we propose here are not restrictive to a discussion of that exact Arabic word. This study instead deals with a deeper semantical analysis of the trilateral root of *al-imārah* - the root *'mr* (Arabic: أمر). Such an aim stretches the semantical analysis beyond the Arabic language border, enabling one to traverse a comparative journey of the root between Arabic and other Semitic languages of the past. This is because the root *'mr* is a known Semitic root,[7] attested in a vast range of interrelated derivations within the East, North, and Central hemispheres of Semitic languages. Such attestations reflect those three consonantal forms *'mr*,[8] either through the verb form of the root with the meanings of either '*to say*', '*to see*', and '*to command*',[9] or

---

Qalqashandī, Shihāb al-Dīn Abū al-ʿAbbās Aḥmad b. ʿAlī, *Ma'āthir al-'Ināfah fī Maʿālim al-Khilāfah* (Kuwait: Matbaʿah Hukūmah al-Kuwait, n.d) Vol.1, 75.

[7] G. Johannes Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren, and Heinz-Josef Fabry, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament (TDOT)*, s.v. "'āmar" (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1974), 328.

[8] By consonantal, it means restrictive vowel expression. For example, such a condition along with the void of oral tradition in Ancient South Arabian (ASA) script has disabled the possibility of its precise pronunciation, and can only be reconstructed through comparison with other Semitic languages. In another term, Peter T. Daniels referred to this system as the *'abjad'*. According to him, this was the norm before the devising of vowels notation occurred in some Semitic languages like Ethiopic, Syriac, and Arabic. This is of course excluding the Akkadian, which is the earliest Semitic language that had employed a cuneiform writing system – syllabic and already incorporated vowels together with the consonants. For reference on ASA and its restrictive vowels, see Norbert Nebes & Peter Stein, "Ancient South Arabian", in *The Ancient Languages of Syria Palestine & Arabia*, edited by Roger D. Woodard (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 146. For abjad writing system, see Peter T. Daniels, "Writing System" in *The Handbook of Linguistics*, edited by Mark Aronoff and Janie Ress-Miller (n.p: Blackwell Publishers Ltd, 2003), 43-58.

[9] Such claim transpires through the shared attestation of the root within these

through a proto-Semitic derivation of the concrete noun *immeru* (*tr.* lamb).[10] Specifically within these vast attestations, however, this study chooses to analyse the Semitic root *ʾmr* in Arabia within its two temporal and spatial frames of pre and Islamic Arabia, with an aim of extracting the root's authoritative worldview through the semantic abstraction as the framework of analysis.

It is imperative to understand firstly that the attempt to perceive *al-imārah* through its root derivations is not essentially a new feat. The previous claim by A. A. Duri is one of the examples, despite its limited time range, which is only within the extent of the Islamic period. A similar but untimely view that perhaps transcends the Islamic timeline came from Ibn Khaldūn, who asserted the concept in its most evolved form as having its forerunner in the pre-Islamic Arabia period. Similar to A.A. Duri, Ibn Khaldūn located *al-imārah* not in its exact morphological form, but through the derivation *amīr*, which he contends to have symbolized military leadership in the pre and early Islamic period, before evolving to a much more complicated political designation (*amīr al-muʾminīn*) during the reign of the second Four-Rightly Guided Caliph (*al-khulafāʾ al-rāshidūn*), ʻUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb.[11] A modern take with a similar manner to Ibn Khaldūn came from an Iraqi-born historian,

---

meanings in many Semitic languages, such as Phoenician, Hebrew, Imperial Aramaic, Hebrew-Bible, Ugaritic, Arabic and many more. See Sulaiman b. Abd Rahman al-Dhīb, *al-Muʿjam al-Mufradāt al-Arāmiyyah*, (Riyadh: Maktabah al-Malik al-Fahd al-Waṭaniyyah, 2006), 35.

[10] Apart from the verb form, Sulaymān al-Dhīb also listed its shared noun form with its concrete meaning of lamb, which has also been attested in Arabic, Phoenician, Punic, Hebrew-Bible, Aramaic, Ugaritic, Palmyrene-Aramaic, Syriac, and even Akkadian. The pronunciation varies from Arabic *immaru*, Akkadian *immeru*, Hebrew *immer*, and many more. In lexical reconstruction discourses of Semitic languages, Alexander Militarev & Leonid Kogan would even include the word *immar* as part of the Proto-Semitic lexicon, indicating its prevalence throughout the history of Semitic languages. See Sulaiman b. Abd Rahman al-Dhīb, 35. See also Leonid Kogan, "Proto-Semitic Lexicon", in *The Semitic Languages: An International Handbook*, edited by Stefan Weninger (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011), 179-258. See also Alexander Militarev & Leonid Kogan, *Semitic Etymological Dictionary: Animal Names* (Münster: Ugarit Verlag, 2005), Vol. II, 7.

[11] Ibn Khaldūn, Abū Zayd ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad, *Al-Muqaddimah*, (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 2004), 240.

Jawwad Ali, who has argued for the similarity between the word *amruhum* used among pre-Islamic Arabs of the Jāhiliyya period to the Islamic period *amīr*.[12]

The *sui generis* of both Ibn Khaldūn and Jawwād's assertions materialize through their attempts to unveil *al-imārah* to its barest sense before being draped with the whole Islamic legal-political tenets. A quick affirmation of that is through their switch of focus from understanding *al-imārah* in its exact morphological form to the other derivational morphological formation generated from its root *'mr*. Far from being original in their approach, it was perhaps the corollary assertions of Qur'anic attestations of this concept, which also have not attested to the idea of *al-imārah* in its exact morphological form but through the range of other derivations of the root; *amara - ya'muru – amr*.[13] The Qur'ān conveys the human and political authority theme similar to the conventional *al-imārah* through the term *ūlī al-amr*, which reflects the meaning of '*those who have the authority'*,[14] or '*those who are in charge of the affair'*.[15]. Interestingly, the Qur'anic phrase conveys a predominantly general human authority in its understanding. This is in contrast to how A. A. Duri, Ibn Khaldūn, Jawwād, or the already-evolved Islamic legal-political definition above have associated *al-imārah* and their related derivations with specific political designations, respectively.

Although the Qur'anic attestation of *al-imārah* remains closer to all of them conceptually in terms of reverberating the same

[12] Jawad Ali, *al-Mufaṣṣal fi Tārikh al-Arab Qabl al-Islām* (n.p: Dār al-Sāqī, 2001), Vol. 9, 219.

[13] For the list of attested derivations of the root, see Muhammad Fu'ād 'Abd al-Bāqī, *al-Mu'jam al-Mufahras li al-Alfaẓ al-Qur'ān al-Karīm* (al-Qāherah: Dār al-Hadīth, n.d), 76-79.

[14] "O you who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those of you (Muslims) who are in authority…,". [al-Nisāʿ: 59]. For notes on translations, see *The Noble Qurʿān*, translated by Taqī al-Dīn al-Hilālī & Muhammad Muhsin Khan (Madīnah: King Fahd Complex for the Printing of Holy Qurʿān, n.d), 118.

[15] Muhammad Hashim Kamali translated the term *ūlī al-amr* in the same verse as '*those in charge of the affairs.'* See Muhammad Hashim Kamali, "The Ruler and the Ruled in Islam: A Brief Analysis of the Sources", in *Justice and Rights: Christian and Muslim Perspectives*, edited by Micheal Ipgrave (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 2009), pp 3-12.

meaning of human political authority, the variation is nevertheless evident morphologically. This refers to how all of them -*except the Islamic legal-political framework*- have resided on divulging the concept or at least what is morphologically near to that concept through other derivations and not through the exact morphological form *al-imārah*. A probable argument, for now, would suggest that the gist of the meaning and morphological differences between those derivations above bespeak derivational-based technicalities, which refer to the differentiation of meanings based on the generated morphological derivations in the Arabic language. Moreover, despite coming from the same Arabic root *'mr*, the temporal and environmental factors have moulded those terms to be specific in their particular definitions terminologically. Regardless of any of its possible conclusions, all attestations above share the same root *'mr* as well as their rudimentary understanding of the root that seems to project meanings related to human political authority. This point here is the main interest of this study, which involves exploring the attestations of this root's authoritative meanings and its worldviews.

2. The Root *'MR* in Pre-Islamic and Islamic Arabia: A Methodological Quest

This is a descriptive qualitative study that mainly employs thematic analysis. By theme, we mean the root *'mr* itself, which acts as the independent variable determining the dependent variables that often come across as the root derivations and their meanings peculiar to those two temporal periods.

In place of secondary assertions concerning pre-Islamic-Arabia's *'mr*, this study has instead relied directly on the primary sources of pre-Islamic Arabia, namely the documentary and literary sources.[16] The documentary sources refer particularly to the epigraphic inscriptions discovered around Arabia.[17] They comprise

[16] Ikka Lindstedt classified the primary sources for this period into three; archaeology, documentary, and literary. This study only utilizes the latter two. See Ikka Lindstedt, "Pre-Islamic Arabia and Early Islam" in *Routledge Handbook on Early Islam*, edited by Herbert Berg (London & New York: Routledge, 2018), 160.

[17] Epigraphy is the study of written matter recorded on hard and durable material. The term is Greek in its origin; *epigraphein* (to write upon, incise) and *epigraphē*

two groups of inscriptions: the Ancient South Arabian (ASA) and the Ancient North Arabian (ANA).[18] Tapping into these sources did not necessarily entail a fieldwork study, as most of these inscriptions have already been documented and gathered within existing corpora of pre-Islamic Arabia inscriptions. The two most important corpora referred to by this study are the Corpus for South Arabian Inscription (CSAI) in the Digital Archive for the Study of Pre-Islamic Arabia Inscription (DASI),[19] and Online Corpus of the Inscriptions of Ancient North Arabia (OCIANA).[20] Apart from these two corpora, we also utilize other secondary studies in deciphering related inscriptions attesting to this root, which comprise individual corpora, related Semitic dictionaries, academic articles, edited and authored books, and others.

On the other hand, the literary sources of pre-Islamic Arabia mostly refer to the written literary corpus of this period, which includes the Arabic and non-Arabic literary corpus. The former are the statements coming from the Islamic period, such as classical Islamic prose,[21] genealogies, and pre-Islamic collections of poetry.[22] By that scale, the Arabic literary corpus itself is already a vast resource, not to mention the non-Arabic literary corpus that comprises the foreign observations and statements on the Arabs of that period.[23] Between those two, this study opts to utilize the Arabic

---

(inscription). See Jaan Puhvel, "*Epigraphy*", Brittanica, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/epigraphy> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

[18] Micheal C.A Macdonald, "Reflection on the Linguistic Map of Pre-Islamic Arabia", *Arabian Archaeology and Epigraphy*, 11 (2000): 28-79.

[19] For an introduction, see DASI, "*Corpus of South Arabian Inscription (CSAI)*" <https://dasi.cnr.it/index.php?id=42&prjId=1&corId=0&colId=0&navId=0&rl=yes> (accessed on 15 June 2024).

[20] For an introduction, see The Khalili Research Centre, "*Online Corpus of the Inscriptions of Ancient North Arabia*" <https://krc.web.ox.ac.uk/article/ociana> (accessed on 25 May 2024).

[21] Harry Munt et al., "Arabic and Persian Sources for Pre-Islamic Era" in *Arabs and Empire Before Islam*, edited by Greg Fisher (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 434.

[22] Micheal Lecker, "Pre-Islamic Arabia", *The New Cambridge History of Islam*, edited by Chase F. Robinson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 154.

[23] They mainly comprise Assyrian, Greek, Babylonian, Roman, Persian, and Israelite literary corpus. See Robert G. Hoyland, *Arabia, and the Arabs: From the Bronze*

literary corpus, focusing solely on pre-Islamic Arabian poetry. The rationale stems from the essence of the poetry itself, which embodies the codification of literary prowess, knowledge, and values of the Arabs of that period, not merely statements or observations from outsiders, Arabic or non-Arabic alike. Secondly, since pre-Islamic Arabian poetry is largely attributed to the 6th century and associated with areal diffusion across the Central and North Arabian regions,[24] it is both temporally and spatially proximate to the advent of Islam. This makes it ideal for comparative analysis with the *ʾmr* of the Islamic-Arabian period, or as a central link connecting the latter with the *ʾmr* of classical antiquity as preserved in documentary sources.[25]

In the case of the Islamic-Arabic period, this study mainly utilizes the Islamic-Arabic lexicon. Considering that it is purely an ingenuity of the Islamic-Arabic culture,[26] it could at least summarize how Islam has influenced the construction of authoritative meanings for the root *ʾmr* in comparison with those two previous sources. It is imperative to note that the phrase Islamic-Arabic lexicon is pertinent to this study, which refers to any form of Arabic monolingual dictionary or lexicon compiled after the emergence of Islam, including both the pre-modern and modern ones. By that definition, a limitation is necessary due to the wide scale of sources that may be reflected through this expression. We would argue, however, that positioning a limitation is possible through the extent of the information, description, and example of the entry related to the root

---

Age to the Coming of Islam (Routledge: London, 2001), 9. See also Jan Retso, *The Arabs in Antiquity: Their History from the Assyrian to the Umayyads* (Oxon: Routledge Curzon, 2005), 8.

[24] Robert G. Hoyland, 9.

[25] It spans earlier from the classical antiquity period as early as the 4th century BC, such as this one South Arabian inscription (Najrān 1), which CSAI asserted to have come from period B (4th-1st century BCE). To put it into perspective, the Jāhiliyya period was around the 5th-6th century CE. See CSAI, *Najrān 1*, <http://dasi.cnr.it/index.php?id=37&prjId=1&corId=0&colId=0&navId=431991822&recId=9961&mark=09961%2C009%2C006> (accessed on 20 June 2024). For the classifications of the period, see CSAI, *Editorial Criteria*, <http://dasi.cnr.it/index.php?id=109> (accessed on 15 August 2024).

[26] Tilman Seidensticker, "Lexicography: Classical Arabic", in *Encyclopaedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics*, edited by Kees Veersteegh (Leiden: Brill, 2006), Vol. 3, 31.

'mr that these lexicons may have provided. The reason stems from the nature of these lexicons themselves, which tend to repeat the same information in their entries, possibly rooted in their methodology that has a propensity to recompile material from earlier lexicographic literature.[27]

3. Semantical Abstraction of Semitic Root: A Brief Theoretical Note

Semitic languages are nonconcatenative, where they have their unique root-pattern morphology, often indicative of semantic abstraction. Janet C.E. Watson, for example, argued that the Semitic root has its semantical abstraction conveyed within two, three, or four consonants.[28] Words are derived from this root through the superimposition of templatic patterns using vocalism or the insertion of any consonantal affix.[29] Take the Arabic root *ktb* and its semantical notion of writing. An entrance of two vowels /*a*/ forms the root into a word that now procures both morpheme and lexeme values. It transforms into *K/a/T/a/B/a* with a pattern of CvCvCv, which carries the lexeme meaning of '*he wrote*'.[30] If a vowel /*i*/ and a consonantal affix *alif* (/*ā*/) enter, it transforms into K/i/T/ā/B (tr. book), with another templatic pattern of CvCvvC. Despite these changes, the notion of writing remains within the same root.[31]

[27] Tilman Seidensticker, Vol. 3, 35.

[28] See Janet C.E Watson, *The Phonology and Morphology of Arabic* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 3.

[29] Muayad Abdul Halim Ahmad Shamsan & Abdul Majeed Attayyib, "Inflectional Morphology in Arabic and English: A Contrastive Study", *International Journal of English Linguistic*s, Vol. 5, No. 2 (2015): 140.

[30] Note how a single wording of the Arabic word *kataba* carries two morpheme values of (he + wrote). This is due to the nature of the Arabic language as a non-concatenative language, where it lacks the ability to divide the morpheme. In detail, the root *ktb* in *kataba* expresses the semantic notion of 'writing', while the vowel /a/ at the end of the word represents the cumulative exponence of a 3rd person singular-masculine. See Janet C.E Watson, "Arabic Morphology Inflectional and Derivational", in *The Cambridge Handbook of Arabic Linguistics*, edited by K.C Ryding & David Wilmsen (Cornwall: Cambridge University Press, 2021), 406.

[31] See Janet C.E Watson, *The Phonology*, 3.

Beyond this intra-Semitic domain of Arabic, however, some scholars argue for distinctive measures between Semitic languages.

In Arabia of antiquity, the same groups of inscriptions under the Ancient South Arabians (ASA) and Ancient North Arabian (ANA) are also interchangeably used as the unit in bifurcating the linguistic formation apart from the Arabic language.[32] Between the two, scholars are much more lenient in establishing the distinction between ANA to Arabic and its predecessors in antiquity (Proto Old-Arabic/ Old Arabic). For example, M.C.A. Macdonald touched upon the importance of recognizing the root word of Arabic as the element that can help in determining and providing clues for the possible cognate and approximate semantical field for the shared root word in ANA languages.[33] This is despite his acknowledgement of the fact that Arabic, or even its predecessor language in antiquity (what he termed as the Old Arabic) is different to other ANA languages (Safaitic, Dadanitic, Taymanitic, Hismaic, and others).[34] Ahmad Jallad also attentively concurred with the differentiation between the Old Arabic to ANA languages but agreed that the latter are mutually comprehensible even in comparison to Classical Arabic. He even argued ANA languages as the dialect continuum for Old Arabic, at least to the extent of Safaitic and Hismaic.[35] Contrarily, others like al-Farūqī disregarded this distinction and did not even mention ANA, affirming the northern Arabian of antiquity as basically Arabic speakers.[36] Ernst A. Knauf also went for this non-differentiation approach, arguing the ANA languages as Proto-Old Arabic, which is

[32] Robert G. Hoyland, 200.

[33] Micheal C.A Macdonald, "Arabs, Arabia, and Arabic before Late Antiquity," *Topoi*, 16 (2009): 319.

[34] For his detailed discussion on the linguistic mapping of pre-Islamic Arabia, see Micheal C.A Macdonald, "Reflection on the Linguistic…", 28-79.

[35] Ahmad al-Jallad, "The Earliest Stages of Arabic and its Linguistic Classification" in *The Routledge Handbook of Arabic Linguistic*s, edited by Elabbas Benmamoun & Reem Bassiouney (London: Routledge, 2018), 323. See also Ahmad al-Jallad, "Safaitic" in *The Semitic Languages*, edited by John Huehnergard & Na'ama Pat-El (London: Routledge, 2019), 343.

[36] Ismāil al-Fārūqī & Lois Lamya, *Cultural Atlas of Islam* (New York: Macmillan, 1986), 20.

another term that he used in defining the first stage of the genetic development of the Arabic language.[37]

Meanwhile, a much clearer and firmer distinction holds sway upon the umbrella term ASA of South peninsular Arabia and its four different languages, Sabaic, Minaic (Madhabic), Qatabanic, and Hadramitic.[38] Even Al-Fārūqī and Knauf, who did not argue for the differentiation between ANA and Arabic, agree that ASA is of different Semitic languages.[39] A naïve hypothesis produced from this firmer distinction would suggest that the root *'mr* shared by ASA and Arabic is then non-parallel to ANA and Arabic's relation, deploring the attempt to perform semantical abstraction within the former two languages. Such an assertion, however, must also be rejected. In a much more inclusive view, Robert Hoyland argued that all vernacular used in Arabia belongs to the Semitic family that bears close similarity to each other. The differences were only in terms of their linguistic features, such as the case of their definite article. For instance, the ANA has a definite article at the beginning of the word, while the ASA has a definite article at the end of the word.[40] On top of that, Arabic uses the article *'l* (*al*), contrasting the ANA and its definite article *h/han*.[41]

Nevertheless, Hoyland argued that they still bear a close resemblance to each other, especially in terms of their word structure, which is their root word system of three letters, an element that ultimately differentiates them from other non-Semitic languages. Rendsburg, Rubin & Huehnergard also argued that the differences between Semitic languages are no more than differences within a

[37] Ernst A. Knauf, "Arabo-Aramaic and Arabiyya: From Ancient Arabic to Early Standard Arabic, 200 CE - 600 CE", in *The Qur'ān in Context*, edited by Angelika Neuwirth, Nicolai Sinai, and Michael Marx (Leiden: Brill, 2010), Vol. 6, 7.

[38] Macdonald classified the ASA languages into two categories, the Ṣayhadic and non-Ṣayhadic. The former has four dialectal classifications: Sabaic, Minaic (Madhābic), Qatabanic, and Haḍramitic, while the discovery and understanding of the latter is still in its infancy stage and yet to be deciphered. See Micheal C. A Macdonald, "Reflection on the Linguistic…", 28-79.

[39] Micheal C.A Macdonald, "Reflection on the Linguistic…", 28-79. See also Ismāil al-Fārūqī & Lois Lamya, 20.

[40] Robert G. Hoyland, 200.

[41] Ibid. See also Ahmad al-Jallad, "The Earliest Stages of Arabic…", 323.

single group in Indo-European, of which a strong lexical correspondence from any of these languages is then expected.[42] Conclusively, those assertions above have at least consolidated the ANA, ASA, and Arabic into a group of languages that are distinct but closely similar to each other, particularly established through the possibility of their connections within the semantical realm in their root word structure.

4. Semantical Abstraction and Worldview: Framework of Analysis

This study applies the understanding of semantics as proposed by Toshihiko Izutsu, which defines it as:

> An analytic study of the key terms of a language with a view to arriving eventually at a conceptual grasp of the *weltanschauung* or world-view of the people who use that language as a tool not only of speaking and thinking but, more important still, of conceptualizing and interpreting the world that surrounds them.[43]

His definition entails semantics as a type of study that is not concerned only with the phenomenon of meaning as suggested by its normative etymology. It is instead a study of the nature and structure of a worldview of a nation, or speakers of a certain language, through methodological analysis of the major cultural concepts embedded within their language's key words.[44] For instance, his study on the semantics of the Qur'ān is not merely a conceptual study of several keywords contained within the scripture. Still, it extends into extracting the worldview or vision of the universe of the latter. The central pillar of his analysis revolved mainly around his selection of certain keywords of the Qur'ān, which to him had played important parts in instituting the basic conceptual structure of the Qur'anic

[42] Gary A. Rendsburg, Aaron D. Rubin, John Huehnergard, "A Proper View of Arabic, Semitic, and More", *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. 128, No. 3 (2008): pp. 533-541.
[43] Toshihiko Izutsu, God and Man in the Qur'ān: Semantics of the Qur'anic Weltanschauung (Tokyo: Keio University, 1964), 3.
[44] Ibid.

worldview. The relation between these words in forming a certain conceptual structure is what he termed the semantical field. A quick example is his construction of the semantical field *īmān* (belief) and its relation to other keywords such as Allah (the object of belief), *islām* (giving oneself to God), *kufr* (disbelief), and others.[45] According to him, the word *īman* is the focus word, a point of unification where all other keywords are connected in a certain semantical field, conjuring a specific conceptual sphere of *īmān*.[46]

This study, however, aims to discover the semantical field through a much simpler outlook, which is through the Semitic root. Probing the semantical field provided through a Semitic root is simpler and perhaps safer than selecting certain keywords as done by Izutsu, which may require more time in determining other keywords that may or may not have a relation to this root conceptually. Even Izutsu himself admits the unavoidability of 'a certain amount of arbitrariness' in that key-words selection phase, which he did warn as to 'may have gravely affected at least some aspect of the whole picture'.[47] Moreover, discussions above have also pointed out the possibility of a Semitic root to embody specific abstractions that may symbolize certain semantical fields. With the root *'mr*, we specifically aim to understand its authoritative worldviews through its attestations in those three sources, which theoretically may appear in two components. One of those is the particular worldview, which is relatively peculiar to those three sources in utilizing the authoritative meaning of the root. Understanding those distinctions requires an understanding of the semantic shift, which refers to the evolutionary changes of the root's authoritative meanings between these three profiles.[48] The second component is the shared

[45] Ibid., 23.
[46] Ibid., 23.
[47] Ibid., 18.
[48] In the perspective of theoretical linguistics, semantic shift refers to any variation of meanings in a given word, either synchronic (i.e. the relation between two different meanings of a polysemous word) or diachronic (i.e. the relation between two meanings of a word in the course of semantic evolution). See Anna A. Zalizniak, "A Catalogue of Semantic Shifts: Towards a Typology of Semantic Derivation" in *From Polysemy to Semantic Change*, edited by Martin Vanhove (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Co, 2008), 217-232.

authoritative worldview of the root- the point of commonality amidst those particular differences, which hopefully may further explain the nature of their shared authoritativeness.

5. The Root *'MR* in the Documentary Sources of Pre-Islamic Arabia: The Distinctive Divine and Secular Contexts

CSAI has recorded the word *'mr* in the ASA to be at least as early as the 4th century BC, attested within two languages: Sabaic (Najrān 1) and Minaic (GOAM 314). Both conveyed the meaning of '*authority'* and '*order'* respectively.[49] Following those two, other ASA inscriptions also relayed the same authoritative meaning for the root. They are mostly similar to the variation of meanings contained in Arabic *amrun*,[50] which varies from '*command'*, '*order'*, '*ordinance'*, '*power'*, or '*authority'*.[51] However, unlike Arabic *amrun* that designates this '*authority'* either for divine or secular usage,[52] the ASA seemed to limit it only to the former, specifically for their religious and cultic functions. It mostly signified the authoritative dispensations of their deities. The Sabaic used it mostly to depict the command and order of their deities *Ḥlfn*, *ḏ-S¹mwy*, and *ʾlmqh*,[53] while

[49] See CSAI, "GOAM 314", *DASI* <http://dasi.cnr.it/index.php?id=37&prjId=1&corId=0&colId=0&navId=431991822&recId=2831&mark=02831%2C006%2C004> (accessed on 12 August 2024). See also CSAI, *Najrān 1*, *DASI* <http://dasi.cnr.it/index.php?id=37&prjId=1&corId=0&colId=0&navId=431991822&recId=9961&mark=09961%2C009%2C006> (accessed on 12 August 2024).

[50] This appears in the Sabaic, Minaic, Hadramitic, and Qatabanic inscriptions. For the full list of South Arabian inscriptions recording this word and its translation, see CSAI, "*'mr*", *DASI* <https://dasi.cnr.it/index.php?id=32&prjId=1&corId=0&colId=0&navId=180408446&wl_group=1&wl_subgroup=47> (accessed on 14 June 2024).

[51] For the English translation and the ranges of meanings of the Arabic verb *amara* and its verbal noun *amrun*, see Hans Wehr, *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, edited by J. Milton Cowan (New York: Spoken Language Services Inc, 1976), 26.

[52] Ibn Manẓūr, Abu al-Fadhl Jamāl al-Dīn Muhammad b. Mukarram, *Lisān al-'Arab* (Beirut: Dār al-Ihyā' al-Turath al-'Arabī, 1997), Vol. 1, 203-206.

[53] For the attestation of its usage to each deity respectively, see CSAI, "Haram 10" *DASI* <https://dasi.cnr.it/index.php?id=37&prjId=1&corId=0&colId=0&navId=547345934&recId=4018&mark=04018%2C016%2C001> (accessed on 14 June 2024). See also CSAI, "Najran 1", *DASI* <https://dasi.cnr.it/index.php?id=37&prjId=1&corId=0&colId=0&navId=547345934&recId=9961&mark=09961%2C009%2C0

the Minaic used it mostly to symbolize the *'authority'* of their two specific deities, *Wd* and *NkRh*.[54] On the other hand, the Qatabanic seemed to use it similar to how the Arabic verb *amara* (*tr*. to command/ to order),[55] usually as an epithet exclusive for *Ḥwkm*, one of their deities. The epithet comes with this particular phrase (*Ḥwkm ḏ-'mr/ w-S²mr*), illustrating *Ḥwkm* as the one who '*orders'* and '*gives decree'*.[56]

Apart from that, the root was also used to convey non-authoritative meanings related to omens and signs from their deities. They came in either of these three forms: *'mr*, *y'mr*, and *y'tmr*. The first one corresponds to Arabic *amārah*, which generally means marks and signs.[57] The ASA, however, has specialized the source of those signs as being attainable only from their deities through cultic and divination activities. Examples of its contexts vary from being the sign from their deities in protecting them from certain things (RES 4998), leading them to do something (RES 4830), or commanding them to dedicate something (NAM 2494).[58] On the other hand, the other two were more towards portraying the act of their deity in providing the sign, which often translates to their deity

---

06> (accessed on 14 June 2024). See also CSAI, "Fa 123" *DASI* <https://dasi.cnr.it/index.php?id=37&prjId=1&corId=0&colId=0&navId=547345934&recId=5920&mark=05920%2C005%2C006> (accessed on 14 June 2024).

[54] For the attestation of *'mr* as the commandment of the two aforementioned Minaean deities, see for example, CSAI, "*GOAM 314"*, *DASI* <http://dasi.cnr.it/index.php?id=37&prjId=1&corId=0&colId=0&navId=431991822&recId=2831&mark=02831%2C006%2C004> (accessed on 15 January 2022). See also CSAI, "M 247*"*, *DASI* <https://dasi.cnr.it/index.php?id=37&prjId=1&corId=0&colId=0&navId=547345934&recId=2967&mark=02967%2C002%2C032> (accessed on 14 June 2024).

[55] For the English translation of the Arabic verb *amara* and its range of meanings, see Hans Wehr, 26.

[56] For discussion on the translation of the phrase *Ḥwkm ḏ-'mr/ w-S²mr/*, see Iwona Gajda et al, "Two Inscriptions Commemorating the Construction of a Mountain Pass, by Yadaab Dhubyân son of Shahr Mukarrib of Qatabân, and by the Qayls of the Madhī Tribe", *Egitto e Vicino Oriente* (2009): XXXII, 167.

[57] For the English translation of the Arabic noun *amārah*, see Hans Wehr, 26.

[58]Sabäische Wörterbuch, "*'mr*" <http://sabaweb.uni-jena.de/SabaWeb/Suche/Suche/SearchResultDetail?idxLemma=2289&showAll=0> (accessed on 23 June 2024).

'*agreeing and giving satisfaction*' to what the author would later do.[59] They are both attested in Minaic inscriptions. For example, in Maʿīn 116, the author used the word *y'mr* to portray the bestowal of agreement and satisfaction of his deity *ʿ̱ttr ḏ*-[*Qbḍ*] upon his journey to the north for trading purposes and as a messenger, to which he achieved it through his offering as the intermediator.[60] In M 246, the author of the inscription used the word *y'tmr* to portray the same meaning of agreement and satisfaction of his deity upon the construction of the wall and tower of his town, which was also attained through offering.[61]

In ANA, a more prevalent record of the root's attestations is evident mostly in the Safaitic inscriptions, where it varied from authoritative to non-authoritative meanings. The authoritative meanings in the Safaitic were mostly in matters related to animal-herding or controlling activities. The Online Corpus of the Inscriptions of Ancient North Arabia (OCIANA) usually depicted it in the meaning '*to control*', specifically for controlling animal herds, or perhaps the act of camel or sheep herding itself (AMSI 31, RSIS 250 & RWQ 333/ ABMNS 2).[62] Meanwhile, Ṣabrī Karīm al-ʿAbbādī in his commentary of ABMNS 2/ RWQ 333 asserted that the phrase *t'mr*/ *h-wḥd* in the inscription could indicate two possibilities. Firstly, it could indicate the author was imagining him herding (*t'mr*) his pastoral animal alone (*h-wḥd*) in a region as if he was an *amīr* for that region.[63] This first possibility is closer to the previous OCIANA's

[59] Mounir Arbach & Mohamed Maraqten, "Notes on the root *LʾK* 'to send' and the term *mlʾk* 'messenger' in the Ancient South Arabian inscriptions" in *Semitica et Classica*, Vol. 11 (2018): 251-256.

[60] Mounir Arbach & Mohamed Maraqten, 251-256.

[61] See CSAI, "M 246", <https://dasi.cnr.it/index.php?id=37&prjId=1&corId=0&colId=0&navId=924546544&recId=2966&mark=02966%2C002%2C032> (accessed 23 June 2024).

[62] The Online Corpus of the Inscriptions of Ancient North Arabia (OCIANA), *The OCIANA Corpus of Safaitic Inscriptions: Preliminary Edition*, edited by Ali Al-Manaser &Michael C.A. Macdonald (Oxford: The Khalili Research Centre, 2017), 568, 8126 & 8260/ 480.

[63] Ṣabrī Karīm al-ʿAbbādī, "al-Mā' fī al-Nuqūsh al-ʿArabiyyah al-Shimālyyah al-Qadīmah: Dirāsah Taḥlīliyyah li Nuqshayn Ṣafāwiyyīn Jadīdayn", *Jordan Journal for History and Archeology*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (2012): 103-123.

translation of '*to control.*' Al-'Abbādī's second interpretation relayed the non-authoritative meaning of the root, particularly on how the author tried '*to make abundance*/ *grow*/ *multiply'* (*t'mr*) his 'sheep' (*h-wḥd*).[64] It is expected as one of the Classical Arabic meanings of the root *'mr* is 'to multiply/ grow/ making abundance', specifically through the derivation *āmara* and *amira*.[65] Unlike OCIANA, which has translated the term *wḥd* as alone, Al-'Abbādī contended that semantically, the word *wḥd* in that inscription also correlates to another Classical Arabic noun for sheep, which is specifically for the sheep that only gave birth once.[66] Within this meaning, it enables the possibility of *t'mr* as to have meant '*to make abundance*', at least within the context of the multiplication of livestock.

Meanwhile, Ahmad Jallad also concurs with this proclivity, at least in the sense of appropriating Safaitic *'mr* through the basic semantical range of the root in other Semitic languages, which often relates to the meaning 'to know' or 'to make known', like in the Akkadian *amārum* (to see) or Hebrew *'āmār* (to say).[67] According to him, Safaitic's translation of the root better accords with this basic meaning essentialized through it being '*apparent'*, '*widespread'* or '*to manifest*', which to him also corresponds to the previous Arabic words *āmara* and *amira* (*tr*. multiply).[68] This implies visibility through quantity. Interestingly, Jallād asserted this meaning of the root *'mr* for a wider subject of abundance and not being limited to the multiplication of livestock. This is evident in his translation of KRS 995 and al-Mafraq Museum 14/ HAUI 72. Both attested to phrases *t'mr*/ *h-s²ḥṣ* and *t'mr h-s²n'*, to which Jallad respectively translated to '*scarcity was widespread*',[69] and '*adversity was widespread*'.[70] Unlike Jallad, however, Rafe Harahshah still translated the same

[64] Ṣabrī Karīm al-'Abbādī, 103-123.
[65] Ibn Manẓūr, Vol. 1, 204-205.
[66] Ṣabrī Karīm al-'Abbādī, 103-123. See also Ibn Manẓūr, Vol. 15, 234.
[67] Ahmad al-Jallad, An Outline of the Grammar of the Safaitic Inscriptions (Leiden: Brill, 2015) 300.
[68] Ahmad al-Jallad, *An Outline of the…,* 300.
[69] Ibid., 344.
[70] Ahmad al-Jallad & Karolina Jaworska, *A Dictionary of Safaitic Inscriptions* (Leiden: Brill, 2019) 130-131.

phrase *t'mr/ h-s²ḥṣ* in KRS 995 within an animal context,[71] which is '*to make abundance/ to multiply the fat sheep*'.[72] Jallad also seems to be silent on other animal-context inscriptions such as the previous ABMNS 2/ RWQ 333 and its phrase *t'mr h-wḥd*, which al-'Abbādī has translated as either '*herding the sheep alone*' or '*to make abundance of/ multiply sheep (that only gave birth once).*'

Meanwhile, OCIANA's translation of the same ABMNS 2/ RWQ 333 as '*to control alone*' also did not adhere to Jallad's contention before on how Safaitic *'mr* is much suited to follow the basic semantical range for the root '*to know*' or '*to make known*'. The OCIANA's translation instead seemed to have conformed more to the Classical Arabic meaning '*to command*', which Jallad argued as a later development of the semantical range for the root *'mr*.[73] Interestingly, the semantical range of the authoritative meaning '*to control*' or Classical Arabic '*to command*' is not precisely unrecorded in the ANA documentary sources. Beyond the Safaitic, another ANA inscription (JSLih 071) of the Dadano-Arabic language attested to this meaning in a form similar to Classical Arabic *amīr*.[74] OCIANA translation recorded a figure with the name *ʿnzh* son of *ʾs¹*, who is the *'mr b-lḥgr* [*amīr* of al-Higr (Hegra or Madāin Sālih)].[75] A.F.L Beeston provided a context of this *amīr* as possibly a North

[71] Harahshah's translation of *s²ḥṣ* here is due to how the Arabic lexicon also indicates *shaḥṣu* as a fat sheep, or the one who is not pregnant and lactated, or the one who does not lactate yet. Ibn Sīdah, *al-Muhkam wa al-Muḥiṭ al-Aʿẓam*, Vol. 3, 100.

[72] Rafe Harahshah, *Nuqūsh Ṣafaiyyah min al-Bādiyah al-Urdūniyyah* (al-Urdun: Dār Ward al-Urduniyyah, 2010), 89.

[73] Ahmad al-Jallad, *An Outline of the*…, 300.

[74] This one Dadano-Arabic inscription (JSLih 071) is part of many more inscriptions that M.C.A Macdonald classified as Old-Arabic 'Mixed' text. This refers to the inscriptions that were written in certain ASA or ANA scripts (Safaitic, Dadanitic, Sabaic, etc) and predominantly in the language normally associated with that script (Safaitic, Dadanitic, Sabaic, etc), but at the same time also contain elements that can be attributed to Old Arabic. See Micheal C.A Macdonald, "Reflection on the Linguistic…," 50-51.

[75] The Online Corpus of the Inscriptions of Ancient North Arabia (OCIANA), *The OCIANA Corpus of Dadanitic Inscriptions: Preliminary Edition*, edited by Micheal C.A Macdonald & María del Carmen Hidalgo Chacón Diez (Oxford: The Khalili Research Centre, 2017), 451.

Arabian Bedouin, hired by some Dadanites sedentary, to protect their caravan and settlements.[76] According to Beeston, the *amīr* position here is temporary, similar to the Muslim *amīr al-hajj*.[77] This explanation helps explain the reason for the linguistic mix of Dadanitic and Old Arabic within this one single inscription.[78] As the phrase *amīr* of al-Higr is linguistically Old Arabic and not Dadanitic, it is comprehensible to assert that the usage of *amīr* in that inscription is similar to the semantical range '*to control*' or the Arabic '*to command*'. However, it is nevertheless also closer to the basic range of '*to know*' or '*to make known*' as Jallad had contended before. This is especially true in terms of the *amīr* position here acted as someone knowledgeable about the desert,[79] which entails his task to protect, as well as to guide the Dadanites in the desert. The act of guidance here then serves the same semantical range of '*to know*' or '*to make known*', at least in a much basal range of '*to control*' or '*to command*' through providing guidance and shepherding people. Conclusively, in contrast to ASA and its divination tendency, ANA's usage of the root *'mr* is indicative and expressive of the socio-economic aspects of nomadic-pastoralism life, from animal-rearing activities of controlling or making abundance, the widespread scarcity, and desert-guiding services.

6. The Root 'MR in the Literary Sources of Pre-Islamic Arabia: The Early Fusion

Unlike the documentary sources that differ in terms of sourcing the authoritative power of the root *'mr* to either the divine (ASA) or

[76] Beeston, A.F.L.& F.V. Winnett, Jacques Ryckmans, and Mahmud al-Ghul, "The Inscription Jaussen Savignac 71." Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies, Vol. 3 (1973): 69–72.

[77] Beeston, A.F.L.& F.V. Winnett, Jacques Ryckmans, and Mahmud al-Ghul, 69-72.

[78] Lines 1-3 that describe the name and genealogical of the person have Dadanitic orthography, while lines 4-10 are Old Arabic written in Dadanitic script. The indicator of the Old Arabic lines is clear through the use of definite article *'l*, such as exampled before in the phrase /*'mr*/ ***b-l****hgr*/. See Micheal C.A Macdonald, "Reflection on the Linguistic…," 52. See also Micheal C.A Macdonald, "Ancient North Arabian", in *The Cambridge Encyclopaedia of the World's Ancient Language*, edited by R.D. Woodard (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) 502.

[79] A.F.L Beeston, F.V. Winnett, Jacques Ryckmans, and Mahmud al-Ghul, 69-72.

secular-shepherding (ANA-Safaitic) context, the Jāhiliyya poetry attested to the root *ʾmr* within both contexts. The divine context of the root *ʾmr* was evident in a poem reportedly ascribed to ʾAbd al-Muṭṭalib, the grandfather of the Prophet, during the invasion of Abrahah.[80] One of the lines in this poem depicts the derivation of *amr* as being specific to Allah, which translates to either '*will'*, '*matter'*, or '*affair'* of Allah.[81] Such phrases of the will, matter, or affair of Allah were to illustrate the authoritative power of Allah in handling Abraha and the latter's intention of destroying Ka'ba. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib also used the term *ḥilālaka* (Your Sanctuary) to portray the Ka'ba as within the sole ownership of Allah,[82] reflecting the position of Allah among these Jāhiliyya Arabs, which was the Lord of the House (Ka'ba), the Most Supreme among other *'supposedly'* deities.[83]

On the other hand, the secular authority of the root *ʾmr* involves three kinds of authority: shepherding, military, and non-specific authority. An example of shepherding authority was available in one of Zuhayr b. Abī Sulma's poem,[84] where it has attested to the word *amr* three times through *amr labiku*, *tukhāliju al-amr* (mixed opinions), *al-amr al-mushtaraku* (shared opinion).[85] All three narrated *amr* reflected the meaning of mixed or shared opinion or verdict, particularly specific to camel-herders and their affairs.[86] The context illustrated a disagreement among them that seems to

[80] Ibn Hishām, Abū Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Malik b. Hishām, *al-Sīrah al-Nabawiyyah* (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-ʿArabī, 1990), Vol. 1, 66.

[81] Ibn Hishām, *The Prophetic Biography (Sīrah Ibn Hishām)*, translated from Arabic by Muhammad Mahdi al-Sharīf (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 2013), 50.

[82] Ibn Hishām, The Prophetic Biography…, 50.

[83] Toshihiko Izutsu, 5.

[84] He is Zuhayr b. Abī Sulmā Rabīʿah b. Ribāh Al-Muzanī, is one of the seven greatest poets of the Jāhiliyya period. One of his poems was among *al-sabʿat al-muʿllaqāt* (The Seven Hanging Ode). Most of his poems revolve around the topic of peace and wisdom. See al-Zirikli, Vol. 3, 52.

[85] Al-Aʿlam al-Shatanmari, Yūsuf b, Sulaimān b. Īsā, *ʾAshʿār al-Shuʿarāʾ al-Sittah al-Jāhiliyyin* (Al-Qāhirah: al-Matbaʿah al-Minbariyyah, 1954), Vol. 1, 309-309.

[86] Al-Wazīr al-Baṭalyūsī, Abu Bakr ʿĀṣim b. Ayyub, *Sharḥ al-ʾAshʿār al-Sittah al-Jāhiliyyah* (Beirut: Al-Maʿhad al-Almānī li al-Abhāth al-Sharqiyyah, 2008), Vol. 2, 86. See also Thaʿlab, Abū al-ʿAbbās Aḥmad b. Yaḥyā, *Sharḥ Shiʿr Zuhayr ibn Abī Sulmā* (Damascus: Maktabah Hārun al-Rashīd li al-Tawzīʿ, 2008), 127-128.

have resulted in the delay in returning their herd from the pasturing fields.[87] Although one of the herders who was being narrated in this poem was a *ghulām* (slave boy) of Ethiopian descent,[88] Zuhayr still suggested the decision-making quality of that *ghulām* herder, signifying the authoritative power within his opinion as someone knowledgeable in herding camels.

Meanwhile, the military context of the root *ʾmr* also varies in its designated derivations. In some cases, it comes off as clearly specific to the military, such as *amīr al-jaysh* (army commander/ general) in Abdullah b. al-Zibaʿra'ʾs[89] poem on Abraha's failed invasion of Mecca.[90] In other cases, the military context within the root's derivation was ambiguous and in need of interpretation. Such is the case with the mere *amīr* in another line by Zuhayr.[91] In his commentary on the poem, Thaʿlab commented that the entailed military nature is implicit yet evident through the authority and disposition possessed by Zuhayr's *amīr*, particularly in making his people leave their homes for certain cause, which Thaʻlab argued as *al-masīr* (military march).[92] On top of that, authoritative military usage is also evident in other poetry through the derivations *amr*, which is often used to indicate military matters and affairs. Similar to the derivation of *amīr*, some are militarily-specific such as the term *amr al-ḥarb* (war affairs).[93] Some lines require interpretation, such as the term *amr al-raʾīs* (lit. leader's command) in a poem depicting the

[87] Al-Wazīr al-Baṭalyūsī, Vol. 2, 86. See also Thaʿlab, 127-128.

[88] The name of the *ghulām* is Yasār, a Habashī-Ethiopian slave belonging to Zuhayr. For the full background of this poem, see Thaʿlab, 9. See also Al-Mufaḍḍal b. Salamah, *al-Fākhir* (n.p: Dār Ihyāʾ al-Kutub al-ʿArabiyyah, n.d), 177. See also Al-Maidāni Ahmad b. Ibrahim, *Majmaʿ al-Amthāl* (Beirut: Dār al-Maʿrifah, n.d), Vol. 2, 363.

[89] He is Abdullah b. al-Zibaʿra b. Qays b. ʿAdī, one of the Companions of the Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H). Ibn Saʻd mentioned him as one of the *Jāhili* poets in Mecca before reverted to Islam after the Conquest of Mecca. See Ibn Saʿd, *Kitāb al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kabīr*, (Al-Qāherah: Maktabah al-Khanji, 2001), Vol. 6, 109.

[90] Ibn Hishām, Vol. 1, 72.

[91] Thaʿlab, 96.

[92] Ibid.

[93] For a full account of the poem, see Ibn Qutaybah, Abū Muḥammad ʿAbd Allāh b. Muslim al-Marwazī, *al-Shiʾru wa al-Shuʿarāʾ* (al-Qāhirah: Dār al-Hadīth, n.d), Vol. 1, 196.

readiness of a cavalry waiting for their commander or chief's command before battle.[94]

Another type of authority for the root *'mr* in the Jāhiliyya poetry is non-specific like the other two shepherding and military authority. For instance, in another ode by Zuhayr, he used the term *amīr* without precisely specifying it in any context, except merely to illustrate that the *amīr* was in a hunting activity together with his subordinate.[95] In a commentary on this ode, Al-Wazīr al-Baṭalyūsī asserted that the *amīr* here is someone whom people are seeking advice and counsel for.[96] His assertion is true, at least in comparison to other Jāhiliyya poetry which often associates the root *'mr* and its derivations with counsel, being wise, and knowledgeable. One of the Ṭarafah's lines is the most pertinent example of this;[97] "*And when it comes upon you amr, then seek council from the wise, and do not disobey (his advice)*".[98] Al-Qurṭūbī had used this one-liner from Ṭarafah within his commentary on one of the Qurʾānic verses concerning the *shūra*.[99] Similarly, Al-Qalʿī also uses this line to assert the importance of selecting advisors for a king to seek advice from.[100] All these assertions on relating this line to counsel or being wise suggest that the root *'mr* and its derivations may also be used to portray a kind of authority that seems epistemic in some sense. If not epistemic, the *amr* must be at least related axiologically to good values – either individually or communally, such as the Jāhiliyya

[94] For a full account of the poem, see Al-Aʿlam al-Shatanmari, Vol. 1, 321.
[95] For a full account of the poem, see Al-Aʿlam al-Shatanmari, Vol. 1, 298-299.
[96] Al-Wazīr al-Baṭalyūsī, Vol. 2, 54.
[97] His real name is ʿAmr b. al-ʿAbd b. Sufyān. Similar to Zuhayr, Tarafah was also one of the poets of *al-sabʿat al-muʿllaqāt* (The Seven Hanging Ode). He is considered the youngest of the muʿ*allaqāt* poets, where he died in his twenties. See J. A Montgomery, "Tarafa" in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, edited by P.J Bearman, TH Bianquis, C.E Bosworth, E. Van Donzel, W.P Heinrichs (Leiden: Brill, 2000), Vol. 10, 219-220.
[98] For a full account of the poem, see Tarafah b. ʿAbd, *Dīwan Tarafah ibn ʿAbd*, edited by Mahdi Muhammad Naṣir al-Dīn (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, 2002), 51.
[99] Al-Qurṭubī, Abū ʿAbdullah Muhammad b. Ahmad, *al-Jāmiʿ Li Ahkām al-Qurʾān* (Al-Qāhirah: Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyyah, 1964), Vol. 4, 251.
[100] Al-Qalʿī al-Shāfiʿī Abu ʿAbd Allah Muhammad b. ʿAli, *Tahdhīb al-Riyāsah wa Tartīb al-Siyāsah* (al-Urdūn: Maktabah al-Manār, n.d), 143.

term *jawāmi' al-amr* (affairs that unite people) used by Zuhayr,[101] or enjoining good (*bilkhayr umuri*) in another poem of Ṭarafah, or the act of heeding only to good *amr* (*wa kullu amrin siwā al-fahshā'ī ya'tamiru*) by another Jāhiliyya poet al-A'sha.[102]

7. The Root 'MR in the Islamic-Arabic Lexicon: The Advanced Fusion

There are two main forms of authoritative meanings provided within this Islamic-Arabic lexical compendium. The first of those two illustrates meanings related to the act of '*negating prohibition*'. The definition varies from '*an antithesis to the prohibition*',[103] '*the enjoining of goodness*',[104], '*a phrase indicating an act of demanding in a superior way*',[105] and the act of '*demanding for action*'.[106] All of them signal the act of commanding and demanding something. It could appear in a verb form such as *amara* (*tr*. to command), or verbal noun *amrun* pl. *awāmir* (*tr*. command).[107] Its active participle varies from *al-amīr, dhu al-amr,* or *al-āmir,* all of whom indicate the

[101] For a full account of the poem, see Al-A'lam al-Shatanmari, Vol. 1, 325.

[102] His real name is Maymūn b. Kays, a prominent ancient Arab poet who was born before 570 CE and died in 625 CE. His poems were mostly panegyric, circulating on political themes. See W. Caskel, "al-A'shā" in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Vol. 1, 690. For a complete account of the poem, see Al-Asma'ī Abū Sa'īd ʿAbd al-Malik b. Qurayb, *Al-Asma'iyyat* (Misr: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1993), 91. See also Ibn Sallām al-Jumāhi Abu Abdullah Muhammad b. Sallām, *Tabaqāt Fuhūl al-Shu'arā'* (Jeddah, Dār al-Madanī, n.d), Vol.1, 210.

[103] Al-Farāhīdī, al-Khalīl b. Ahmad, *Kitāb al-'Ayn* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 2003) Vol. 1, 85. See also Al-Azharī, Muhammad b. Ahmad, *Tahdhīb al-Lughah* (Beirut: Dār 'Ihyā' al-Turath, 2001), Vol. 15, 207. See also Ibn Manẓūr, Vol. 1, 203-206. See also Al-Fayrūzabādī, Muḥammad b. Ya'qūb, *al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ* (Beirut: Mu'assasah al-Risālah, 2005), Vol. 1, 344. See also Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī, Muḥammad b. Muḥammad, *Tāj al-'Arūs min Jawāhir al-Qāmūs* (n.p: Dār al-Hidāyah, n.d), Vol. 10, 68.

[104] Al-Zamakhsharī, Mahmūd b. Qāsim, *Asās al-Balāghah* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1998), Vol. 1, 33.

[105] Abū al-Baqā' al-Ḥanafī, Ayyūb b. Mūsā, *al-Kulliyyāt: Mu'jam fi al-Muṣtalaḥāt wa al-Furūq al-Lughawiyyah* (Beirut: Muassasah al-Risālah, n.d), 176.

[106] Al-Samīn al-Ḥalabī, *'Umdat al-Huffāẓ fi Tafsīr Asyhar al-Alfāẓ* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1996), Vol. 1, 114.

[107] Hans Wehr, 26.

doer, or the one who makes the demand.[108] Similar to Jāhiliyya poetry, the Islamic-Arabic lexicon appropriates this meaning within both divine and secular contexts. The latter is of course used for human daily context, explicating usages for the act of demanding from two different parties. Meanwhile, examples of divine context in these lexicons mostly come from the Qur'ān, indicating the authority of Allah and His dispensation for command, such as and *enjoin (wa'mur) al-salāh (the prayers) on your family*],[109]or [*and we have been commanded (wa'umirna) to submit ourselves to the Lord of the 'Ālamin*].[110]

Another derivation generated from this first authoritative meaning is the verb *i'tamara*. It generally means *qabila al-amr*,[111] which is the act of receiving or obeying the command. This is like in the sayings of *i'tamara al-rajul*, which translates to a guy that has performed the command upon him,[112] or *amartuhu fa'tamira* (*tr*. I commanded him, and he received/obeyed/performed the command).[113] The Qur'anic example of this form is available in one verse, which concerns the relationship of divorced spouses: [*and let each of you accept the advice (wa'tamirū) of the other in a just way*].[114] Apart from being concerned with two parties, the Islamic-Arabic lexicon also includes this form within the meaning of one submitting and heeding to his own command. This is visible in the likes of the phrase *u'tumira bikhayr* (tr. [as if] one heeded to his own command in performing goodness],[115] or *rajulun mu'tamir wa huwa mustabiddun bi ra'yihi* (tr. a *mu'tamir* man, whom a man adamant of

[108] Ibn Manẓūr, Vol. 1, 304.
[109] Qur'ān, Ṭāhā 20: 132. For notes on translations, see *The Noble Qurʿān*, 427.
[110] Qur'ān, al-Anʿām 6: 71. For notes on translations, see *The Noble Qurʿān*, 180.
[111] Al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī, Abu al-Qāsim al-Hussein bin Mufaḍḍal, *Al-Mufradāt fi Gharīb al-Qur'ān* (Dimashq: Dār al-Qalam, n.d), 89. See also Ibn Manẓūr, Vol. 1, 205. See also Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī, Vol. 10, 68.
[112] Al-Himyari, Nashwan b. Saʿīd, *Shams al-'Ulūm wa Dawā' Kalaā al-'Arab min al-Kulūm* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr al-Muʿāsir, 1999), Vol. 1, 329.
[113] See also Al-Fayyumī Al-Hamawī, Abu Al-Abbas Ahmad bin ʿAli, *al-Miṣbāḥ al-Munīr fī Gharīb al-Sharḥ al-Kabīr* (Beirut: Al-Maktabah al-ʿIlmiyyah, n.d), Vol. 1, 22.
[114] Qur'ān, al-Ṭalaq 65: 6. For notes on translations, see *The Noble Qurʿān*, 767.
[115] Ibn Manẓūr, Vol. 1, 205.

his own view and opinion).[116] From this vantage point of self-command, the Qur'ān introduces another derivation- the hyperbolic participle *ammārah*. Discussion of this word in the classical lexicography is mostly available only within the Qur'anic-oriented lexicon. The contextual examples signify the derivation as Islamic in its origin, as they are all oriented around two specific Qur'anic verses with no reference to pre-Islamic poetry or prose.[117] Both reflect on how one's self is continuously deliberating the person to incline to evil; *inna al-nafs la ammāratun bi al-sū'* [tr. ...verily, the (human) self is inclined to evil].[118]

The second authoritative meaning is the standard etymological meaning used by Islamic political literature in defining political *al-imārah*, which most early lexicons associate with *al-wilāyah* (*tr*. the sovereignty, government, rule).[119] Some argued that the terms are interchangeable between *al-imārah* or *al-imrah*, and some differentiate these two lexemes apart by specializing the former to *al-imrah* as *al-rif'ah* (*tr*. height, elevation), while *al-imārah* as *al-wilāyah*.[120] Muslim lexicographers also differed in specifying the correct one between the verbal sequences that vary from *amara*, *amira*, or *amura*. Nevertheless, they all equate their preferred verbal sequences with the verb *waliya* (*tr*. to be in charge, to rule, to govern).[121] Five other derivations related to this meaning[122] *are*

[116] Ibid., 206. See also Al-Zamakhsharī, Vol. 1, 33.

[117] Al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī, 89. See also Al-Samīn al-Ḥalabī, Vol. 1, 115.

[118] Qur'ān, Yūsuf 12: 53. See the translation in *The Noble Qur'ān*, 311.

[119] Al-Farāhīdī, Vol. 1, 85. See also Al-Jawharī, Abu Naṣr Ismā'il b. Hammād, *Taj al-Lughah wa Ṣiḥāh al-'Arabiyyah* (Beirut: Dār al-'Ilm li al-Malāyīn, 1987), Vol. 2, 580-581. See also Al-Ṣāḥib, Ismā'īl b. 'Abbād, *al-Muḥīt fi al-Lughah* (Beirut: 'Ālim al-Kutub, 1994) Vol. 10, 284. See also Ibn Sīdah, Abu al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Ismā'īl, *al-Mukhaṣṣas* (Beirut: Dār Ihyā' al-Turath al-'Arabī, 1996), Vol. 1, 322. See also Ibn Sīdah, *al-Muhkam wa al-Muḥiṭ al-A'ẓam* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 2000), Vol. 10, 299.

[120] Ibn Sīdah, *al-Mukhaṣṣas*…, Vol. 1, 322. For the translation for *al-rif'āh*, see Hans Wehr, 350.

[121] Al-Azharī and al-Ṣahib specified it with *amara*, while al-Jawharī extended it into *amara* and *amura*. Meanwhile, others like Ibn Sīdah and Ibn Manẓūr included all three *amara*, *amura*, and *amira*. See Al-Azharī, Vol. 15, 209. See also Al-Ṣāḥib, Vol. 10, 284. See also Al-Jawharī, Vol. 2, 580-581. See also Ibn Sīdah, *al-Muhkam wa al-Muḥiṭ al-A'ẓam*, Vol. 10, 299. See also Ibn Manẓūr, Vol. 1, 206-207.

ammara (*tr*. the act of appointing someone as an *amīr*),[123], *ta'ammara* (*tr*. the act of being dominant over others),[124] and *āmara*/ *ista'mar*/ *i'tamara* (*tr*. the act of consulting and discussing with someone).[125] Although we have previously determined *i'tamara* as performing/ receiving/ and obeying the command of one's self or others, most lexicons also agree that it also means '*to consult*'.[126] Al-Rāghib stipulated that it happened due to how both parties who engage in the act of issuing and receiving commands are mutually responsive to each other, where each party performs a command that is '*ashāra ilaihi*' (tr. has been pointed out to/ suggested to/ referred to), hence is indicative to consultation.[127] Other than that, the Islamic-Arabic lexicon also pointed out the same non-authoritative meanings of the root in both ASA and ANA before, which include 'matter and affair',[128] 'mark and sign',[129] and 'to make abundance/ multiply'.[130]

---

[122] For complete verbal sequences of these five, see Hasan Sa'id al-Karmī, *al-Hādī ila Lughat al-'Arab* (Beirut: Dār Lubnan, 1991), 85.

[123] Al-Jawharī, Vol. 2, 582. See also Ibn Manẓūr, Vol. 1, 208. See also Hasan Sa'id al-Karmī, 85.

[124] Al-Jawharī, Vol. 2, 582. See also Ibn Manẓūr, Vol. 1, 208. See also Hasan Sa'id al-Karmī, 85.

[125] Al-Jawharī, Vol. 2, 582. See also Al-Zamakhsharī, Vol. 1, 33. See also Al-Himyari, Vol. 1, 330. See also Ibn Manẓūr, Vol. 1, 206. See also Zayn al-Dīn al-Rāzī, Muhammad b. Abū Bakr, *Mukhtār al-Ṣiḥāḥ* (Beirut: al-Maktabah al-'Aṣriyyah, 1999), 21. See also Al-Fayrūzabādī, Vol. 1, 344. See also Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī, Vol. 10, 76.

[126] Al-Jawharī, Vol. 2, 582. See also al-Rāghib, 89. See also al-Zamakhsarī, Vol. 1, 33. See also Al-Himyari, Vol. 1, 329. See also Ibn Manẓūr, Vol. 1, 205. See also al-Samīn al-Ḥalabī, Vol. 1, 115. See also Zayn al-Dīn al-Rāzī, 21. See also Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī, Vol. 10, 76.

[127] Al-Rāghib, 89.

[128] Al-Farāhīdī, Vol. 1, 85. See also Al-Azharī, Vol. 15, 207. See also Al-Jawharī, Vol. 2, 580. Ibn Fāris, *Mu'jam Maqāyīs al-Lughah*, (n.p: Dār al-Fikr, 1979), Vol. 1, 137. Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-'Arab,* Vol. 1, 203-206.

[129] Ibn Manẓūr, Vol. 1, 208. See also al-Samīn al-Ḥalabī, Vol. 1, 116. See also Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī, Vol. 10, 74.

[130] Al-Jawharī, Vol. 2, 581. See also Al-Rāghib, 89. See also Ibn Manẓūr, Vol. 1, 205.

8. The Authoritative Worldview of the Root 'MR: The Shepherding Notion

A great range of semantical dissonance is obvious in the documentary sources between the ASA and the ANA who had appropriated the root for the divine and the secular-pastoralism activities respectively. This is unlike the Jāhiliyya and Islamic-Arabic lexicon that have included both contexts together. Neither of these two contexts can confirm one another in terms of which was earlier in its semantical range. Jallād's previous contention on ANA-Safaitic *'mr* and its accordance with the basic Semitic meaning of the root '*to know'* or '*to make known*' through the quantitative aspect of '*to be widespread/ abundance*' perhaps could indicate the ANA-Safaitic as the earliest of those three profiles, hence making the secular-shepherding as the forerunner among them both. This is at least in recognizing the usage of the meaning '*to command'* for the root *'mr* in the ASA, the Jāhiliyya poetry, and the Islamic-Arabic lexicons, which according to Jallad is more recent in its semantical range.[131]

We would perhaps be able to find a much clearer explanation by assessing the previous proto-Semitic derivation of the root *'mr*, which is *immeru* (lamb).[132] The same bifurcation of the root *'mr* into the divine and secular context was also evident in the usage of *immeru*, and they were particularly available as early as in the Akkadian language. The divination context of Akkadian *immeru* was used within two lexical fields, either for sacrificial offerings or a divinatory process in revealing and making visible the omens of their purported deities and divine beings.[133] Meanwhile, the literal usages were available within three lexical fields; 1) literary texts reflecting it as the concrete word for lamb and sheep, 2) economic texts documenting the trading process of *immeru*, and 3) the shepherding process; ranging from the aspects of its age (young sheep), size and fattening process, and others.[134] By these proto-contexts, we could

[131] Ahmad al-Jallad, *An Outline of the*…, 300.
[132] See the 'Introduction' of this study.
[133] The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago (CAD), *immeru*, edited by A. Leo Oppeinheim (Chicago: The Oriental Institute, 2004), *immeru*, Vol. 7, 130.
[134] The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago

identify the same divine context of *immeru* against which the divine contexts of the ASA's *'mr* that perhaps supposedly also indicate the same basic meaning '*to know*' and '*to make known*' as contended by Jallad before. However, unlike most of the ANA-Safaitic that accords to this semantical range through indicating the quantitative aspect of '*to make widespread*' or '*abundance*' of either their pastoral animal or their scarcity physically, the ASA appropriated this range through '*making visible*' the supposed command and signs from their deities.[135] In this regard, both ASA and ANA's authoritative context of the root are connected to this same semantical range, but from different standpoints.

The same notion of *knowing* or *visibility* also binds the authoritative *'mr* of Jāhiliyya and the Islamic-Arabic lexicon together. Within the Jāhiliyya paradigm, however, attestations of secular activities other than animal shepherding were more prominent, namely for military and tribal leadership. That one Dadano-Arabic inscription (JSLih 071) before is perhaps the link connecting the animal-shepherding *'mr* in the ANA-Safaitic to the Jāhiliyya's human-authoritative *'mr*, where it had used the derivation *amīr* in a human-activities context, specifically for the person who guided the Dadanites sedentary in the desert. That kind of semantical shift adopts the notion of *visibility* not through the ANA-Safaitic's notion of animal-abundancy or widespread anymore, but either through these two possibilities: the epistemic superiority in knowing and guiding, or as the highest socio-political order specific to their environment. In Jāhiliyya poetry, the same epistemic visibility seemed prevalent mostly within their preoccupation in connecting the root *'mr* with wisdom in council, warfare, or even in animal-shepherding, as well as linking the root to good societal values.[136] In Islamic lexicography, however, Ibn Sīdah addressed this visibility mainly from the second possibility, where he identified human governance in *al-imārah* or *al-imrah* from *al-rifʿah* (tr. height,

(CAD), Vol. 7, 129-133.

[135] For detailed elaboration on the mechanization of divination through *immeru*, see for example Yoram Cohen, *The Babylonian šumma immeru Omens: Transmissions, Reception and Text Production* (Munster: Zaphon, 2020) xv.

[136] See the previous discussion of the root *'mr* in literary sources (Jāhiliyya poetry).

elevation) and *al-wilāya*h (tr. sovereignty).[137] To be inclusive, however, we could infer that those elevation, height, or sovereignty are not necessarily the '*visibility'* of the root itself, but perhaps the contingencies of the epistemic visibility and superiority.

The importance of this visibility notion in coalescing the variation of this root's authoritative meanings indicates that it is indeed the shared meaning and worldview of the root. Yet it is still seemingly inadequate, particularly in further explaining the nature of those variegated authoritative paradigms of the root *'mr* within those three semantical sources. For that to materialize, it is important to grasp the rationale of this visibility. In nomadic-Safaitic, their secular-materialist consciousness in operationalizing the authoritative *'mr* for animal-shepherding could have possibly been their utmost goal, where the aim was more on multiplying, maximizing, and capitalizing the livestock to the best interest of their pastoral life. In the most profane realm, the animal-shepherding context then becomes the root's basic authoritative worldview, solely implying and aiming for visibility through material and secular abundance. Though it may seem far-fetched, it is not impossible for the Islamic-Arabic lexicon to have also pointed out this proclivity. Al-Azharī was the first lexicographer who mentioned the relationship between the Arabic *immaru* (lamb) and the economic state of the Arabs. According to him, the Arabs used to call people who were being struck with poverty and deficiency with the phrase '*mā lahu immaru wa-la immaratu*', which translates to 'he has nothing of either a male or a female lamb'.[138] Although this phrase is indicative figuratively for a person in poverty and deficiency, it is, however, seems to be also valid literally. Such literal context manifests whenever one considers the revered status of sheep and goats among the Arabs, known as early as in the Hellenistic and Judeo-Christian literature.[139]

---

[137] Ibn Sīdah, *al-Mukhaṣṣas* Vol. 1, 322.

[138] Al-Azharī, Vol. 15, 29.

[139] In Hellenistic literature, Cicero affirmed the Arabs as those who are so acquainted with pasturing, often travelling the plains in winter and mountains in the summer. On the other hand, the Biblical historiography mentioned the abundance of flocks possessed by the people of Qedar, and how they became the merchants who mostly traded with them. The Qedarites are the confederation of Arab tribes dominating the Arabian Peninsula at that time. See Cicero, *On Divination*, translated from Latin and

For instance, although the Bedouin's nobility and strength were considered through their status as the camel-herder tribe, the possession of goats and sheep in small or large amounts, however, was the basic attribute of any Arab tribe, including the Bedouin and those sedentary communities who lived in the cities.[140] Thus, not having possessed anything as meagre as a male or a female lamb was indeed an indicator projecting their extreme scarcity. This was the reason why the absence of *al-immaru* could act as an indicator of poverty and deficiency, while the abundance of it then projected otherwise. Moreover, it also explains why other derivations of the root *'mr* in Arabic are sometimes expressive of abundance and livestock. For example, the definition for the Arabic phrase *amira al-rajul* (*tr*. the person has become abundance, multiplied, grew) is the phrase *kathurat māshiatahu*, which translates to the abundance, multiplying or growing numbers of his livestock.[141] Note that though these examples above are emblematic of the Islamic-Arabic lexicon, the same understanding is nevertheless applicable to the ANA-Safaitic animal-shepherding usages of the root. This is at least by following Jallad's previous contention on Safaitic as the dialect continuum of Arabic.[142]

Through Jallad's contention, we could also utilize other Islamic-Arabic examples of the root against which to understand how the ANA-Safaitic animal-shepherding worldview had possibly evolved into human-shepherding activities. The link is perhaps possible firstly with the previous Dadano-Arabic inscription, where the word *amīr* is attested as the person who shepherded and guided the Dadanites' caravans and settlements in the desert. It then became

---

Greek with commentary by David Wardle (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 76. See also Isaiah 60: 7 & Ezekiel 27: 21. For elaboration on the people of Qedar, see Marwan G. Shuaib, "*The Arabs of North Arabia in later Pre-Islamic Times: Qedar, Nebaioth, and Others*" (PhD thesis, The University of Manchester, 2014), 139-174.

[140] Louise Sweet, "Camel Raiding of North Arabian Bedouin," *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 67, no. 5 (1965): 1134.

[141] Ibn Manẓūr, Vol. 1, 205. See also Al-Fayrūzabādī, Vol. 1, 344. Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī, Vol. 10, 72.

[142] See Ahmad al-Jallad, "The Earliest Stages of Arabic…", 323. See also Ahmad al-Jallad, "Safaitic"…, 343.

more perceivable within the literary sources of the Jāhiliyya poetry with the words *amīr* and *amr* for tribal, warfare, and military functions, all of which indicated forms of human-shepherding activities. The Islamic tradition provided important insights into deciphering how this evolution had occurred. It need not be overemphasized that the notion of materialist-abundancy interpreted previously from the construed relation of *al-immaru* and shepherding was not the end of the social evolution and progress of the Arabs. A more advanced Arab society that is growing exponentially may indulge in other matters and affairs that are more complicated and suited to their increasing quality of life and not be restricted to discussing or fine-tuning matters related to livestock and pastoral affairs. This could involve the more complicated legal matters, tribal war and domination, where the root *'mr* was also a subject of this sophistication.

Al-Ṭabarī, for instance, described the abundance in the derivation *amira* within two forms, ranging from the physical abundance, growth, and multiplication of clan member to the intensification and complexification of their affairs and matters from their physical abundance. The second form is the gist of this evolution, where the physical abundance leads to their societal sophistication, leading the root *'mr* to enter the phase of what the Islamic-Arabic lexicons classify as human governance.[143] Ibn Fāris also stated this evolution of shepherding to governance, where he said *min qawmin umur* (tr. from a group of people [there will be] affairs).[144] His phrase here indicates that whenever the physical abundance and multiplication of clan and tribe occur, there will be a lot of human affairs to tend to, hence the need for *al-imrah* and *al-imārah*, which is a type of sovereignty governing them and their affairs. Within this framework, the previous governance-related meanings of the root *'mr* attested within the Islamic-Arabic lexicon are not necessarily independent from the animal-shepherding worldview, but instead an extension of this shared worldview of shepherding within the human domain.

---

[143] Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-Bayān fī Ta'wīl al-Qur'ān*, (n.p: Dār Hijr, 2001), Vol. 14, 532.
[144] Ibn Fāris, Vol. 1, 137-138.

The Islamic-Arabic lexicon also adduced another context of governance that seems indicative of Islamic influences, which is the previous notion of *ammārah*; a precaution for men on the ever-commanding nature of the human self that is lenient to evil and misdeeds (*al-nafs al-ammārah*). Again, such recognition of the bestial and wicked nature of one's own self is important for a person in the process of self-shepherding, proven through two other improvement stages of human-self mentioned in the Qur'ān, *al-nafs al-lawwāmah* (censuring-self/ soul) and *al-nafs al-muṭma'innah* (tranquil self/ soul).[145] This here is an invention peculiar to the Islamic tradition alone, which seems to deal with the metaphysical aspect of *al-imārah*, thus dispossessing this root from the previous materialist-secular-abundancy context. Elsewhere, the Islamic-Arabic lexicon also adduced other metaphysical authoritative examples of the root by associating it with the dispensation of Allah. This refers to the Qur'anic phrase *amr* Allah, which Abū al-Baqā' al-Ḥanafī asserted as having either varied in the exegesis from the *dīn* (religion) of Allah, the Qur'ān or the Prophet himself.[146] By associating *amr* Allah with these meanings, Islam has rejected both visibility meaning of ASA through divination or of ANA through material abundancy, at once defying the domain of each shepherding function for both profiles.

For ASA, the visibility of their deities' command and signs attained through the divination and cultic communication practices used to possess the same secular-shepherding functions. The evidence is clear, particularly through how those inscriptions had associated the revelation of these alluded signs and omens as if they were -*supposedly*- in their belief, - within the governance of their deities in shepherding them to their good and interests.[147] Within their belief, these signs and commands became the indicators or cues for many aspects of their life, such as in building something, protecting them, dedicating statues for penance, etc.[148] In this regard,

[145] For a detailed discussion on these three types of self, see Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, *Prolegomena to the Metaphysics of Islam…,* 121.
[146] Abū al-Baqā' al-Ḥanafī, 177.
[147] Robert G. Hoyland, 153-157.
[148]Sabäische Wörterbuch, "*'mr*" <http://sabaweb.uni-jena.de/SabaWeb/Suche/Suche/

even the non-authoritative meaning of these deities' marks and signs had transformed into authoritative for these ASA cultic adherents. All these became nullified after Islam as the only accepted visibility notion of the root *'mr* is only *amr Allah*, which lies in the vicinity of those three meanings before; the *dīn* of Allah (the religion Islam), the Qur'ān, or the Prophet Muhammad. These three shared their visibility meaning through their means of deliverance as the revelation from Allah, which forms the only visibility of the root accepted in Islam that functions to shepherd and to provide the pathway and manual for mankind in guiding their life to their good interest and benefits - whether in their worldly affairs or the afterlife.

Apart from the visibility notion, the shepherding notion of the root *'mr* then also forms the abstracted authoritative worldview of the root attested in those two temporal frames. But far from being exclusively animal-related, this notion goes beyond that limitation. Interestingly, such a trait is a normative character for the Arabic conceptualization of words related to animal shepherding. One of those words is *al-ri'āyah* (tr. guardianship, custodianship, protection),[149] which is the most general and dynamic term that can be used within myriad domains of shepherding activities. Al-Azharī, for example, viewed *al-ri'āyah* could invoking a definition that pertains to the act of taking care and protecting the interest of livestock in animal rearing activities,[150] while in governance, it lies in taking care of and protecting the interest of the subject of the governance.[151] Despite different realms of operation, *al-ri'āyah* projects one similar aim and function, which is to take care of the interest of the subject (*yaḥūtuha wa yahfaẓuha*).[152] It is perhaps from within this paradigm that the shepherding notion of the authoritative *'mr* has also thrived, maintaining its shepherding essence from the most mundane domain of animal-pastoralism that strives for animal-abundancy for the better affairs of their family and clan, or even in the divination practices in making visible their deities' signs in

SearchResultDetail?idxLemma=2289&showAll=0> (accessed on 23 March 2022).

[149] For translation, see Hans Wehr, 346-347.

[150] Al-Azharī, Vol. 3, 103.

[151] Ibid.

[152] Ibid.

shepherding the interest of their worldly affairs. From here it continues to evolve and transpires within the Jāhiliyya poetry and Islamic-Arabic lexicon, allowing the existence of the new socio-political institutions to emerge invariably within *amīr*, *amr*, *ūli al-amr*, *ammarah*, and so on. All of whom were authoritatively functioning in shepherding the interest of their dominions respectively.

9. Conclusion

Stripping *al-imārah* through its root *'mr* provides the barest sense of its conceptualization. In place of the normative Islamic legal-political framework, semantical analysis of the root *'mr* provides a wide array of understanding of its authoritative meanings, particularly through comparative assessment of its variegated attestations of different temporal timelines. It does not bind the root authoritatively to solely represent a specific Islamic political system. It had instead embraced a much diversified and dynamic pattern of authoritative usages, mostly amalgamated through the notion of *shepherding* for the best interest and affairs of their respective dominion. Although the means of achieving that vary respectively to each profile, this shepherding quality remains the same among them. The Islamic-Arabic lexicon is perhaps the most advanced in utilizing this root, transcending the worldly and materialist interests covered by the previous documentary and literary sources of pre-Islamic Arabia. It ventures instead into the metaphysical domain of incorporeal *shepherding* of the life after death and the *self-shepherding* of the *nafs*.

Within the materialist-abundancy paradigm, the authoritative meaning of the root *'mr* has always been involved with progress, growth, and adaptability suitable to its specific environment, particularly shown through its ever-changing semantical range. Such a statement refers to how the root's derivations had evolved from the most primordial human activity of animal shepherding into human governing that may have begun simply as guiding the sedentary in the desert to matters related to tribal and warfare. The Islamic al-imārah took off from the latter, further evolving into what we may have known today as the emirate. One may still question the extent of this root's authoritative evolution to be halted to that Islamic political

institution, particularly with reference to the seemingly more general Qur'anic address of this root in its human political order theme ūlī al-amr. This semantical perspective of al-imārah seems to be a good starting point for that discourse, particularly in extraditing the concept from the usual legal-political epistemic lens, and bringing it within the fore of a new spectrum of, for example- the social and political ethics discourses. Having said that, however, one must respect the terminological understanding of the concept in its normative legal-political framework. But the respect must come in unison with the quest for the realization of a more universal authoritative *'mr*, which should remain peripheral– *if not integral*- to the future theorization and operationalization of *al-imārah*.

CREATION OF MAN IN ISLAM AND HINDUISM: AN INTELLECTUAL ENCOUNTER

Arshad Islam[1]

Abstract

This study examines the similarities and differences in ontological views of the creation process as described in Islam and Hinduism. The Islamic view is based on the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth, expounded in the commentaries and auxiliary works of the Islamic scholars, and the Hindu view is rooted in the oldest Vedic scriptures, particularly the Rig Veda. The Qur'ān reaffirms the Judaic account of the creation of Adam as the primordial human, who was established as a vicegerent in the earth. It repeatedly iterates the Quranic theme of the incredible fine-tuning of creation being a cause for reflection on the meaning and significance of the universe, rather than being a random or idle occurrence. The Qur'ān declares that human beings have a uniquely privileged role in the destiny of the Universe. They are not an irrevocably fallen creature, as believed by Christians. The Islamic paradigm is fundamentally centered on the divine mandate of humans to worship their Creator, whereby they may return to their Paradisal homeland; exhibiting some similarities and differences, the Vedic theory of Creation posits that the universe is of immense age, and that humans have descended (devolved) from a higher state of consciousness to their current impasse. It must seek to re-ascend to their former status and unity with the transcendent Absolute. The study then zooms out to offer a comparative analysis of general Islamic views of Hinduism and some modern Hindu views of Islam.

Keywords: Islam, Hinduism, Qur'ān, Evolution, Creationism.

[1] Former Head, Department of History and Civilization, AbdulHamid AbuSulayman Kulliyyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences, International Islamic University Malaysia, Email: arshadislam2@gmail.com.

1. Introduction

Among the abundant favors granted by the Creator, the distinguishing feature of the human being according to the Abrahamic faiths is the ability to discern (i.e., to *name* things), by which Adam was honored above other creatures.[2] The mystical ability to understand and to learn is the essence of all human activity, by which humans learn from past knowledge, and to survive in the alien environment of the world by squarely facing up to its challenges. This uniqueness of man to explore the causes and the consequences, to comprehend the association between the antecedent and the outcome is certainly a divine blessing conferred upon him only. It is this unique favor venerated to man which differentiates him from the brutes and has been the real purpose for all the advancement made by him in arts and sciences, culture and civilization.[3]

This paper explores the Islamic and Hindu accounts of creation. Clearly it is impossible to expound the beliefs of two great religions in this paper, thus this analysis is necessarily limited to a general and mainstream assay. It presents the Islamic view in the context of the Abrahamic religions' belief in an ordered cosmos. The discussion is premised on Islamic and Jewish doctrines exhibiting a high degree of orthodoxy and homogeneity concerning creationism (although the Christian view is somewhat different due to the consequences of particularities of Christian beliefs in the Fall of Man and Redemption of Christ). In contrast, Hinduism has always been a more heterogeneous faith tradition, taking shape over many centuries in disparate communities throughout Central, South, and Southeast Asia, and attempts by modern fanatical movements seeking to make it a political ideology, and to impose a rigid orthodoxy, are likely to be short-lived in the long term.

This study presents the generic and mainstream beliefs of traditional Hinduism concerning Creation. Those seeking more in-depth knowledge of the particularities and debates occurring among

[2] al-Qur'ān, 2: 31; *Holy Bible*, (New International Version (NIV) 2011 by Biblica, Inc.), Genesis, 1: 19-20.
[3] Kausar Niazi, *Creation of Man*, (Delhi: Taj Company, 1990), 9.

Hindu scholars – as well as among scholars of Islam and other religions – may do so in confessional works, but the scope of the current paper is to give an overview, which it is hoped may serve as a primer for people primarily familiar with the Abrahamic religions to gain a deeper appreciation of the Hindu view, and to consider the similarities and differences in these religions' views on Creation.

2. Islamic Creationism

The Quranic view of the genesis of humans describes that they were created in the best form by God, amenable to divine obedience and guidance, and susceptible to shortcomings and repentance, and not in a form irrevocably predisposed to the Fall, requiring an absolute salvation (unlike the Christian variation from the Abrahamic paradigm). Every human being is imperfect because man is prone to commit negligence because of the inherent nature of the human creation. According to the Islamic view, Adam and Hawa committed their own individual original sins, and were subsequently forgiven by Allah (ﷻ) prior to their departure to the earth, after He accepted their repentance.

> Our Lord! We have wronged ourselves. If Thou forgive us not and have not mercy on us, surely, we are of the lost.[4]

> And Adam disobeyed his Lord, so went astray. Then his Lord chose him, and relented toward him, and guided him.[5]

After acceptance of their repentance, Adam and Hawa were dispatched to populate the earth, wherein they and their descendants were to follow guidance received from the transcendent realm, while resisting the snares of their enemy, Satan:

> We said: 'Get ye down all from here; and if, as is sure, there comes to you Guidance from me, whosoever

[4] al-Qur'ān, 7: 23.
[5] al-Qur'ān 20: 121-22.

> follows My guidance, on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.'[6]
>
> He said: 'Get ye down, both of you, - all together, from the Garden, with enmity one to another: but if, as is sure, there comes to you Guidance from Me, whosoever follows My Guidance, will not lose his way, nor fall into misery.' [7]
>
> But whosoever turns away from My Message, verily for him is a life narrowed down, and We shall raise him up blind on the Day of Judgement. [8]

Consequently, humans retain the capacity for Adamic perfection, which consists of sinning and then sincerely repenting to their Lord, and not of pagan ritual sacrifices, cannibalism, and drinking blood (e.g., to partake of Christ's redemption). Anas bin Malik may Allah (ﷻ) be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> All of the children of Adam are sinners, and the best sinners are those who repent. [9]
>
> By the One in Whose hand is my soul, if you did not commit sin Allah would do away with you and bring people who would commit sin then pray for forgiveness.[10]

Hence, in Islam, humans retain the capacity for obedience, and for disobedience, repentance, and forgiveness, all of which are part of the divine splendor of the human mission in Allah (ﷻ) creation.

---

[6] al-Qur'ān, 2: 38.
[7] al-Qur'ān, 20: 123.
[8] al-Qur'ān, 20: 124.
[9] Abi Issa Muhammad bin Isa bin Surah Al-Tirmidhi, *The True Collection Sunan Al-Tirmidhi*, 1-4 Vols, (Beirut: Dar Al-Kutub Al-'Ilmiyyah, 2005), 2499; Imam Muhammad bin Yazid Ibn Majah al-Qazvini, *Sunan Ibn Majah*, (Beirut: Dar Al-Kutub Al-'Ilmiyyah, 2008), 4251.
[10] Abu Al-Husayn Muslim Ibn Al-Hajjaj Al-Qushayri, *Sahih Muslim*, (Riyadh: Maktaba Dar-usSalam, 2007), 2749.

3. Purpose of Creation

Allah unequivocally rejects man's conceit that he has been created in vain, by means of random and meaningless processes.

> Did ye then think that We had created you in jest, and that ye would not be brought back to Us (for account)?[11]

According to the Islamic view, the Children of Adam are called to a noble destiny, premised on worshipping their Creator, and going through the adventures of this world and its temptations away from this end, and from remembering their primordial covenant with Allah. The whole of the Qur'ān reiterates this message, a few illustrative examples of which are given below:

> We have indeed created man in the best of molds.[12]

> If it had been Allah's plan, they would not have taken false gods: but We made thee not one to watch over their doings, nor art thou set over them to dispose of their affairs.[13]

> Say, 'The truth is from your Lord': Let him who will believe, and let him who will, reject (it): for the wrong-doers We have prepared a Fire whose (smoke and flames), like the walls and roof of a tent, will hem them in: if they implore relief they will be granted water like melted brass, that will scald their faces, how dreadful the drink! How uncomfortable a couch to recline on!

> As to those who believe and work righteousness, verily We shall not suffer to perish the reward of any who do a (single) righteous deed.

> For them will be Gardens of Eternity; beneath them rivers will flow; they will be adorned therein with bracelets of gold, and they will wear green garments of

[11] al-Qur'ān, 23: 115.
[12] al-Qur'ān, 95: 5.
[13] al-Qur'ān, 6: 107.

> fine silk and heavy brocade: They will recline therein on raised thrones. How good the recompense! How beautiful a couch to recline on![14]

4. Man's Creation from the Islamic Viewpoint

According to the Islamic creation account, Allah (ﷻ) created the heavens and the earth (including the narrow band of the electromagnetic spectrum that we inhabit in this life) in six stages: "He it is who created the heavens and the Earth in six days – and His Throne was over the waters". [15] At a later phase, Allah (ﷻ) conveyed to the angels: "I want to create a vicegerent on earth," declaring the role of this creature as a custodian and representative of the Creator, based on His unfathomable knowledge of human potential and quality:

> Behold, thy Lord said to the angels: 'I will create a vicegerent on earth.' They said: 'Wilt Thou place therein one who will make mischief therein and shed blood? - whilst we do celebrate Thy praises and glorify Thy holy (name)?' He said: 'I know what ye know not.'[16]

Iblis found it abhorrent that he should be called upon to give obeisance to what he considered an inferior life form created from the base matter of clay, described variously in the Qur'ān as "sounding clay," "like unto pottery," and "from mud".[17] Abrahamic religion affirms that Allah (ﷻ) breathed His spirit into the dry mud and man came into being. Allah (ﷻ) did not use His "breath," "blood," or "flesh"; rather He blew from His own Soul into man.[18] Thus, man, who was formed from mud and the spirit of Allah (ﷻ), is a two-dimensional being. One dimension tends towards mud, lowliness, sedimentation, and stagnation; while the other aspires to the loftiest imaginable point possible. The animating soul of the

[14] al-Qur'ān, 21: 29-31.
[15] al-Qur'ān, 11: 7.
[16] al-Qur'ān, 2: 30.
[17] al-Qur'ān, 55: 14.
[18] al-Qur'ān, 15: 26.

human being is the source of nobility and sacredness, while the bodily (clay) component is that which inclines toward material desires. This is reflected in Abrahamic religions in the struggle to master the lower desires of the bodily self and to consecrate human and bodily activities by means of the spirit's obedience to Allah (ﷻ). It is up to man to choose where to go: to cleave to the lowly world of clay, or to transcend this by sanctifying his material existence with the light of the spiritual realm of providence.[19] Man's fate, from reaching the age of maturity to death, is to engage in jihad, the spiritual struggle between these poles.

> He it is created you from clay, and then decreed a stated term (for you). And there is in His presence another determined term; yet ye doubt within yourselves! [20]

> He Who has made Everything which He has created Best: He began the creation of man with (nothing more than) clay, [21]

When Iblis refused to obey his Creator's command to prostrate to the Adamic being (notably *after* breathing the soul component into him), due to his perceived material superiority as a being made from "smokeless fire" as opposed to clay, he founded the concept of material and racial superiority as an index of worth.

> And when We said to the angels: 'Prostrate to Adam', they (all) prostrated except Iblis; he refused. [22]

> Allah) said: 'What prevented thee from bowing down when I commanded thee?' He said: 'I am better than he: thou didst create me from fire and him from clay.'[23]

The Islamic paradigm posits that nobility depends upon spiritual

[19] Sayyid Qutb, *Fi Zilal al-Qur'an*, (Al-Qahira: Darul-Sharuq, 1979), Vols. III, 1400; VII, 1392-94; Yasien Mohamed, 'The Interpretations of Fitrah', *Islamic Studies*, 34/ 2 (Summer 1995), 131-32.
[20] al-Qur'ān, 6: 2.
[21] al-Qur'ān, 32: 7.
[22] al-Qur'ān, 20: 116.
[23] al-Qur'ān, 7: 12

knowledge and intelligence rather than upon racial superiority. Man's potential superiority over material creation is also evident when Allah contrasts his fate with that of the skies, seas, plants, mountains, animals and so forth, when Allah (ﷻ) invited them to accept the "trust," but all refused except man. This is indicative of the fact that man possesses another virtue; that is, his acceptance of a trust that everyone else refused. This means that man is a representative of Allah (ﷻ) in the universe as well as His trustee.

> We have honored the sons of Adam; provided them with transport on land and sea; given them for sustenance things good and pure; and conferred on them special favors above a great part of Our Creation.[24]

Humans have the free will to choose whether to obey or disobey the Creator, and unlike vegetables, animals, and minerals, they can act contrary to their innate disposition. For example, no animal voluntarily fasts, and no plant can commit suicide in grief and despair. Humans have the ability to revolt against their material, physical, and spiritual nature and needs, and to actively execute wrongdoing or sacrifice self-benefit for others. These are among the unique favors and status accorded to humans according to Islam, highlighting the rapport between them and the Creator.[25]

5. Hindu Creationism

The primordial Hindu scriptures, the Vedas, refer to "knowledge of that which was before unknown" (a concept which can be considered to allude to "revelation" in the Abrahamic sense). Modern scholars distinguish between the primordial Vedic religion of the Indo-Aryans, the subsequent Brahminic religion that subsequently took shape in ancient India, and the heterodox modern faith tradition of Hinduism. In all cases the Vedas are considered sacred texts, which were recited, memorized, transcribed, and transmitted over the millennia by the sacerdotal Brahmin caste, and which were jealously

[24] al-Qur'ān, 17:70

[25] Ali Shariati, *Islamic View of Man*, trans from Farsi by A. A. Rasti (Free Islamic Literatures Incorporated (FILINC), Bedford, 1978), 3.

guarded secrets withheld from the profane.[26] These ancient texts shape modern Hindu beliefs about the nature of Creation and the role of human beings. In a mystical sense, Hindus believe that water existed before all Creation, and that Creation rests on this, which is the cause of the cohesion of atoms and the order of the Universe. Water is thus conceptualized as the primordial substance from which the Creator derived other things, analogous to the Quranic concept of God's primordial throne being "over the waters" [27]

> He it is Who created the heavens and the earth in six Days - and His Throne was over the waters - that He might try you, which of you is best in conduct. But if thou wert to say to them, 'Ye shall indeed be raised up after death, 'the Unbelievers would be sure to say, 'This is nothing but obvious sorcery!' [28]

In terms of the creation of the conventional Universe, the Vedas explain that it originates from the Para Brahman (Supreme Brahman), which is the Absolute, primordial godhead, also understood as the Ultimate Reality; this concept is philosophically analogous or even identical to the understanding of God in Abrahamic religion. Para Brahman gave rise to the triune Trimurti, which orthodox Hinduism refers to as Brahma (the "Creator"), Vishnu (the "Preserver"), and Shiva (the "Destroyer"). The Trimurti collectively represent the governing dynamics of Creation. While it may be tempting for those familiar with Abrahamic religion to see this as analogous to the Christian Trinity, Brahma is a distinct entity from Para Brahman (and is not simply "God the Father" as in the Trinity), and Vishnu became

[26] Bloomfield, Maurice, *The Religion of the Veda: The Ancient Religion of India (from Rig-Veda to Upanishads*), (New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1908), 18; Basham, A. L., *The Cultural History of India*, (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999), 65.

[27] Abu Rayhan al-Biruni**,** Alberuni's India: An Account of the Religion, Philosophy, Literature, Geography, Chronology, Astronomy, Customs, Laws and Astrology of India about A.D. 1030, trans. and ed. E. C. Sachau (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co. Ltd., 1910), 222.

[28] al-Qur'ān, 11: 7.

much more important (and indeed the most important Hindu deity) in the post-Vedic development of Hinduism.[29]

While Brahma implicitly originates physical manifestation in the material universe, Vishnu is seen as the main motivator of events within it, and is the focus of much more practical importance and veneration for Hindus. Indeed, Vishnu came to be seen as the practical "maker" of the earth and its water, as well as fire and wind, as described in the excerpt below. The Trimurti are conceptualized as masculine emanations, complemented by the female-natured Tridevi: Saraswati, Lakshmi, and Parvati, the mystical spouses of Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva. Saraswati is the goddess of knowledge, art, and music, known as Bharati (eloquence), Shatarupa (existence), Vedamata ('mother of the Vedas'), Brahmi, Sarada, Vagisvari, and Putkari). Lakshmi is the goddess of beauty, fertility, power and prosperity. Parvati, also called Uma, is a regulatory goddess concerned with harmony, love, motherhood, and nourishment.

In Hindu theology, all of the gods of their pantheon are considered manifestations of a single essence (ultimately derived from Para Brahman), which can be extended to encompass the whole Universe in general in philosophical analyses; when these personas of the Divine are incarnate in the Earth to interact directly with the human realm, they are known as avatars. All Creation is in transcendent unity according to Hinduism, as Vasudeva said in *Bhagavad Gita*:

> To speak accurately, we must say that all things are divine; for Vishnu made himself the earth that the living beings should rest thereupon; he made himself water to nourish them thereby; he made himself fire and wind in order to make them grow; and he made himself the heart of every single being. He presented them with recollection and knowledge and the two opposite qualities, as is mentioned in the Veda. [30]

In terms of the mechanics of how biological life forms were created,

[29] *Rigveda,* Vol. 1. Eng trans. by Tulsi Ram, (Delhi: Vijaykumar Govindram Hasanand, 2013), 74-75.
[30] Abu Rayhan, *Alberuni's India*, 40.

the Veda declares that "every being comes from Purusha." [31] Purusha is the life force of the existing world, emanating at its ultimate source from Para Brahman, described as knowing and not knowing, gaining knowledge by acquisition. The not-knowing of Purusha is the cause of action coming into existence, and its knowing is the cause of action ceasing.[32] The Rig Veda describes Purusha as Cosmic Man, burned in sacred fire to create the familiar worldly man. The Purusha is considered a heavenly emanation of the Para Brahman, analogous to the Adamic creation in the Abrahamic religion, representing the individuation of consciousness, and a personal aspect of God whose lower mutations create the physical universe. The Rig Veda specifies that 75% of the Purusha remain "ascended high." At the same time, a quarter "took birth again down here," whereby the physical universe is a lower reality of less magnitude and importance than the majoritarian divine realm.

The androgynous primal human Purusha separated through a primordial self-sacrifice into man and woman, from whom the world was created with all its contrasts. This is equivalent to the non-binary initial Adamic being described in Genesis[33] and the Qur'ān [34] prior to the separation into the male "Adam" and his female mate. An analogous creation myth among early Vedic beliefs is that of the cosmic egg, which was separated into the male sky and the female earth.[35] The "mundane egg" (Hiranyagarbha) represented a dualistic male-female energy, comprising the mutually dependent Purusha and Viraj (the primordial creative goddess). Hindu cosmology is unique in going beyond the division of primordial "man" into male and female to describe the additional individuation of the four castes (Brahmin, Rajanya, Vaishya, and Shudra), and its further belief that the higher elements of the world in general are created from this proto-human energy, which differs from the Abrahamic account of a

[31] Abu Rayhan, *Alberuni's India*, 31.
[32] Ibid., 40.
[33] *Holy Bible*, (New International Version (NIV) 2011 by Biblica, Inc.), Genesis, 5: 1-2.
[34] al-Qur'ān, 4: 1.
[35] *Rig Veda*, 1. 164. 45; Brown, W. Norman, 'Theories of Creation in the Rig Veda', *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Jan.-Mar. 1965, 85/1 (Jan -Mar. 1965), 31.

pre-existing physical world that predated the creation of Adam. According to the Hindu creation account, the gods undertook a yajna ("sacrifice") of Purusha, and subsequently formed the revealed or lower world from his transfigured body parts and mind, which were disseminated among the physical universe, encompassing the sky, air, earth, Vedas, varnas (castes), and the gods Indra and Agni. The obvious parallels with motifs of ancient Indo-European and other ancient cosmologies suggest that this is likely a very early concept in Vedic religion (and not a later "Hindu" development arising within India during the classical period).[36]

Following this process, Hindus believe that Purusha became incarnate consciousness in all beings, including humans (who are at a relatively heightened – though imperfect – state of consciousness), animals, plants, and natural manifestations such as mountains and rivers, etc. Hindu creationism posits that all beings on earth, including humans, have ultimately "devolved" from a primordial elevated state of absolute awareness (i.e., Para Brahman), and via an infinite cycle of births and rebirths consciousness can ascend or descend through various tiers of existence, whereby the Universe may be of unimaginable age. The Vedas certainly affirm the extreme antiquity of the universe and the history of the earth.[37]

Hindu religion is premised on the doctrine of karma, whereby good actions (in accordance with the dharma, the order of the Universe instituted by the transcendent) accrue ascending consciousness, which may result in reincarnation as a higher form of consciousness in future lives (e.g., serially ascending from insect to goat, cow, lower-caste human, and Brahmin), before seeking ultimate reunion with the universal consciousness of Para Brahman. Alongside the individual trajectory of particular souls, Hindus believe that the universe itself goes through cycles of birth, decay, destruction, and rebirth. At the end of the Kali Yuga (dark age), the Vedic theory of the evolution of consciousness (expounded in the Upanishads) marks the dawning of a new era in which consciousness will come to be incorporated as an essential item in our scientific theories about life and its origin.

[36] *Rig Veda*, 10. 54.3; Brown, 'Theories of Creation in the Rig Veda', 32.
[37] Brown, 'Theories of Creation in the Rig Veda', 27.

Hindus believe that their religious law and its single precepts derive their origin from Rishis, their sages and pillars of their religion, and not from prophets (*narayana*), who appear as human figures to rectify particular evils and to restore the primordial dharma, which is eternal and not subject to change (unlike the successive Sharīʿah and dispensations of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, as in Muslim belief). Laws (i.e., karmic principles) do not change in Hinduism.[38] According to Hindu religion, humans are to seek to accrue good karma to ascend divine transcendent consciousness. While religious worship *per se* is an intrinsic part of the religion, these are symbolic tokens of obeisance (as in Abrahamic religion), and not admission prices to buy an ascension in consciousness. As the *Bhagavad Gita* says:

> Many people try to approach me in their aspirations through something which is different from me; they try to insinuate themselves into my favor by giving alms, praise, and prayer to something besides me. I, however, confirm and help them in all these doings of theirs, and make them attain the object of their wishes because I am able to dispense with them.[39]

6. Classical Islamic Views of Hinduism

6.1 Al-Biruni's Perception of the Hindu Religion

The history of Indian perceptions of divinity is a complex and nuanced field, of which even most practicing Hindus are largely unaware. While modern political ideologies are keen to emphasize religious divides between people, classical Muslims had a deep appreciation of Hinduism (which may be surprising to modern Muslims), and even saw in it the philosophy of the Oneness of God. During the first incursions into Sindh by the Umayyad armies the

[38] Muhammad Abdul Karim Shahrastani, *Kitab Al-Milal Wa al-Nihal (Book of Religious and Philosophical Sects*, Edited by William Cureton. (London: James Madden & Co. 1842), 449; Abu Rayhan, *Alberuni's India*, 106-7.

[39] Abul Kalam, *Tarjuman ul Quran*. Vol. 1, (Lahore: Urdu Academy, n.d.), 182-83; Abu Rayhan, *Alberuni's India*, 122; Basham, *The Cultural History of India*, 72.

Hindus were accorded an equivalent status to the People of the Book, and their temples and practices were protected, as explained below. Despite the axiomatic abhorrence of idolatry for Muslims, classical Muslim scholars were able to see beyond the superficial polytheism of folk religion to ascertain a deep philosophical transcendence in Hinduism. [40]

The Islamic intellectual most noted for his pro-Indian (and pro-Hindu) sensibilities was Al-Biruni (973-1050), who considered that Hinduism posited that God is One, with the associated Divine Attributes (i.e., of Para Brahman) of being eternal, devoid of origination and end, acting by consciousness, invincible, prudent, living, life-giving, sovereign, sustaining, unique, and beyond all likeness.[41] He rooted his analysis of Hinduism in an elementary model, whereby universal beings in the world are composed of heaven, wind, fire, water, and earth, known as *mahabhuta*. He described how Hindus called the world *loka*, containing the upper (*svarloka*/ paradise) and lower (*nagaloka*, the world of serpents, i.e., hell), and the intermediary realm of our current existence, called *madhyaloka* and *manushyaloka*; all of these concepts equate easily with the Islamic cosmology of the higher and lower heavenly and hellish *akhira* realities, and the current lower *dunya* world. Humans seek to attain the upper realm and avoid descending to the lower, which is clearly analogous to Abrahamic concepts. A man who merits arriving at *svarloka* or *nagaloka* obtains there the greatest reward of his acts in a specific time comparable to the length of his acts, but in both, there is only the soul, free from the body.[42] According to *Vishnu-Purana* there are 88,000 hells for the specific traits and names by which a hell is assigned to a particular sinner according to the gravity of their sins:

> The man who makes a false claim and who bears false witness, he who helps these two and he who ridicules people, come into the *Raurava* hell.

---

[40] Shahrastani, *Kitab Al-Milal Wa al-Nihal*, 445, 449; Al-Kufi, Ali b. Hamid, *Chach-Namah*, (Islamabad: Institute of Islamic History, Culture and Civilization, Islamabad University, 1983), 184, 208-09.
[41] Abu Rayhan, *Alberuni's India*, 27.
[42] Ibid., 59.

> He who sheds innocent blood, who robs others of their rights and plunders them, and who kills cows, comes into *Rodha*. Those who also strangle people come here.[43]

Al-Biruni recorded that the Hindus of his time considered that there were 33 *koti* or *crore* (330,000,000) devas (which he loosely equated with angels), of which eleven belonged to Mahadeva.[44]

7. Opinions on Prophets Being Sent to India

According to the Quranic specifications, prophets and messengers were sent to every nation and tribe, to convey and explain the message of God according to their language and their needs, so that they might avoid evil and wrong actions and obtain the pleasure of Allah (ﷻ), including India, which comprises a vast span of South Asia. This was the opinion of numerous scholars throughout history, including Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (1862-1943), Hakim Ajmal Khan (1868-1927), Maulana Abdul Bari Farangi Mahali (1878-1926), Shaikh Al-Hadith Maulana Zakaria (1898-1982), Syed Akhlaq Husain Dehlavi (1919-2009), Shams Naveed Usmani (1931-93), and Abdul Razzaq Hansvi (d. 2016) etc.[45]

Mirza Mazhar Jan-i-Janan (1699-1781) explicitly said that the Veda comprises a divine revelation sent to the Hindus by the entity he called the "Angel Brahma" (i.e., the Brahma of the Trimurti), and similar views are attributed to Shah Abdul Aziz Muhaddith Dehlavi (1746-1824). The founder of Darul Uloom Deoband, Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanotwi (1833-80), forbade insolence toward Rama and Krishna, because of the probability that they were originally prophets (in addition to the general Quranic prohibition of insulting other religionists' "gods"):

> Revile not ye those whom they call upon besides Allah, lest they out of spite revile Allah in their ignorance.

[43] Abu Rayhan, *Alberuni's India*, 60.
[44] Ibid., 92.
[45] Abul Kalam Azad, *Jamiush Shawahid*, (Patna: Khuda Baksh Oriental Public Library, 1993), 34-35; Qasmi, M. Shamim Akhtar, 'Salatin Hind ke Ahd meyn Ghair Muslims ki Sharai Haisiyat,' *Darul Uloom Monthly*, 2: 91, Feb. 2007, 33-34.

> Thus have We made alluring to each people its own doings. In the end, will they return to their Lord, and We shall then tell them the truth of all that they did. [46]

Maulana Manazir Ahsan Geelani (1892-1956) wrote that the existence of prophets and messengers in India cannot be denied, and Shah Abdul Rahman Chishti (1596-1655) demonstrated in several contexts that there is a concept of such figures in the Hindu religion (*dharma*) and society. In the opinion of Qazi Sanaullah Panipati (1730-1810), the nature of the Vedas is proof that prophets and messengers came to India, and that Hinduism was of the same origin as the Abrahamic religions. He contextualized this view in terms of the potential interpretation that religions derived from monotheism are viewed in the Qur'ān:

> Verily, those who believe and those who are Jews and Christians, and Sabians, whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day and does righteous good deeds shall have their reward with their Lord, on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.[47]

> Verily, those who believe (in Allah and in His Messenger Muhammad), and those who are Jews, and the Sabians, and the Christians, and the Majus [Zoroastrians], and those who worship others besides Allah; truly, Allah will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection. Verily, Allah is over all things a Witness.[48]

According to classical exegetes, human communities after Adam (and later after Noah, peace be upon them) tended to degenerate over time into polytheism, and were periodically sent prophets to warn and restore monotheism. While Judaism is essentially unequivocal in its monotheism and views Christianity as absolute idolatry, the Christian Trinity was viewed as a proto-polytheist concept by classical Islamic exegetes. Modern Muslims tend to view this as

[46] al-Qur'ān, 6: 108.
[47] al-Qur'ān, 2: 62.
[48] al-Qur'ān, 22: 17.

straightforward *shirk*, but the classical view was that Christian monotheism was acknowledged in the Qur'ān,[49] and only those who regarded God as being one of three beings *within* the Trinity (and not incarnate in all the personas), such as the heresiarch Marcion of Sinope, were considered outright "disbelievers": "Surely, disbelievers are those who said: 'Allah is the third of the three…'" [50] (a view that is shared by mainstream Christianity).

Classical exegetes also considered the Zoroastrian duality of the forces of light and darkness to be a proto-polytheist concept, but not to be polytheism *per se*, while the religion in itself was considered to derive from a prophet (i.e., Zarathustra). Due to the general accommodation of Zoroastrianism alongside the People of the Book in the Qur'ān, Zoroastrians (Magians) were accorded analogous status in classical Islamic civilization. Based on these precedents, Qazi Sanaullah Panipati argued that Hindus were entitled to equivalent regard:

> I say that if the forefathers of the Magians were people of the Book, then the Hindu idolaters of our time will also be people of the Book. They also have a book called the Vedas, which has four parts, and they claim that it is a divine book, then most of their principles are also compatible with the Sharia principle, and the principles that differ are the result of satanic mixing. Just as the Muslim community split into seventy-two sects due to satanic division. The Qur'an also supports the fact that Hindus are people of the book. Allah said, 'Verily We have sent thee in truth, as a bearer of glad tidings, and as a warner: and there never was a people, without a warner having lived among them (in the past).[51]
>
> The king of the Magi became angry with drunkenness and committed adultery with his sister and left his religion and the book and became the advocate of the

[49] al-Qur'ān, 2: 62.
[50] al-Qur'ān, 5: 73.
[51] al-Qur'ān, 35: 24.

> religion of Adam, but the Hindus did not do anything like that, but they became infidels because of denying the Messenger of Allah. It has been narrated to me that the fourth Veda contains the good news of the Messenger of Allah; after reading which the Hindus became Muslims…
>
> if any nation or tribe claims to be a book of God, such as the Magi and Sabians, then it cannot be rejected by saying that its name is not in the Holy Qur'an. Because those who understand the Holy Qur'an know that not all the names of the heavenly or divine books are in the Holy Qur'an… the light can be obtained from the study of their texts that if they are based on monotheistic instructions and the concept of the Hereafter… However, we must reject the distortions and additions that have been made in the heavenly book. [52]

Similarly, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad wrote that if the Magi and Sabians can be considered similar to People of the Book, then the Hindus warrant the same status. In addition to these things, it is also known from the Ḥadīth of Musnad Ahmad that 124,000 prophets and messengers were sent to guide people in the world, a small number of whom are named or described in the Qur'ān, while there is no specific explanation about most of them.[53]

8. Status of Hindus in India

Classical Muslim views rightly regarded India as a site of ancient human civilization, and presumed that Indians had received prophets throughout the history of their great civilization. For this reason,

[52] Qazi Sanaullah Panipati, *Tafseer al-Mazhari,* 8 Vol., (Beirut: Dar Ehia Al - Tourath Al Arabi, 2004), 16-18.

[53] Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawziyyah. Zad Al-Ma'ad: Provisions of the Afterlife Which Lie Within Prophetic Guidance, translated by Ismail Abdus Salaam, (Beirut: Dar al Kotob al ilmiyah, 2010), 304-05; Al-Kufi, *Chach-Namah*, 151; Azad, *Jamiush Shawahid*, 35; Niazi, *Creation of Man*, 7-8; Qasmi, 'Salatin Hind ke Ahd meyn Ghair Muslims ki Sharai Haisiyat', 36-38; al-Baladhuri, Abu al-Hasan b. Yahya, *Futuh al-Buldan*, (Cairo: al-Maktaba al-Tijari yya, 1932), 538.

some scholars of India like Qazi Sanaullah Panipati and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad used the term "*Shibh Ahl-i-Kitab*" to refer to Hindus, and their analogous situation to that of the People of the Book (Jews and Christians).[54] Al-Baladhuri noted the policy of toleration established by Muhammad b. Qasim, who said: "The [Hindu and Buddhist] temples shall be unto us like the churches of the Christians, the synagogues of the Jews, and the fire temples of the Magians." With specific regard to religious sites, this is a significant allusion to the Quranic approbation of such sites.

In other words, Muhammad b. Qasim assumed Buddhists and Hindus to be identical to *ahl-al-Kitab* (People of the Book), specifically respected minorities who paid *jizya* instead of zakat (the latter of which was paid by Muslim citizens) to be excused from military conscription, and who were granted a large amount of religious freedom, in addition to overall liberty to conduct their business and control their own affairs. In Islamic jurisprudence, the status of dhimmis was originally given to the People of the Book (mainly Christians and Jews); later, when regions populated by other communities such as Zoroastrians and non-Christian Berbers were conquered, they were assigned the position of *Mushabbih Ahl-i-Kitab* (Equivalent Companions of the People of the Book).[55]

For all practical purposes there is no difference in the status of the two except for two issues: Muslims are permitted to marry females of the People of the Book and eat the meat slaughtered in accordance with their religious rites, which is not allowed in the case of the *Mushabbih Ahl-i-Kitab*. When the issue of the status of Hindus in Islamic sharia was encountered in Sindh, Muhammad b. Qasim emphatically conferred on them the status of *Mushabbih Ahl-i-Kitab*, which was practically reflected in his protection of the famous

[54] Panipati, *Tafseer al-Mazhari*, 7/ 215-16; Azad, *Jamiush Shawahid*, 34-35.

[55] Qazi Abu Yusuf, *Kitab al-Kharaj*, (Cairo: al-Maktab al-Salafiyya, 1933), 128; Abu Ubaid Qasim Sallam, *Kitab al-Amwal*, trans. Abdur Rahman Tahir Surti, (Islamabad: Idarah Tahqiqat-i Islami, 1969), 44-45; Azad, *Jamiush Shawahid*, 34-35; Qasmi, 'Salatin Hind ke Ahd meyn Ghair Muslims ki Sharai Haisiyat', 33-34; Arshad Islam, 'Multifaith Relationships and Civilization-Building in India's Muslim States and Societies', in *South Asian Islam*: *Spectrum of Integration and Indigenization*, edited by Nasr M Arif and Abbas Panakkal (London and New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group UK, 2024), 85-86.

Temple of the Sun in Multan, which he left unmolested, building a separate mosque nearby, and his successors honored his covenant, and followed this practice.[56] This reflects a long-term policy of building relations with local traditions, as well as a manifestation of the general Islamic political ethos of respecting people of preceding religions in their attempt to follow the Quranic ethos:

> And dispute ye not with the People of the Book, except with means better (than mere disputation), unless it be with those of them who inflict wrong (and injury): but say, 'We believe in the revelation which has come down to us and in that which came down to you; Our Allah and your Allah is one; and it is to Him we bow (in Islam).' [57]

9. Antipathy to Hinduism: Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi (1562-1624)

While the general picture of Hindu-Muslim engagement was one of concord in classical Islamic civilization, the reader will no doubt be left wondering how the current impasse came about, and the absurdity that Muslims and Hindus were perceived to require their own separate states in modern times. While Hindu-Muslim divisions were actively encouraged during the British Raj, and it is not the focus of this paper to explore Hindu-Muslim relations *per se*, it should be noted that commensurate with the generally peaceful *modus vivendi* established by the attitudes described above among Islamic scholars and rulers (the Indian equivalent of Muslim Spain's *Convivencia*, or the Ottoman millet system), there were scholars who were deeply suspicious or resentful of the heterogeneity they saw in local society and (more seriously for them) religion, as exemplified by Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi. He was generally considered in India to be the "Mujaddid Alf Thani" (Renewer of the Second Millennium). A Farooqi and Naqshbandi, he was perturbed by what he perceived to be the adverse religious impacts of "foreign" or non-orthodox influences upon the lives of Muslims, particularly Shi'ism and

[56] Al-Kufi, *Chach-Namah*, 184, 208-9; Qasmi, 'Salatin Hind ke Ahd meyn Ghair Muslims ki Sharai Haisiyat', 39-40.
[57] al-Qur'ān, 29: 46.

aspects of Hindu culture. In *Risalah Radde-e-Rawafidh* he vigorously condemned Shia beliefs and traditions, and sought to curtail the soaring impact of Shias in the Mughal court of the Emperor Akbar (1542-1605).[58]

In his treatise *Ithbat al-Nub-uwwah* (On Prophethood), he commenced with a polemic against the resolute profligacy in India under Akbar, who was noted for his highly heterodox beliefs that many considered beyond the pale of Islam. In his screed, Sirhindi decried public trust in fortune-telling and directly criticized governance by denouncing the despotic torture of several *'ulāma'* for their arduous devotion to Sharia and submission to the Prophet (ﷺ). He observed that the state was so dire that the name of "Muhammad" was not cited in the imperial court, and people bearing this name had adopted an alternative. Akbar also banned the sacrifice of cows, which was a hot-button issue for Muslims seeking to differentiate themselves from Hindus. He also noted that many illiterate people and Muslim women celebrated the Hindu festival of Divali and performed other Hindu rituals.[59]

Shaikh Sirhindi directly addressed the questions of Muslim life in India from the juristic viewpoint, exploring the relations Muslims should maintain with the people of India, who do not fall directly into the class of *Ahl-i-Kitab*. Unlike the vast majority of Islamic scholars, Sirhindi was derisive concerning the question of the role of prophets in primordial India. While acknowledging that prophets had been sent to the region, he claimed that all of them were abandoned, and none of them had more than three adherents. They were ineffective in setting up a community, thus there could be no confidence in any reliable sources for them. He cited the existence of relics all over

[58] Badaoni, Mulla Abdul Qadir, *Muntakhabut Twareekh*, Vol. II & III, (New Delhi: Qaumi Council Baraye Farogh Urdu Zuban, 2008), 206; Burhan Ahmad Faruqi, *Imam-i-Rabbani Mujaddid-i-Alf-i-Tham Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi's Conception of Tawhid*, (Lahore: SH. Muhammad Ashraf, 1940), 7-8.

[59] Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi, *Ithbat al-Nubuwwah*, (Hyderabad Sindh, 1383 AH.), 515; Badaoni, *Muntakhabut Twareekh*, 252-53; Shaikh M. Ikram, *Raud-i-Kauthar*, Lahore: Idarah Thaqafat-e-Islamiya, 2005), 318-20; Fahad, Obaidullah, 'An Analysis of Mujaddid's Critique of Hinduism,' Eds. Abdul Ali & Zafarul Islam, *Contribution of Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi to Islamic Thought*, (Aligarh: Institute of Islamic Studies, AMU., 2005), 132-33.

India as possible evidence of abortive prophetic missions.[60] While these obscure prophets left some marks upon the mystical life of India, the "leaders of Indian infidelity" (*ruasa-i-kufr-i-hind*) had ensured that nothing more than a tentative theological philosophy had managed to endure in native Indian thought and belief. Citing the classical belief that reason alone is not adequate to distinguish the traits of God, Sirhindi argued that the human intellects of Brahmins could not discern God without prophetic guidance.

He also criticized the Brahmin belief that the divine was incarnate in them (*hall-o-sari*), whereby they encouraged people to bequeath the divine worship upon their own person (a Hindu belief analogous to the Christian doctrine of Divine incarnation in Christ, and indeed the belief of some Shias that the Divine was incarnate in Ali ibn Abi Talib and the Imams).[61] Sirhindi apparently makes a distinction between the Islamic concept of prophecy as a purely human mission to convey divine revelation, and the Hindu belief of *awtar* (incarnation and apotheosis).[62] In addition, Sirhindi clearly refuted the belief in incarnation as follows:

> God is not unified with *anything*; nothing is unified with God. Nothing is assimilated in Him nor is He assimilated in any-thing. He is indivisible and impartible. The partition and division are impossible and far from His being. [63]

Sirhindi likewise rebutted the asceticism promoted by Hindu yogis and Greek philosophers, emphasizing the distinction between religious duties (*farāidh*), works of supererogation (*nawafil*), and acts of indignity (*riyazat*, *mujahadat*), into the latter of which he accorded popular ascetic practices. He argued that the suppression of the sensual soul, which ought to be man's ultimate aim in this world, can be influenced exclusively through the execution of the works approved by the Sharia, while works of supererogation are of value

[60] Sirhindi, Shaikh Ahmad, *Maktubat Imam Rabbani*, ed. Nur Ahmad, Vol. I, (Amritsar, 1334 AH.), L. No. 284.
[61] Sirhindi, *Maktubat*, Vol. 1, 1334, L. No. 284.
[62] Sirhindi, *Maktubat*, Vol. 1, 1334, L. No. 80.
[63] Sirhindi, *Maktubat*, Vol. 2, 1334, L. No. 126.

only when they enhance sacred obligations.

Sirhindi's assiduous critiques, however valid in sharia, would have been viewed as puritanical in most classical and early modern Muslim cultures; for example, the human soul itself is viewed as something mystically emanating from God, which might be viewed as being somehow "incarnate" in human beings, as discussed previously. While Ibn Taymiyyah and other custodians of literalist theology denounced the mainstream belief of pre-modern Muslims that Allah (ﷻ) dwelt in the heart of the pious believer (a view held by Al-Tabari and Al-Ghazali), the majority of Muslims in Sirhindi's own society held this belief:

> Indeed, Allah Ta'ala has reserved certain individuals among the inhabitants of earth as his containers. The containers of your Rabb are the hearts of his pious slaves, and the most beloved of hearts to Allah are the softest and most tender. [64]

Some of the most arcane and complex controversies in Islamic intellectual history were due to the mystical (and ultimately unfathomable) nature of God and the possibilities of the manifestations of Him or His attributes, such as the Muʿtazilite argument that the Qur'ān, emanated from God and is not un-created and co-eternal with Him; only the renowned Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal thought it worthwhile to risk his life by standing up against this particular concept, while the other scholars of Iraq were content to go along with it due to its arcane nature and apparently negligible impacts on popular religious observance. Jesus, the son of Mary (peace be upon him) was described in the Qur'ān itself as "a Word from [i.e., emanating from] God".[65] Consequently, Sirhindi's singling out of Hindus for special treatment in his polemic about issues of incarnation is idiosyncratic, as similar views could be found among the Muslim masses and even major scholars.

Indeed, Sirhindi's critiques can only be understood in the

[64] Shams AlDin Abul Khayr Muhammad bin Abd AlRahman Al-Sakhawi, *Al-Maqasidul Hasanah*, (Beirut: Shams Al-Din and Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 2009), Hadith No. 990.
[65] al-Qur'ān, 3: 39.

context of the highly troubling regime of Akbar, which was certainly very unsettling for orthodox Muslims. Akbar was on the verge of creating his new syncretic religion, which he called *Din-i-Ilahi*, supported by Hindu and Zoroastrian priests and rationalist court scholars. Consequently, traditional Muslims underwent various forms of harassment, as alluded to previously, and had no powerful protectors at court or among customary authorities.[66] Islam and Muslims were openly reviled and suppressed; while Hindus freely observed their celebrations across the country with great pomp, Muslims were forbidden to demonstrate any public observances or practices. To commemorate *ekadasi* (a Hindu rite involving a fast), Muslims were prohibited from dining and drinking in public, whereas Hindus were encouraged to ostentatiously dine and drink at will throughout the month of Ramadan. In *Eid ul-Adha* if Muslims slaughtered a cow their lives were forfeit. Many mosques were destroyed by Hindus and temples were erected on their grounds during this period.[67]

It is important to note this episode as an example of the existence of orthodox streams tending against concordist interpretations of both Islam and Hinduism, and of the possibility of Hindu reactionary movements against Muslims (as well as the more famous converse), but as emphasized above, such trends must be contextualized in terms of prevailing governmental and societal directions. We can see a similar crisis in the current era, when Hindu-Muslim enmity is deliberately encouraged by political entrepreneurs seeking to align themselves with both traditions in order to divide and rule. Such shenanigans represent an abuse to both religions, and the demagogues who resort to such tactics seem curiously unwilling to apply any facet of Islam or Hinduism in their political, legal, economic, and social policies (all of which are strangely germane to the interests of big business and the lower self, rather than any transcendent spiritual vision of the elevated possibilities of human life). The genuine lived experience of the majority of Indians throughout history is epitomized in the observation of Gandhi in his

[66] S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi. *Tarikh Da'wat wa Azimat*, Vol. IV, (Lucknow: Majlis Tahqiqat wa Nashriyat Islam, 1980), 108-25.
[67] Sirhindi, *Maktubat*, Vol. 2, 1334, L. No. 92; Ikram, *Raud-i-Kauthar*, 322-23.

pamphlet *Hind Swaraj* (originally written in 1909):

> Should we not remember that many Hindus and Mahomedans own the same ancestors and the same blood runs through their veins? Do people become enemies because they change their religion? Is the God of the Mahomedan different from the God of the Hindu? Religions are different roads converging to the same point. What does it matter that we take different roads so long as we reach the same goal? Wherein is the cause for quarrelling?
>
> Those who do not wish to misunderstand things may read up the Koran, and they will find therein hundreds of passages acceptable to the Hindus; and the Bhagavadgita contains passages to which not a Mahomedan can take exception.[68]

10. Hindu Views on Islam

10.1 Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902)

Although the nineteenth-century Hindu monk, spiritual leader, preacher, and revivalist Vivekananda spent most of his life in Kolkata, where he was born and died, he had a key role in the spread of the Vedanta philosophy outside India. Vedanta is an ancient Hindu philosophical school based on the sacred scriptures of Hinduism, which Vivekananda's teachings popularized in the US and the UK. Vivekananda first became well-known both domestically and internationally in 1893 after giving a momentous farewell address at the World's Parliament of Religions in Chicago, promoting humanitarianism and social action as the ultimate objectives. He established the twin spiritual institutions of Ramakrishna Math (a monastic order) and the Ramakrishna Mission, and is regarded as the principal disciple of the Hindu mystic Ramakrishna (1836-86).[69]

---

[68] M. K. Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj* or *Indian Home Rule*, (Ahmedabad: Jitendra T Desai Navajivan Publishing House, 1938), 44-47.

[69] Swami Nikhilananda, *Vivekanand: A Biography*, Ramakrishna Vivekananda Center, New York, 1989, 1.

Vivekananda, a supporter of Vedanta philosophy, elaborated on the fundamental principles of Hinduism and spirituality in his many lectures. He discussed a wide range of topics, including the *Bhagavadgita*, the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata*, and the ideas of yoga, bhakti, atman, and maya. According to Vivekananda's teachings, working for the good of all people—especially the underprivileged and destitute—is the highest calling and a path to enlightenment. His own experiences as a wandering monk, when he saw the poverty of the Indian populace, shaped this vision. The Ramakrishna Order of Monks and its adherents have continued to uphold this concept of devotion to humanity throughout their life.[70]

Vivekananda advocated for the equality of all religions. In his speeches, he urged people to embrace the existence of other faiths, rather than seeking to destroy them. He placed a strong emphasis on religious concord and peace, which could only be achieved with tolerance. It is debatable whether he viewed all faiths as equal in themselves or sought to subsume non-Hindu faiths within his neo-Vedanta philosophy. In any case, he devoted more attention to Buddhism and Christianity than to Islam, and his "Complete Works" include only one chapter on "Mohammed", with no commensurate chapter on Islamic civilization (unlike his descriptions of Christianity and Buddhism). Indeed, Islam occupies a conspicuously small portion of his work, and he goes little beyond acknowledging that Islam is a monotheistic faith based on the idea that there is only one God, and that He has no partners with whom to share His divinity.[71]

He himself attributed this to the inherent simplicity of Islam. He sardonically observed that Islam is uniquely simple to understand because it lacks a priesthood, philosophy, or intricate moral code. He feels that Islam's message of equality for people of all races and colors, which aids in the development of a social structure based on justice, equality, and fraternity, embeds the religion's practicality.

While Vivekananda sought to present Hinduism as a "spiritual" hobby for Western elite dilettantes, alongside Buddhism and Christianity, his chief concern with regard to Islam was to prevent the mass conversion of Hindus to the religion, which was

[70] Ibid., 2-3.
[71] Swami Nikhilananda, *Vivekanand*, 27.

mainly driven by the rigid caste system and the professed egalitarianism of Islam. Vivekananda observed that Muslims claimed to accept converted people without any difference (i.e., between converts and people born and raised as Muslims), which he viewed as a deceitful, claiming that according to Muslims, freshly converted "American Indians" would be welcome to eat with even the Sultan of the Turks, which he viewed as impossible.[72] Conversely, Vivekananda claimed that Muslims were a nation of bigoted throat-slitters, and lower caste and untouchable people would be best advised to remain in their place:

> Mohammadans talk of universal brotherhood, but what comes out of reality? … Why, anyone who is not a Muslim will not be allowed to join this fraternity; instead, they will probably have their neck sliced.[73]

He also argues that Islamic sectarian hostility and conflict between the Shia and Sunni sects belie claims of brotherhood. Vivekananda was primarily irritated by the widespread conversion of lower Hindu classes—who were severely discriminated against in society due to their caste—to Islam as a means of escaping caste prejudice. He criticized Islam in an attempt to persuade his fellow Hindus that converting to Islam would not free them from caste and sectarian hierarchies.[74]

Only a small percentage of Vivekananda's "Complete Works" contain viewpoints on Islam itself, and most of them are dominated by his rejection of Islamic philosophy and its idea of racial equality. To construct an argument that Islam logically condemns Hindu idolatry, he views Islamic ideas as a collection of inconsistencies, considering that the Muslims worship the Kaabah as an idol, prostrating to it five times a day and kissing the black stone during

[72] Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, Vedanta Spiritual Library Kolkata| www.celextel.org, Volume-2, 166.
[73] Nosheen Zaheer, "Vivekananda's Views on Christianity and Islam," *Rahat-ul-Quloob* 1, no. 1 (January–June 2017): 1–20.
[74] Ibid., 162.

the Hajj. Additionally, he equated Muslim veneration of saints and prophets with Hindu forms of "idolatry."[75]

Vivekananda was perplexed by the implications of the Hindu caste system, and its negative image set alongside contemporary religions which at least posited human equality in their doctrines, if not in practice (i.e., Christianity, Buddhism, and Islam). Vivekananda attempted to downplay the violent actions of Hindus and the abuse of lower castes in addition to the inability of Hindu society to unite, due to class and social divisions. Additionally, he was fond of the orientalist trope that Islam was forcibly spread by the sword, claiming that Muslim despotism, not bravery, had enabled them to triumph over the superior Hindus.[76] Needless to say, this view is not respected among contemporary historical scholarship, which acknowledges that the Islamic religion (as opposed to political power) was already widespread in the Indian Ocean maritime civilizations long before political and military forces arrived in Sindh. Furthermore, his own existence and identity were a testament that Hindus had not been forcibly converted to Islam under centuries of Indian Muslim governance.[77]

Although he was critical of Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam, it is clear from comparing the severity of his attacks on these three religions that he acknowledges Buddhism as a complementary aspect of Hinduism. Despite treating Christ as a pure spirit, he disavows Christian dogma, rites, missionary work, and Western civilization (this view was popular among Western theosophists and other orientalist dilettantes interested in "Wisdom of the East"). His criticism of Islam, Islamic teachings, rituals, and proselytization was complemented by his ad hominem attacks on the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), calculated to inflame Muslim-Hindu conflict among Indians.

In his polemic against the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), Vivekananda attempted to smear him as an opportunist and worldly

[75] Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, 21-22.

[76] Yashodharma, Rkm Propagating the Opposite of What Vivekananda and Ramakrishna Had Said Call to the Rank and File at Rkm! Stand up and Uphold the Truth (Mumbai: Maanoj Rakhit, 2013), 46.

[77] *South Asian Islam*, 85-86.

figure concerned with kingship, describing the visitation of Gabriel as "dreams and visions" rather than revelation. However, unlike Western polemics against the Prophet (ﷺ), Vivekananda considered them to be consequences of spiritual preparation (e.g., extensive prayers, seclusions, and fasts). Vivekananda sought to characterize this as the spiritual states attainable by conventional yogis, which more enlightened souls could receive from birth, such as Krishna, Buddha, and Christ. He considered the Ascension of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) to be a superstition, and did not consider him to be a Vedantist alongside Buddha and Christ.[78]

Vivekananda's speculations were based on the concept that Islam arose as a reaction against "the sin, idolatry and mock worship, superstitious and human sacrifices, and so on" of seventh-century Arabia, but that it was not an enlightened tradition comparable to Hinduism, Buddhism, or even Christianity. He claimed that Muslims had a far greater degree of animosity against Hinduism than Jews and Christians, and that this was ultimately rooted in core tenets of Islam, and he presented the familiar anti-Islamic tropes of Muslim savages cutting non-Muslims' heads of a whim to attain sensual pleasures in the Hereafter. In Vivekananda's words:

> Muhammad advocated a two-pronged approach. He explained to Muslims that murdering non-Muslims is both a genuine act of worship to Allah and a gesture of charity towards them. Allah has so offered these men direct access to heaven and all the sensual pleasures they could desire with stunning women who are unaffected by pregnancy or ageing. Muslims have killed many non-Muslims because of this belief.[79]

As with his other bigoted polemics against Islam, this was populist propaganda designed to stoke Hindu-Muslim animosities. Vivekananda's speeches convey the idea that Muhammad (ﷺ) alone has the power to determine the fate of unbelievers, ignoring the Islamic precept that Allah (ﷻ) is omnipotent and that Muhammad (ﷺ) just delivered the truth that Allah (ﷻ) had given him. His claim

[78] Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, 213.
[79] Ibid.,158.

that "ignorant persons...dare to say that others are entirely wrong, and they alone are right" reflected his view of Muhammad (ﷺ)'s authority. They start fighting whenever someone opposes them. They claim that if a man does not share their beliefs, as Muhammad (ﷺ) did, they will engage in combat. Vivekananda thus holds Muhammad (ﷺ) accountable for giving his nation (Muslims) a barbaric and intolerable name, which they could be disabused of if only they would recant and submit to Hindu domination (and revert to their lower caste status). [80]

Vivekananda's inflammatory and prejudiced portrayal of Islam and disparagement of Christianity (notwithstanding his sympathetic approach to "Christ" himself) is partly a reaction due to Hinduism's precarious existence among other religions like Islam and Christianity. With regard to the latter, Hinduism had a shameful reputation among Christian imperialist elites due to *suttee*, the caste system, and other Hindu customs, while Islam was attracting converts seeking to escape from the humiliations of the caste system. However, he was aware of the need for Hindu-Muslim cooperation in order to overthrow British colonial domination, as expressed in his saying that:

> the only hope for our motherland is a junction of the two great systems, Hinduism and Islam-Vedanta brain and Islam body. With the body of Islam and the brain of Vedanta, I envision the ideal India of the future emerging from this turmoil and conflict, magnificent and unbeatable.[81]

Naturally his view of a Hindu brain (potentially incorporating some kind of Hindu interpretation of Islam) with Muslim brawn driving India's future was a novel reiteration of the caste system, with Hindu Brahman brain and Muslim Shudra brawn in a united, independent India. He also sought to harness slogans of equality to the "body" aspect (i.e., Muslims and lower castes equally subjugated to the

[80] Ibid.

[81] Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, 231; CXLII Friend – Letters of Swami Vivekananda to Mohammed Sarfaraz Husain of Naini Tal, Almora on 10th June, 1898.

Hindu elite). He thus sought to harness Islamic egalitarianism to the service of otherwise effete Hindu domination:

> Despite our grand philosophy, you note our weakness in practice; but there You see the greatness of the Mohammedan beyond other races, showing itself in equality, perfect equality regardless of race or colour.[82]

10.2 Arvind Sharma (b. 1940)

A more enlightened and conciliatory view of Islam has been offered by some contemporary Hindus, diverging from the colonial-era Hindu polemics of Vivekananda and the modern political jingoism of the Hindutva supremacist movement. Prof. Arvind Sharma argues that common sense entails a respectful attitude toward world religions and their followers in the modern world, citing Judaism's monotheism and ethnic exclusivity, which does not seek to proselytize (like Hinduism), in contrast to Christian evangelical ardor that has profoundly shaped Indian communal relations over the last two centuries. While Christian proselytizing has always been unwelcoming for Indian Hindus (as noted above with regard to Vivekananda), the Christian concept of the Trinity has been more familiar to the Hindu belief system than the more austere monotheism of Judaism and Islam. Sharma describes how, while Muslims venerate the Prophet, somewhat similar to Christ in Christianity, the former is definitively *not* considered to be a divine incarnation, which is contrary to what Sharma considers to be the general tendency of Indian religions. For instance, he cites that while Buddha purportedly did not "believe in God," he was nevertheless venerated as a divine being by Buddhists, which is analogous to the position of Christ for Christians.

Sharma argues that Hindu doctrines urge maximum tolerance for other religions and urges Hindus to seek conciliatory interpretations of other faith traditions. This is consistent with the Hindu-Buddhist doctrine of *anatta*, which states that all created ephemera, including human beings, are in one sense inconsequential. Sharma interprets this doctrine thus: if one views oneself as a non-

[82] Ibid., 108, 166, 238.

ego, to the maximum extent possible, it is inconsistent to adopt a partisan preference for one's own particular religious identity. Rather, one should be compassionate to all things, including followers of other religions. Sharma also cites the Hindu offshoot of Jainism, with its *anekāntavāda* doctrine, which posits that the complicated nature of the world should make people avoid judging others.[83]

In this sense, Sharma considers that Sikhism represents an archetypically Hindu formation in balancing Hindu and Islamic constituents in a cohesive religious tradition, analogous to the Confucian "Doctrine of the Mean" in Chinese tradition.

While Sharma is fundamentally averse to monotheism, considering it totalitarian and equivalent to communism in its political impacts, he argues that a delicate and accommodative balance is required of Hindus and indeed everyone in modern societies.

Sharma considers the salient characteristic of Islam to be the love Muslims bear toward the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), and considers that Hindus ignoring this sensibility can be inflammatory. According to Sharma, the crisis of modern relations between Hindus and Muslims is exemplified by the Nupur Sharma issue, which can potentially be leveraged to improve relations. After a Shiva-linga was purportedly discovered in the Gyanvapi Mosque, Varanasi, some Hindu populists insulted the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ).

Sharma observed that problematic texts and concepts for modern people can be found in all religions, including Hinduism, with parallels between the marriage of Aisha and Sita, the wife of Rama. Additionally, the *Puranas* are replete with narrations of Hindu gods engaging in activities illegal under modern Indian laws, and even to Hindutva sensibilities. Consequently, Sharma argues that the importance for Hindus is to consider what holy figures bid their votives to do ("*na devacaritam caret ... devakathitam caret*"). He argues that even modern luminaries such as Einstein, Gandhi, and President Kennedy offered important lessons, even if we might not agree with aspects of their personal, private lives.

---

[83] https://www.firstpost.com/opinion/dharma-files-the-delicate-nature-of-different-religions-12626702.html

Sharma notes that using Islamic religious texts to stir trouble between Muslims and Hindus for modern political entrepreneurialism is disingenuous as well as dangerous, and that the implications of the Sunnah are no different from those of Hindu texts, and that followers of great religions – including Islam and Hinduism – must interpret their texts in alignment with contemporary needs. He cites the example that the Hindu saint Vinoba Bhave cited that Shivaji, a Maratha lord, who built many castles, but a contemporary understanding of this would look to build missile centers or airfields, as traditional castles are useless in modern warfare. Similarly, he argues that polygamy can be understood in the same context of meeting the needs of widows after the battle of Uhud.

Sharma argues that the Prophet Mohammed (ﷺ) is undoubtedly the founder of a great world religion, who for Muslims is the conveyor of God's words, and in comparison, to this profound, transcendent belief, the particularities of personal issues of modern societal mores are inconsequential. While for Muslims the Prophet (ﷺ) is the exemplar for all of humanity, for Hindus he is a notable figure who should be treated with appropriate respect, even though Hindus might not agree with all (or indeed any) of the tenets of Islam (although Hinduism has historically been an inclusive, conciliatory faith tradition).[84]

11. Conclusion

This paper has presented a summary of the salient characteristics of Islamic and Hindu Creationism. It has highlighted cross-cultural similarities and contrasts between two different but overlapping worldviews in terms of their doctrinal and scriptural beliefs. It has also demonstrated the practical ecumenism of traditional Muslim approaches toward this issue, and the inherent expansiveness in Hindu philosophy, which can serve as a framework for the development of harmonious relations between Muslim and Hindu civilizations, both of which consider human beings to be noble creatures of transcendent origin with sacred souls, with concomitant

[84] https://bharatabharati.in/2022/07/04/understanding-islam-in-the-light-of-hinduism-arvind-sharma/

rights (e.g., to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness). It is hoped that this paper can provide a primer for people to grasp a basic understanding of the core ontological implications and potentials of Islam and Hinduism, which can serve as a basis to continue studies into the future of inter-civilizational development and harmony, as well as to shape contemporary socio-economic and political discourse.

THE SENSE OF JUSTICE AND ITS MORAL SIGNIFICANCE IN MAWLANA JALAL AL-DIN MUHAMMAD RUMI'S THOUGHT

Muhammet Caner Ilgaroglu[1]
Arief S. Arman[2]

Abstract

This article analyses the moral significance of the sense of justice in the thought of Mawlana Jalal al-Din Rumi (d. 1273). Through a systematic close reading and hermeneutical analysis of Rumi's principal works, Mathnawī and Fīhi Mā Fīh, it explores the individual, social, and metaphysical dimensions of justice within his moral philosophy. Rumi does not perceive justice merely as a legal or social principle but as a divine moral faculty inherent in human nature. The findings reveal that the sense of justice plays a pivotal role in grasping moral principles, cultivating ethical character, maintaining social harmony, and achieving spiritual proximity to the Divine. Employing metaphors such as the "scale" (mīzān) and the "mirror of the heart (gönül),"[3] *Rumi suggests that purifying the soul (nafs) from desires and passions activates this innate moral sense. Ultimately, Rumi presents justice as a divine mechanism that reflects moral balance, wisdom, and virtuous action. By highlighting the sense of justice as an internalized metaphysical virtue that*

[1] Associate Professor,Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, Birgivi Faculty of Divinity, Ege University, Izmir, Türkiye and Visiting Scholar at SOAS University of London.

[2] Research Fellow, Peace, Dialogue & Xenophobia Studies (PEDIXS) Centre at the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) and Associate Member of the University of Malaya Centre for Civilizational Dialogue (UMCCD), Kuala Lumpur.

[3] As a thinker who lived in Anatolia and wrote in Persian, Mawlānā's use of language was reshaped by the profound meaning-world of the culture in which he lived. The term "دل" (dil), which he used in his works to denote the metaphysical center of the human soul, came to be understood and interpreted within the Anatolian context as *gönül*—a concept with a more original and profound semantic depth in the local cultural landscape.

transcends legal norms, this study offers a novel contribution to contemporary Islamic moral philosophy.

Keywords: Islamic Philosophy, Philosophy of Emotion, Rumi, *Mathnawī*, Morality, Justice, Sense of Justice.

1. Theoretical Foundations

Justice, the central concept of our study, is a fundamental notion that encompasses all dimensions of human existence. Generally known as a value, a virtue, a sense and a legal concept that humanity continuously pursues, justice refers to the transformation of that which is disorderly, excessive, evil, imbalanced, incompatible, and/or lacking, into a state of balance, completeness, correctness, goodness, harmony, and moderation.[4] As one of the core concepts in philosophical and religious thought, justice has been comprehensively examined throughout history from a diverse range of perspectives – legal, moral, and political. As a philosophical concept, justice is understood as an abstract and intellectual idea, while in law it is realized through legislation, while in ethics it manifests as moderation. Its constitutive concepts can be identified as balance, harmony, and order, whereas its practical aspects pertain to the distribution of rights, equal treatment, and the establishment of social order.[5]

The first systematic classification of justice can be attributed to Aristotle (d. 322 BCE), though it is not possible to consider him independently from Plato (d. 347 BCE) and earlier Pre-Socratic philosophers. After an extensive inquiry, Plato defines justice—whether in the structure of the soul or the state—as *each part being in its most appropriate position and performing its most suitable function*. However, unlike Aristotle, Plato does not provide a clear taxonomy of the types of justice. It is difficult to find a detailed and concrete categorization of justice in his thought.[6]

[4] Anil Cecen, *Adalet Kavramı* (Istanbul: Gundogan Publishing, 1993), 186.
[5] Yuksel Sengul, *Platon ve Fârâbî'de Adalet Kavramı* (Ankara: Iksad Publishing, 2022), 3-4.
[6] See Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. David Ross (Oxford: Oxford

Islamic thought, on the other hand, offers a broader perspective on the nature and manifestations of justice, through the disciplines of ethics, philosophy, *kalām*, *taṣawwuf*[7], *fiqh*, and *hadith* studies. In the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth literature, justice signifies balance, equality, order, piety, judgement in accordance with truth, proportionality, impartiality, and truthfulness.[8] Justice can only be realized through adherence to *haqq*, an objective concept and a fixed principle of law.[9] The fact that the Qur'ān mentions justice prior to goodness[10] is significant, as it indicates that no act of goodness devoid of justice can acquire true moral value. Moreover, references to the physiological and aesthetic harmony of the human body;[11] the balance and harmony of the spiritual self;[12] and the spiritual equilibrium and ethical perfection attained through obedience to moral laws,[13] as well as the notion of a "middle nation",[14] all reflect the concept of justice.[15]

In Islamic thought, justice is conceived as the projection of harmony and balance between existence, knowledge, and value. It is understood, in its broadest sense, as a person's knowledge of their position within the universe and their connection with the Creator in accordance with truth, and their action in line with this knowledge.[16] Thus, a human being, regarded as a metaphysical/theological as well as a historical/social being, is seen as a balanced being who actualizes justice through action and embodies it in the external

University Press, 2009); Plato, *The Republic*, trans. G. M. A. Grube, rev. C. D. C. Reeve (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1997).

[7] Often translated into English as 'purification of the heart.'

[8] Mustafa Cagrici, "Adâlet," in *Islamic Encyclopedia*, vol. 1 (Ankara: Turkish Religious Foundation, 1988), 341–343.

[9] Qur'ān, *al-A'rāf* 7:159, 181.

[10] Qur'ān, *al-Naḥl* 16:90.

[11] Qur'ān, *al-Infiṭār* 82: 7–8.

[12] Qur'ān, *al-Tīn* 95: 4; *al-Shams* 91: 7.

[13] Qur'ān, *al-Shūrā* 42: 15.

[14] Qur'ān, *al-Baqarah* 2: 143.

[15] Cagrici, "Adâlet," 341343.

[16] Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, *Prolegomena to the Metaphysics of Islam: An Exposition of the Fundamental Elements of the Worldview of Islam* (Kuala Lumpur: ISTAC, 1995), 36–58.

world.[17] Within Islamic philosophy specifically, the concept of justice appears as a comprehensive value in the ethical thought of Ibn Miskawayh (d. 932), while in the works of al-Farabi (d. 950) and Ibn Sina (d. 1037), it is meaningful in terms of its role in preserving cosmic balance and social harmony.[18] In the field of *kalām*, Kadi Abd al-Jabbar (d. 1025), a major Muʿtazilī theologian, defines justice as God's obligation to act according to reason and moral order, and considers human beings responsible moral agents precisely because they are endowed with reason and volition.[19]

In modern Western thought, justice has been addressed predominantly through political philosophy, social contract theory, and liberal ethics. Philosophers like Immanuel Kant (d. 1804) defined justice through the lens of rational autonomy and universal law (Kant, 1996). John Stuart Mill (d. 1873) framed justice in terms of utility and social well-being, linking it to collective happiness.[20] In the 20th century, John Rawls (d. 2002) developed a theory of justice based on fairness, proposing the "original position" and "veil of ignorance" as foundational constructs for evaluating just principles.[21] Meanwhile, Robert Nozick (d. 2002)'s libertarian critique emphasized individual rights and minimal state interference.[22] These approaches, although influential, often remain within the bounds of legalism, rational contract, and distributive ethics.

However, beyond these normative and institutional frameworks, recent scholarship has increasingly turned to a more internalized and experiential dimension of justice: the sense of

[17] Muhammet Caner Ilgaroglu, *Ahlak Felsefesi Açısından Duygu-Değer İlişkisi* (Istanbul: HiperBook, 2020), 39–57.

[18] See al-Farabi, *On the Perfect State: Abū Naṣr al-Farabi's Mabādiʾ ārāʾ ahl al-madīna al-fāḍila*, trans. and ed. Richard Walzer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985); Ibn Miskawayh, *Tahzîb el-Ahlâk*, ed. Hasan Temim (Beirut, 1398 AH); Ibn Sīnā, *The Book of Healing (Kitāb al-Shifāʾ)*, trans. Michael E. Marmura (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 2001).

[19] See Kadi Abd al-Jabbar, *Sharḥ al-Uṣūl al-Khamsa* (Cairo: Maktabat Wahba, 1965).

[20] See John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism* (London: Parker, Son, and Bourn, 1863).

[21] See John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971).

[22] See Robert Nozick, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* (New York: Basic Books, 1974).

justice. For instance, Dubber treats the sense of justice as a cognitive and emotional faculty at the individual and societal levels, arguing that this faculty plays a central role particularly in judicial decision-making processes.[23] However, this work overlooks the role of the sense of justice in inner transformation, the formation of conscience, and moral decision-making. Similarly, Folger analyses the sense of justice based on the belief that people should receive what they deserve and deserve what they receive, yet neglects its moral dimension.[24] This approach reduces the sense of justice to a reward-punishment mechanism and unfortunately, disregards its deeper ethical meaning.

Among these works, the one most closely aligned with ours is Cline's article. Cline defines the sense of justice as the capacity to perceive and feel justice, and offers a comparative analysis between Rawls's theory of justice and Confucian thought.[25] However, his study too does not delve into the metaphysical and ethical dimensions of the sense of justice, instead focusing on the normative differences between theoretical frameworks. John Rawls's seminal article "The Sense of Justice" defines the sense of justice as a moral faculty enabling social cooperation, emphasizing the individual's voluntary commitment to just principles.[26] However, Rawls's approach considers the sense of justice merely as an internal motivation aligned with the principles of the "social contract", excluding its transcendental, cosmic, or spiritual dimensions. Dennis Krebs's study, "The Evolution of a Sense of Justice", attempts to explain the sense of justice within the context of evolutionary biology and social psychology, discussing how this capacity may have developed as an evolutionary advantage.[27] Yet this approach too disregards the

[23] See Markus Dirk Dubber, *The Sense of Justice: Empathy in Law and Punishment* (New York: New York University Press, 2006).
[24] See Robert G. Folger, *The Sense of Injustice: Social Psychological Perspectives* (New York: Springer, 1983).
[25] See Erin M. Cline, *Confucius, Rawls, and the Sense of Justice* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013).
[26] John Rawls, "The Sense of Justice," in *Readings in Social and Political Philosophy*, ed. Alvin I. Goldman (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1975), 199–224.
[27] Dennis L. Krebs, "The Evolution of a Sense of Justice," in *The Handbook of*

ethical, metaphysical, and spiritual foundations of the sense of justice, framing it solely as a product of biological and pragmatic processes.

While these contemporary approaches offer valuable insights, they fall short in addressing the deeper ethical and metaphysical layers of justice. It is precisely in this regard that Rumi's philosophy offers a profound alternative.

Indeed, the metaphysical dimensions of justice—particularly its status as an intrinsic value enabling the perception of moral truths and the formation of conscience, its function as an internal guide shaping one's inner world, and its role in directing individuals towards moral perfection—are addressed in the most original, systematic, and profound manner by one of the towering figures of Islamic thought: Mawlana Jalal al-Din Muhammad Rumi (d. 1273). Contrary to classical juridical approaches, Rumi does not regard justice merely as a social or institutional mechanism for regulating rights and relationships; rather, he considers it an expression of divine order and a moral faculty that governs both individual transformation and the structure of the cosmos. His metaphors, such as the "scales" (*mīzān*) and the "mirror of the heart" (*qalb*/*gönül*), illustrate that purifying the human *nafs* from desires and passions is a prerequisite for the true manifestation of justice.[28] In this regard, Rumi's concept of justice shares notable affinities and contrasts with other prominent Islamic scholars.

Al-Farabi views justice primarily as a principle of cosmic and social harmony, essential to maintaining the hierarchical order of the virtuous city; yet his emphasis is more on structural rationality than on inner emotional intuition.[29] In contrast, al-Ghazali (d. 1111) emphasizes the purification of the soul (*tazkiyat al-nafs*) and the

---

Evolutionary Psychology, ed. David M. Buss (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2005), 405–446.

[28] Reynold A. Nicholson, *The Mathnawī of Jalāluddīn Rūmī: Edited from the Oldest Manuscripts Available, with Critical Notes, Translation & Commentary*, vol. I (London: Messrs. Luzac & Co., 1925–1940), 3580. All citations from the *Mathnawī* are derived from Reynold A. Nicholson's critical edition and translation, *The Mathnawī of Jalāluddīn Rumi: Edited from the Oldest Manuscripts Available, with Critical Notes, Translation & Commentary*, London: Messrs. Luzac & Co., 1925-1940, vol. I-VI.

[29] See al-Farabi, *On the Perfect State*.

cleansing of the heart as prerequisites for perceiving truth and moral insight—ideas which resonate deeply with Rumi's poetic expressions. However, al-Ghazali's tone remains more theological and didactic.[30]

Ibn Miskawayh, in his ethical treatise *Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq*, conceptualizes justice as the balanced harmony of the soul's faculties, achieved through reason and moderation—much like Rumi, but with a greater reliance on Hellenistic rational ethics.[31] On the other hand, Ibn Arabi (d. 1240) approaches justice ontologically, identifying it with the divine name *al-ʿAdl* and interpreting it as the proper manifestation of each being according to its *haqq* (truth/right). It is of interest to note that the metaphysical alignment between *haqq* and justice is profoundly echoed in Rumi's own integration of cosmic order, moral perception, and divine love.[32]

While these scholars offer distinct lenses—ranging from rational-political to mystical-metaphysical—Rumi's integrative synthesis uniquely bridges spiritual insight with moral reasoning.

Building on these comparative insights, the following section outlines the objectives and questions guiding this study.

This study aims to fill a significant gap in the literature by focusing on Rumi's thought through textual analyses and philosophical interpretation, arguing that justice transcends legal frameworks and manifests as an intrinsic sense of value. This sense emerges as a reflection of divine order within human nature. The paper seeks to answer the following key questions:

I. How does Rumi define justice?
II. How does he position justice within the relationship between human beings, the universe, and God?
III. What role does he attribute to the sense of justice in the process of understanding, attaining, and actualizing moral values?

By addressing these questions, this research explores how

[30] See al-Ghazali, *Iḥyāʾ ʿUlūm al-Dīn* (Beirut: Dār al-Maʿrifah, 2004).
[31] See Ibn Miskawayh, *Tahzīb al-Akhlāq*, ed. Hasan Temim (Beirut, 1398 AH).
[32] See Ibn Arabi, *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam (The Bezels of Wisdom)*, ed. Afifi Abd al-Rahman (Cairo: Dār al-Kitāb al-ʿArabī, 1980).

Rumi's conception of justice integrates with moral values and ethical conduct, situating it within a broader philosophical and theological discourse. In doing so, we intend to contribute to a deeper understanding of Rumi's ethical thought, as well as to provide significant insights into contemporary discussions on the universality of (the sense of) justice as a moral principle.

2. Human Nature and Justice

The human being is a complete entity, possessing capacities for reasoning, sensing, and feeling. These inseparable qualities enable the human being to be a self-conscious entity. Thus, the human being becomes a multidimensional unity—body, mind, and emotions. Moral philosophy and, more recently, the philosophy of emotions, highlight this multidimensionality, defining the human being as a social entity that, through reason and emotion, transcends nature, feels, knows, acts, and produces values.[33]

For the human being, emotions are not merely reflexive mechanisms; rather, they are functional and cognitive attributes through which one understands oneself, the universe, nature, matter, individuals, societies, and the concepts of good and evil—distinguishing what is valuable from what is not. Emotions help humans engage with phenomena and events while navigating practical life. They play a critical role in decision-making processes, intentions, orientations, and choices. They are dynamic, subjective sensations and impressions, intrinsic to these processes.[34] Furthermore, emotions serve as motivating forces that inspire action, shape evaluations of the past, present, and future, and drive human agency.[35]

The human being exists within two intertwined realms: the material and natural world, and the spiritual-intellectual world of values. One attains spiritual-intellectual existence by constructing a world of values encompassing philosophy, science, religion, art, law,

[33] Paul Tillich, *Morality and Beyond* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), 18-19.
[34] Peter Goldie, *The Emotions: A Philosophical Exploration* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), 12.
[35] Robert M. Gordon, *The Structure of Emotions* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 11.

and ethics. The human being forms judgements—good and evil, beauty and ugliness, truth and falsehood, justice and injustice, balance and imbalance—through emotions and affective states at every stage of the thought process. Even in directly cognitive activities, such as sensation, perception, and thinking, the human being engages with epistemic emotions such as curiosity, wonder, and admiration.[36] Thus, the human being possesses an intellectual methodology that progresses through the unity of reason and emotion, which are essential attributes of its existential structure, within a historical existence that evolves and transforms in this methodological cycle.

One of the most distinctive characteristics of the human being is its inherent incompleteness—a needy entity constantly seeking self- completion. As such, and under the influence of aspirations, desires, and emotions, one endeavors towards self-realization.[37] From this perspective, the human being is, by nature, a seeker of what is lacking within oneself—constantly searching for balance, completion, harmony, order, and wholeness. This quest extends beyond one's own existence and body, leading to the pursuit of meaning and the formation of metaphysical constructs. Since the sense of completeness, harmony, and order that humans desire is not attainable within their own nature, they seek to fulfil it in the objects and entities toward which they turn.

Thus, the human being attempts to *compensate for this existential deficiency through the idea of justice*. One seeks justice in every event, phenomenon, and object. In this regard, justice—as an aspiration, an ideal, and value judgement—fundamentally relies on an internally ingrained sense of value and manifests in social interactions. The sense of justice, innate in every human being, develops over time and is a uniquely human trait. At times, it appears

[36] Paul Ekman, "All Emotions are Basic," in *The Nature of Emotion: Fundamental Questions*, ed. Paul Ekman and Richard J. Davidson (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 16.
[37] Hilmi Ziya Ulken, *Aşk Ahlakı (The Ethics of Love)* (Istanbul: Türkiye Is Bankasi Publishing, 2012).

as resistance to injustice, at others, as a rebellion against devaluation.[38]

Moreover, the balance in what is just—its completeness, being neither excessive nor deficient—provides the human being a sense of fulfilment, both spiritually and physically, compensating for existential deficiencies. For these reasons, the human being, in seeking truth, order, harmony, and balance, arrives at moral values that motivate actions through their most fundamental innate emotion—the sense of justice. Through reactive emotions, particularly love, the human being engages with these values, transforming them into intentions, attitudes, and contingent actions.[39]

Considering inner peace as one of the fundamental outcomes of human morality, it becomes evident that the human being cannot attain inner harmony in any phenomenon where justice is absent. The sense of justice, much like a spirit level used by a mason, serves as an indispensable instrument through which the human being constructs their moral framework. Justice is an unavoidable measure—one cannot refrain from using it as a guiding principle. This suggests that the sense of justice is an inherent sense of value instilled in humans. As nothing can be deemed "good" or "valuable" unless justice is ensured, we can assert that this intrinsic sense of value is, in essence, the sense of justice itself.[40]

With this power, the human being ascends to the boundaries of love through affection, devotion, and attachment, ultimately achieving union with God. Indeed, those who succeed in uniting with God are the ones who have attained the secret of humanity.[41]

By nature, humans attribute both goodness and beauty to what is just. The goodness in justice stems from its balance and the preservation of rights, while its beauty lies in its harmony and unifying qualities. Together, these attributes form the sense of justice.

---

[38] Amartya Sen, *The Idea of Justice* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011), 4-5.

[39] John Deigh, *From Psychology to Morality* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 57.

[40] Ilgaroglu, *Ahlak Felsefesi Açısından Duygu-Değer İlişkisi*, 48.

[41] Nurettin Topcu, *İslam ve İnsan: Mevlânâ ve Tasavvuf* (Istanbul: Dergah Publishing, 2002), 117.

Through the perception of justice, the human being generates emotional responses rooted in conscience, such as moral acceptance, moral disgust, and hatred. This alone demonstrates that justice, as one of the most fundamental concepts of morality, cannot merely remain theoretical; rather, there exists an inherent 'tugging' within humans that recognizes it.

Deep within every person's conscience lies a sense of justice. This emotion, which can also be referred to as the sense of *haqq* (the sense of right), is an intrinsic sense that demands balance, fairness, harmony, appropriateness, and righteousness. It perceives these qualities in its object intuitively and directly. When confronted with a given situation in life, a person reacts based on the value judgement shaped by this sense of justice. This mode of judgement is particularly emphasized in the ethical perspectives of Aristotle and the Islamic philosophers who followed in his tradition. The sense of justice, with its demand for moderation, fosters temperance in emotional states, laying the groundwork for the virtue of prudence (*phronesis/ta 'aqqul*). From this perspective, justice can be understood as an active process aimed at correcting what causes injustice or preventing such a sense from arising.[42]

The sense of justice is an innate faculty that refers to moral balance. It is the fundamental sense of value that enables a person to intuitively perceive the golden ratio of moral conduct. Just like nature, the human being is a creation of balance and harmony. Accordingly, one perceives as valuable and approves intentions, attitudes, and actions that align with one's inner harmony. Just as the human body maintains health through a delicate equilibrium, a stable temperature, and the harmonious functioning of organs, the human's social self also seeks a balanced and harmonious relationship with

[42] See John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971); Al-Farabi, *On the Perfect State: Abū Naṣr al-Farabi's Mabādiʾ ārāʾ ahl al-madīna al-fāḍila*, trans. and ed. Richard Walzer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985); Paul Ricoeur, *The Just*, trans. David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000); Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *The Heart of Islam: Enduring Values for Humanity* (New York: HarperOne, 2002); Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. David Ross (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

society, both for one's own existence and for the requirements of the community.

In this context, Rumi, in particular, speaks of the journey of self-awareness and self-discovery that a human being must undertake, guided by philosophical inquiry. He emphasizes that one should begin this journey by contemplating fundamental philosophical questions, such as: Who am I? What elements exist within me? What am I doing, and what is my purpose? When I die and stand before God, how will I account for my actions?

Throughout this process, an individual should adopt a universal understanding of love, which, as Rumi asserts, is guided by the principle of tolerance rooted in the sense of justice, embracing all people equally.[43] Rumi contends that tolerance entails an acceptance that perceives goodness in all things, consents without complaint, and remains content with what is. Through such tolerance, his teachings reflect equality in love, rejecting distinctions based on class, religion, or language. The inclination to embrace all beings created by God with His divine greatness forms the central axis of his thought. As the eminent sage declares:

> To complain about creation is to complain about the Creator[44]

Where love is present, injustice, imbalance, and partiality are absent; everything in the universe deserves equal attention, imbued with a sincere and harmonious presence. This universal tolerance, grounded in love for God, is unconditional and selfless, embodying respect, compassion, and care for others. Rumi argues that individuals must reflect the inherent love within themselves onto every aspect of the

[43] Hussaini, Sayed Hassan. "Akhlaq." In "Religious Wisdom and Perennial Philosophy: East and West." *Philosophy, Culture, and Traditions* 8 (2012): 170–172. https://doi.org/10.5840/pct2012814; Sertdemir, Ilknur. "Sevgi Anlayışında Düşünsel Ayrımlar: Mevlânâ ile Konfuçyüs Öğretilerinde İnsanlık ve Ahlak İlişkisi." *FLSF (Journal of Philosophy and Social Sciences)* 31 (Spring 2021): 369; Affan, Moh. Husnul. "Tolerance Based on Love in Maulana Jalāl al-Dīn Rumi's Thought." *Sunan Kalijaga: International Journal of Islamic Civilization* 7, no. 1 (2024): 112–114. https://doi.org/10.14421/skijic.v7i1.2905.

[44] Jalal al-Din Rumi, *Mektûbât (The Letters)*, trans. Abdulbaki Gölpınarlı (Istanbul: Inkılap and Aka Bookstores, 1963), 136.

world–recognizing it as a manifestation of divine wisdom. He further insists that moral actions should be guided by respect, avoiding breaking hearts, harboring resentment, or holding grudges.

Having clarified the moral role of love, Rumi then turns to the structural symbolism of the heart and divine justice. Rumi further underscores the importance and function of emotions through the concept of love, implicitly asserting that the sense of justice—the ability to distinguish good from evil, beauty from ugliness, and truth from falsehood—is an intrinsic value within human nature:

> By love, bitter things become sweet; by love, pieces of copper become golden. By love, dregs become clear; by love, wounds become healing. By love, the dead is made living; by love, the king is made a slave. This love, moreover, is the result of knowledge: Who (ever) sat in foolishness on such a throne?[45]

At the core of Rumi's thought lies his conception of the human being, shaped by the principle of *wahdat al-wujūd.*[46] According to Ahmad Murad Merican, who is based at the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC-IIUM) Kuala Lumpur, the ocean referred to by Rumi symbolizes *Tawhīd* (Divine Unity), while the drop of water represents the human soul, which is inevitably drawn back to its Source.[47] Rumi asserts that the human being is the heart of the universe and the very reason for the existence of all beings. In his view, without human existence, neither truth, nor love, nor existence itself would be possible. Within his philosophy, the human being stands as the ultimate entity that encompasses all of creation and imparts meaning to it.[48] This teleological argument is one that differs from European Existentialists who argue that

[45] Nicholson, *The Mathnawī of Jalāluddīn Rūmī*, vol. II, 1525-1530.
[46] William Chittick, "Rumi and *Waḥdat al-Wujūd,*" in *Poetry and Mysticism in Islam: The Heritage of Rumi*, ed. Amin Banani, Richard Hovannisian, and Georges Sabagh (Harvard University: Divinity School, 1994), 92.
[47] Ahmad Murad Merican, "Reproducing the Humanities: Mevlana Rumi's Corpus in Restructuring the Study of Man and Society," *Al-Shajarah* 25, no. 1 (2020): 41, https://doi.org/10.31436/shajarah.v25i1.1031.
[48] Bilal Kuspinar, "Mawlana Rumi's Treatment of Human Nature," *Jurnal Qalbu* 4, no. 2 (December 2017): 36.

existence precedes essence.[49] Contrary to the philosophical notion that the human is the microcosm (*al-ʻālam al-asghar*) and the universe is the macrocosm, Rumi asserts that, in reality, the human is the macrocosm (*al-ʻālam al-akbar*). He argues that the human being integrates all forms of creation, knowledge, and value within itself.[50] According to Rumi, the universe exists for the perfection of the human soul. No matter how vast the physical universe may be, it remains finite and transient. Rumi states that the human soul is the only eternal and boundless essence within this fleeting world.[51]

As Rumi states, when we examine the existential structure of the human being, we can see that it unites and integrates all different elements within itself. As a being in which opposites harmoniously come together, the human is arguably the perfect manifestation of *Tawḥīd*.[52] Therefore, when one deeply reflects, the human being emerges as a key to understanding both the universe and divine reality. Thus, understanding the universe as an 'entity' composed of various forms or an aggregation of countless shapes—where each form inherently reflects its own meaning and its connection with God—is dependent on one's true comprehension of what it means to be a human being. In this context, the duty of human being *is not to be deceived by appearances*. One must realize that form does not exist independently but rather manifests as an expression of a deeper, transcendent meaning.[53]

According to Rumi, humans possess two opposing poles, making them inherently dual in nature. In other words, humans are dualistic beings. They have both a material (animalistic) nature and a spiritual (rational) essence, which are in opposition to one another. However, the spiritual aspect is considered the primary one.[54] This duality and polarity are unique to humans and are not observed in any

[49] See Arief Subhan, "Memento Mori: Existential and Religious Perspectives on Death," *Al-Shajarah: Journal of the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilisation (ISTAC)* 28, no. 1 (2023): 163–174, https://doi.org/10.31436/shajarah.v28i1.1597

[50] Nicholson, *The Mathnawī of Jalāluddīn Rūmī*, vol. IV, 520.

[51] Ibid., vol. VI, 1005.

[52] Chittick, "Rumi and *Waḥdat al-Wujūd*," 92.

[53] Merican, "Reproducing the Humanities," 47.

[54] Nicholson, *The Mathnawī of Jalāluddīn Rūmī*, vol. I, 2435.

other beings. In this regard, humans are moral entities capable of inclining toward both good and evil. What distinguishes humans and elevates them above other creatures is their morality. Rumi highlights self-awareness, overcoming one's ego, and thereby demonstrating the will to cultivate virtuous character as the hallmarks of human success.[55]

Rumi includes the following couplets in the *Mathnawī*, expressing that humans are beings of emotion and value:

> If a human being were a man in virtue of form, Ahmad (Mohammed) and Bú Jahl would be just the same?[56]
>
> The painting on the wall is like Adam: see from the (pictured) form what thing in it is wanting. The spirit is wanting in that resplendent form: go, seek that jewel rarely found![57]

Rumi persistently emphasizes that what makes a human truly human and distinguishes them from other beings is not their physical form, body, shape, or material existence. Instead, he asserts that the essence of being human lies in one's spiritual existence, which encompasses beliefs, emotions, intellect, and thoughts. Highlighting the importance of transcending outward appearances to focus on inner virtues—moving beyond transient, superficial forms to attain enduring, essential truths—Rumi criticizes those who, despite possessing so many valuable qualities that elevate humanity, become fixated on external appearances and live according to trivial, material pleasures. He warns against the error of failing to distinguish between appearance and reality, or form and meaning, through illustrative examples:

> Thou art not a single "thou," O good comrade; nay, thou art the sky and the deep sea. Thy mighty Thou, which is nine hundredfold, is the ocean and the drowning-place

[55] Rasoul Rahbari Ghazani and Saliha Uysal, "Rumi's Asceticism Explored: A Comparative Glimpse into Meister Eckhart's Thought," *Religions* 14, 1254 (2023): 4, https://doi.org/10.3390/rel14101254.
[56] Nicholson, *The Mathnawī of Jalāluddīn Rūmī*, vol. I, 1015.
[57] Ibid., vol. I, 1020.

> of a hundred "thou's".[58]
>
> Take heed, do not become a worshipper of form and do not say this. Do not seek (to discover) the secret of congeniality in the (outward) form. Form resembles the mineral and the stone: an inorganic thing has no knowledge of congeniality.[59]

The sense of justice, in turn, is the fundamental sense of value that enables one to perceive what is morally valuable. Justice must precede goodness because an act that lacks justice, balance, and proportion *ceases to be good and may even turn into oppression*. In this respect, the precedence of justice over goodness is affirmed in the following verse:

> God commands justice, doing good… He forbids what is shameful, blameworthy, and oppressive.[60]

Thus, in Rumi's view, the reason for the creation of the universe is humanity, and *the reason for the creation of humanity is to unite with the will of God*. In this regard, referring to *ayāh*[61] of the Qur'ān, he emphasizes that the divine duty entrusted to humans is to protect and cultivate the universe. For Rumi, the continuity of existence signifies the orderly functioning of the universe; therefore, failing to adhere to the existing order equates to disregarding God's power. From this perspective, the responsibility assigned to humans is, above all, to establish a standard of living in accordance with God's will.[62]

Thus, it becomes evident that at the center of Rumi's thought lies the human being as an entity of emotion, morality, and value. He believes that the ego is prone to potential evils and is that 'very thing' which distances humans from goodness. Rumi suggests that, by purifying the ego of its evils, a person's inner world can become

[58] Ibid., vol. III, 1300.
[59] Nicholson, *The Mathnawī of Jalāluddīn Rūmī*, vol. VI, 2950.
[60] Qur'ān, *al-Naḥl* 16:90.
[61] "We offered the Trust to the heavens, the earth, and the mountains—yet they refused to undertake it and were afraid of it; mankind undertook it—they have always been inept and foolish" Qur'ān, *al-Aḥzāb* 33:72.
[62] Sertdemir, "Sevgi Anlayışında Düşünsel Ayrımlar," 363.

capable of genuinely perceiving truth and goodness.[63] Rumi considers the inspirational ability within humans to be a kind of value emotion, one that discerns beauty that is balanced, orderly, and aligned with God's pleasure. This value emotion, which we identify as the sense of justice, reveals truth, goodness, and what is inherently valuable to humans.

When asked, what is justice? Rumi responds through his magnum opus, the *Mathnawī,* with this concise expression, linking justice to moral values:

> Justice is giving water to trees. Injustice to give water to thorns.[64]

He also defines justice as placing blessings in their proper place and states that watering every root that absorbs water is not justice.[65] In this context, Rumi states that *ẓulm* is placing something in an improper place, which inevitably leads to calamity.[66] He further emphasizes this point in his most celebrated compilation:

> (If) you behave unjustly, you are damned: the Pen has dried (on that). If you show justice, you eat the fruit (of blessedness): the Pen has dried (on that).[67]

> If you give a babe bread instead of milk, take it (for granted) that the poor babe will die of the bread; (Yet) afterwards, when it grows teeth, that babe will of its own accord ask for bread. When an unfledged bird begins to fly, it becomes a mouthful for any rapacious cat; (But) when it grows wings, it will fly of itself without trouble and without whistling (prompting), good or bad.[68]

As can be understood from these passages, according to Rumi, there is no place for randomness or disorder in the creation of the universe. That is, from God bringing the heavens into existence from nothing,

[63] A. J. Arberry, *Discourses of Rumi (Fīhi Mā Fīhi)* (London: Routledge, 1995), 429.
[64] Nicholson, *The Mathnawī of Jalāluddīn Rūmī*, vol. V, 1085.
[65] Ibid., vol. V, 1090.
[66] Ibid., vol. V, 1090.
[67] Ibid., vol. V, 3130.
[68] Ibid., vol. I, 580.

to spreading the earth like a carpet, and making the stars sources of light, both visible and hidden structures have come into being in accordance with the immutable principle of justice. As long as humanity preserves this order and refrains from disrupting it, existence will continue in harmony.

In the *Mathnawī*, Caliph Umar, a symbol of justice, is described through his simple way of life. Rumi maintains that justice can only flourish on the foundation of a simple life. A simple life, in turn, is associated with resisting greed for worldly possessions. Indeed, it is evident that the love of status and wealth cannot serve as a foundation for the virtue of justice.

In the presence of justice, humans experience trust, fear, and love. Justice, by representing order and balance, evokes a sense of trust. Its punishment of the unjust inspires fear, while its reward for goodness generates love. In this context, in the *Mathnawī*, Rumi describes a Roman envoy who encounters Caliph Umar as experiencing both fear and love, portraying this as a unique emotional state. This state of the Roman envoy reflects the human response to justice, as reflected in his soul. The portrayal of Caliph Umar in the *Mathnawī* shows that his greatness and authority do not stem from a throne, wealth, or any worldly possession but rather from the *majestic character radiated by his sense of justice, which permeates every aspect of his being*. The Roman envoy's admiration for Umar exemplifies this. In the same passage, Rumi explains that while fear and love are opposites, when they coexist within a person, they create a sense of awe and admiration. Through the Roman envoy's experience, this emotional state also reminds us of the concept of *khashyah* (reverential fear).[69]

In another passage, Rumi, through his unique interpretation, conveys the concept of divine justice through the words of Caliph Umar in the incident where and when a thief is brought before him. The thief claims that this was his first crime, to which Umar responds by stating that God does not punish or unleash His wrath for the first crime but instead *covers and forgives sins multiple times*. Here, it is evident that Umar reminds the thief of God's forbearance (*ḥilm*),

[69] Nicholson, *The Mathnawī of Jalāluddīn Rūmī*, vol. I, 1390-1480.

highlighting that God does not rush to punishment. This presents a contrast between a human understanding of justice, which often punishes the first offense, and the divine, merciful approach, which delays punishment until the very end.[70] It is also evident here that *punishment ought to be reformative and not punitive its own sake*.

As Rumi informs us, divine justice operates through love rather than wrath, transforming human perception of justice from one of retribution to one of unity and moral balance. Islamic philosophers have argued that when rational justice is fully understood in its ideal form, it aligns with divine justice, and in reality, all justice originates from divine justice. In this context, Rumi's understanding of justice can also be seen as a reflection of divine justice.[71] In reality (*haqīqah*) all justice originates from one source, that is Divine Justice. With this in mind, Rumi's conception of justice can also be appreciated as a reflection of divine justice.

As can be observed, Rumi generally explains justice through the concepts of moderation and appropriateness, and he describes being just as acting in accordance with truth and goodness. Rumi establishes a heart-centered system of thought that incorporates the sense of justice to understand how truth and goodness, as manifestations of human actions, can be actualized.

Rumi describes the sense of justice as a "divine mirror", reflecting the moral balance, harmony, and wisdom embedded within the human being. This innate sense is nourished by divine love, which illuminates the heart and enables a person to perceive truth beyond superficial appearances. Just as a physical mirror reflects reality as it is, a heart purified by divine love reveals the true value of all beings through the sense of justice. Through this inner enlightenment, an individual gains the ability to distinguish between good and evil, as well as right and wrong.

This spiritual mechanism operates like a "scale of justice", guiding individuals in aligning their thoughts, intentions, and actions with righteousness. A person who loses inner balance may fall prey to their ego, worldly desires, or external influences, leading to moral corruption and social disorder. However, when divine love

[70] Nicholson, *The Mathnawī of Jalāluddīn Rūmī*, vol. IV, 160-180.
[71] Alexander Knysh, *Islamic Mysticism: A Short History* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 101.

establishes justice in the conscience, the heart naturally inclines toward justice and strives to uphold equity in human relationships. Therefore, in Rumi's thought, justice is not merely a social or legal principle; it is an intrinsic, sacred force that preserves the harmony of both the human soul and the universe. Through this divine sense of justice, a person attains inner peace, constructs moral order, and participates in the universal equilibrium that sustains all existence through virtuous action:

> Their hearts are like a stainless, unblemished mirror free of hatred. Their hearts have become like an open sky, where the king has come to dwell.[72]
>
> Inclination toward desires and whims is a lock that chains our hearts; you must become the key, the teeth of the key become the teeth of the key.[73]
>
> Yet, pure gold and counterfeit coins resemble one another; they can only be distinguished through the light of God.[74]

In Rumi's thought, the concept of the heart (*gönül*) holds a distinct place and significance. In his *Mathnawī*, "*gönül*" is undoubtedly one of the most frequently used terms.[75] Rumi identifies the *gönül* as the essential attribute of a human being. According to him, the *gönül* is the guiding principle of *haqq*, where emotions, thoughts, beliefs, and intentions are harmoniously aligned. The term *gönül*, a Turkish word, refers to the faculty through *which one perceives what cannot be grasped through the senses or intellect*. While the intellect is limited in its ability to recognize the nature of things, the heart, or the spirit, is the one that perceives, uncovers, and accepts the truth as it is near to God.[76] Rumi uses the metaphor of a mirror for the *gönül* and that

[72] Jalal al-Din Rumi, *Divān-i Kabīr*, trans. Abdulbaki Golpinarli (Ankara: Remzi Bookstore, 1957), 1690.
[73] Rumi, *Divān-i Kabīr*, 161.
[74] Rumi, *Divān-i Kabīr*, 250.
[75] Yilmaz, Hasan Kamil. "Eğitimde Gönül Faktörü: Mevlânâ Örneği." In *Yetişkinlik Dönemi Eğitim ve Problemleri*, 159–178. Istanbul: Ensar Publishing, 2006, 159.
[76] Yilmaz, "Eğitimde Gönül Faktörü," 161.

of a scale for justice. The mirror represents the inner world of the human heart. According to this view, the more a person purifies themselves from the desires of the self, the less they seek worldly possessions, eventually leading to a simple lifestyle. For Rumi, simplicity is almost a prerequisite for justice. Living with minimal needs requires an individual to be measured and orderly, while on a societal level, it necessitates careful attention to the rights of others, thereby promoting justice. In this context, Rumi's concept of justice appears to have two aspects. The first is the sense of justice that refers to the purification of one's inner world, allowing the heart to become a clear mirror that can perceive truth. The second is the divine justice, which encompasses the broader plan of destiny. The first resides within the heart and is symbolized by the mirror, while the second is represented by God's promise and is symbolized by the scale.

> Thy mirror has shot out of the case: how shall mirror and balance speak falsehood? How shall mirror and balance stop their breath (suppress the truth) for fear of hurting and shaming anyone? Mirror and balance are noble touchstones: if thou do service (sue) to them for two hundred years, Saying, 'Conceal the truth for my sake, display the surplus and do not display the deficiency,' They will say to thee, 'Do not laugh at thy beard and moustache: mirror and balance, and then deceit and trickery! Since God has raised us up in order that by means of us it may be possible to know the truth, if this do not happen (if we fail to display the truth), what worth have we, O young man? How shall we become a standard for the face of the fair?' But (said the Prophet) slip the mirror (back) into the cloth, if (Divine) illumination has made thy breast a Sinai." He (Zayd) said, "Why, shall the Sun of the Truth and the Sun of Eternity be contained any wise under the armpit? It bursts asunder both armpit (baghal) and imposture (daghal); in its presence neither madness nor (soundness of) understanding remains." He (the Prophet) said, "When thou layest one finger on an eye, thou seest the

> world empty of the sun. One finger-tip becomes a veil over the moon—and this is a symbol of God's covering—So that the (whole) world may be covered (hidden from view) by a single point, and the sun.[77]

In the overall framework of Rumi's thought, it becomes apparent that he engages in a profound struggle against human's inclination toward base and superficial choices. He persistently urges individuals to transcend their attachment to fleeting pleasures, material possessions, and external appearances, advocating instead for the pursuit of inner depth, wisdom, and spiritual satisfaction. According to the student (one may say–spiritual disciple) of Shams-i Tabrizi, those who remain ensnared by mundane desires and bodily gratifications fail to recognize the true essence of existence. He warns that such attachments lead to spiritual stagnation, preventing individuals from reaching their higher potential. Through his poetry and teachings, Rumi challenges people to rise above their lower inclinations and strive toward self-purification, enlightenment, and unity with the divine.

Rumi states that *gönüls* become tainted by negative emotions and impulses such as desire, insatiable greed, lust, ambition, and arrogance, all of which stem from *hawa* (base inclinations). According to him, a person who allows their *gönül* to be swept away by the whirlpool of the ego succumbs to an incurable disease and turns their back on the truth. In order for the *gönül* to distinguish right from wrong and good from evil, it must distance itself from *hawa* and become as pure, polished, and radiant as a mirror. This purification can only be achieved through worship, obedience to divine commands, and the cleansing of the self (*tazkiyah al-nafs*). Only by maintaining the sense of justice that arises in the *gönül* through these means can true moral clarity and righteousness be preserved. Below are treasures from the *Mathnawī* which relate to *tazkiyah al-nafs:*

> Justice is the guardian of pleasures; not men who beat

[77] Nicholson, *The Mathnawī of Jalāluddīn Rūmī*, vol. I, 3545-3555.

> their rattles on the roofs at night.[78]
>
> Keep a careful watch over your own behavior: observe that the honey is (contained) in justice and that after injustice comes the sting.[79]
>
> To seek (one's own) desire is to flee (from God) and shed the blood of piety in the presence of His justice. This world is a trap, and desire is its bait: flee from the traps, quickly turn your face (towards God). When you have gone this way, you have enjoyed a hundred (spiritual) blessings; when you have gone the opposite way, you have fared ill.[80]
>
> Vision of the end is the sign of your (having the) light; the lust of the moment is in truth your (dark) grave.[81]
>
> The mirror of the heart must be clear, in order that you may know therein the ugly form from the beautiful.[82]
>
> I am selective, discerning. Like a sieve that allows no straw to pass through, I separate flour from bran, showing what is essence and what is husk. I am God's scale on earth. I separate the light from the heavy and thereby reveal the distinction between the two.[83]

Rumi asserts that the sense of justice is an innate feeling, one that is inherently placed in human hearts by God Himself:

> God hath scattered that light over (all) spirits, (but only) the fortunate have held up their skirts (to receive it); And he (that is fortunate), having gained that strown largesse of light, has turned his face away from all except God. Whosoever has lacked (such) a skirt of love

[78] Nicholson, *The Mathnawī of Jalāluddīn Rūmī*, vol. IV, 730.
[79] Ibid., vol. VI, 4530.
[80] Ibid., vol. VI, 375.
[81] Ibid., vol. II, 1975.
[82] Ibid., vol. II, 2060.
[83] Ibid., vol. II, 2075-2080.

> is left without share in that strown largesse of light.[84]

Rumi emphasizes that seeing with the eye of the *gönül* is synonymous with perceiving through the light of faith. He highlights that discerning the truth behind appearances is only possible through this divine illumination. According to him, the insight (*firasah*) of a believer becomes attainable when the sense of justice shining within the *gönül* is kept alive and constantly active.[85]

> If the true believer was not seeing by the Light of God, how did things unseen appear naked (plainly revealed) to the true believer? Inasmuch as you were seeing by the Fire of God, you did not discern the difference between good and evil.[86]

> Open thy (inward) vision with the pure light of the King. Beware of fancying, like one who is short-sighted.[87]

> O brother, how wilt thou behold his palace, when hair has grown in the eye of thy heart? Purge thy heart's eye of hair and defect, and then hope to behold his palace. Whoever hath a spirit purged of (sensual) desires will at once behold the Presence and the Holy Porch.[88]

Rumi proposes various methods to keep the eye of the *gönül* open and the sense of justice alive and active. These methods aim to eliminate excesses related to both the body and the *nafs*, thereby achieving the balance that justice demands within the inner world of the *gönül*:

> Assuredly abstinence is the first principle of medicine: abstain and behold the strength of the spirit.[89]

> All mankind are children except him that is intoxicated

[84] Ibid., vol. I, 760.
[85] Adnane Mokrani, "The Cross in Rumi's *Matnawī*," *Religions* 13 (2022): 6, https://doi.org/10.3390/rel13070611.
[86] Nicholson, *The Mathnawī of Jalāluddīn Rūmī*, vol. I, 1330.
[87] Ibid., vol. I, 2005.
[88] Ibid., vol. I, 1390-1395.
[89] Ibid., vol. I, 2910.

> with God; none is grownup except him that is freed from sensual desire. He (God) said, "This world is a play and pastime, and ye are children"; and God speaks truth. If you have not gone forth from (taken leave of) play, you are a child: without purity of spirit how will you be fully intelligent (like an adult)? When knowledge strikes on the heart (is acquired through mystical experience), it becomes a helper (yárí); when knowledge strikes on the body (is acquired through the senses), it becomes a burden.[90]

Rumi emphasizes that negative emotions such as doubt, envy, fear, hatred, and resentment are veils that obscure the mirror of the *gönül*, making it essential to purify oneself from them. Otherwise, the sense of justice becomes dulled, rendering one incapable of distinguishing good from evil.

> Anger and lust make a man squint-eyed; they change the spirit (so that it departs) from rectitude. When self-interest appears, virtue becomes hidden: a hundred veils rise from the heart to the eye. When the cadi lets bribery gain hold of his heart, how should he know the wronger from the wretched victim of wrong?[91]

The Balkh-born mystic asserts that the sense of justice is intrinsically connected to divine justice, making it a spiritual and moral sentiment. He *emphasizes* that preserving this sense depends on the servant's propriety (*adab*) and their relationship with the Creator.

> Let us implore God to help us to self-control: one who lacks self-control is deprived of the grace of the Lord.[92]

3. Ethical Implications and Contemporary Relevance

Rumi's understanding of justice, as explored in this study, transcends legal and social frameworks, grounding itself in a spiritual principle

[90] Ibid., vol. I, 3430-3445.
[91] Ibid., vol. I, 330-335.
[92] Ibid., vol. I, 75.

inherent in human nature. Unlike conventional legal interpretations, Rumi conceptualizes the sense of justice as an innate moral faculty, one that reflects divine wisdom, moral balance, and the individual's ethical responsibility. Through the metaphors of the scale and the mirror of the heart (*gönül*), he emphasizes that justice is not merely an external regulation, but an inner virtue cultivated through the purification of the *nafs* and moral refinement.

Rumi's ethical conception of justice operates on two interconnected levels: divine justice and human justice. Divine justice is based on God's forbearance (*ḥilm)* and His measured intervention in human actions, while human justice depends on individuals' moral integrity and their alignment with the divine order. According to Rumi, true justice cannot be achieved solely through the enforcement of external laws but rather through the development of an individual's inner moral consciousness. This approach demonstrates that justice is the foundation of social harmony and spiritual fulfilment.

Rumi's philosophical account of justice exhibits notable affinities with classical philosophical traditions, particularly Aristotle's account of temperance in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, where unchecked desires are viewed as impediments to rational judgment and ethical discernment. Yet, Rumi both deepens and transcends this framework by grounding moral clarity not solely in reason, but in the illuminating power of divine love. In his thought, justice is no longer confined to a principle of balance defined by rational moderation; rather, it is reconstituted as an inner value realized through spiritual purification, the refinement of the heart, and the intuitive perception of truth. By presenting justice as a mystical intuition, a metaphysical reality, and a means of participating in divine order, Rumi offers a transformative contribution to Islamic moral philosophy.

In addition to building on the classical Islamic moral and political tradition, Rumi reinterprets and deepens it by infusing a mystical and affective dimension into the concept of justice. The structural rationalism of al-Farabi's virtuous city, al-Ghazali's doctrine of the purification of the soul, Ibn Miskawayh's reason-based ethical theory, and Ibn Arabi's ontological interpretation of divine justice are all rearticulated in Rumi's thought through a focus

on inner experience, intuitive insight, and spiritual refinement. For Rumi, justice is not merely a principle of social order or rational moderation; it is the manifestation of divine truth reflected in the purified heart. By positioning justice as both the foundation of spiritual transformation and the essence of cosmic harmony, Rumi forges a unique bridge across theological, philosophical, and mystical traditions. His contribution thus offers a profound reconfiguration of Islamic moral thought at metaphysical, psychological, and poetic levels.

Moreover, Rumi's concept of justice has significant implications for contemporary ethical debates. Particularly in the fields of moral psychology, social justice, and the relationship between law and spirituality, Rumi's vision challenges positivist and procedural justice theories. He argues that justice can only be realized when it is internalized as a lived moral experience. This perspective aligns with modern discussions on virtue ethics, moral cognition, and affective justice, positioning Rumi as an ethical scholar whose insights extend beyond his historical and cultural context.

Rumi's conception of sense of justice, though rooted in an Islamic metaphysical framework, reveals striking affinities with the Western moral sense tradition, particularly with philosophers like Shaftesbury (d. 1713), Hutcheson (d. 1746), and Adam Smith (d. 1790). These philosophers held that humans possess an innate moral faculty that allows them to distinguish right from wrong, akin to a "moral sense." For instance, Hutcheson, in his *An Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue* (1725), describes this sense as an immediate perception of virtue. Adam Smith, in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759), speaks of the "impartial spectator" as an inner faculty for moral judgment. Similarly, Rumi identifies the human heart (*gönül*) as a divine mirror and internal scale (*mīzān*), capable of perceiving moral truth when purified from base desires. Both perspectives emphasize the emotional and intuitive dimensions of moral awareness, suggesting that moral cognition is not merely rational but deeply affective. By placing the sense of justice at the heart of moral experience, Rumi offers a complementary vision to these Enlightenment-era theories, but with a

distinctive spiritual depth grounded in divine love and metaphysical harmony.

In conclusion, this study contributes meaningfully to ongoing discussions in both Islamic moral philosophy and epistemology by offering a systematic analysis of Rumi's conception of justice through its epistemological, ethical, philosophical, and theological dimensions. Admittedly, this exploration has relied heavily on direct translations from the *Mathnawī,* but we believe that there is a need to engage with Rumi's magnum opus as it is. It is hoped that the couplets brought forward will facilitate further study on both Rumi and his ideas on the purification of the soul.

To reiterate, Mawlana Jalal al-Din Rumi reinterprets justice not merely as a legal principle but as an innate moral sense embedded in human nature. He identifies spiritual purification, ethical responsibility, and divine love as the essential foundations for cultivating both the virtuous individual and the just society. This integrative perspective—bridging legal, epistemological, and mystical traditions—offers a valuable framework for understanding both classical and contemporary debates concerning justice, morality, knowledge, and human perfection. Peace and harmony in society can only come forth if there is peace and harmony within the hearts of its people.

INTEGRATING QURANIC INSIGHTS WITH COGNITIVE-BEHAVIORAL SUPPORT FOR ADOLESCENT DEPRESSION: A SPIRITUAL-PSYCHOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Mohammad Mohiuddin[1]

Abstract

This study examines the approaches and frameworks found in the Qur'ān for addressing the growing issue of adolescent depression. A qualitative research method was adopted utilizing textual analysis to explore the Qur'ān, various tafsirs and scholarly interpretations, and existing research papers to identify relevant verses related to the depression issue. The study employed thematic coding, comparative and contextual analysis, and integration of perspectives. The research emphasizes three key strategies and supportive frameworks presented in the Qur'ān for managing adolescent depression: promoting positive behavioral change, spiritual enhancement and fostering supportive relationships. This study serves as a source of motivation for individuals and society to stay resilient, drawing strength from the Qur'anic wisdom. The paper also situates this integration within a broader Islamic civilizational perspective, arguing that the Qur'anic worldview offers therapeutic support and a holistic epistemology rooted in divine purpose and metaphysical coherence.

Keywords: Adolescent Depression, Behavioral Activation, Qur'anic Guidance, *Tadabbur*, Supportive Relationships.

[1] Assistant Professor, Department of Qur'an and Sunnah Studies, AbdulHamid AbuSulayman Kulliyyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences, International Islamic University Malaysia, Email: mmohiuddin@iium.edu.my, mahiiiumissc@gmail.com

1. Introduction

In today's post-modern era, moral decline is unfortunately not uncommon. Even with the rapid increase in higher education, this problem has not yet been overcome. The advancement of technology and how it is increasingly becoming a part of people's daily lives may also be a significant contributing factor to the above problem. In the current situation globally, several pressing issues, such as the fear of death or losing loved ones, social isolation, media misinformation, and panic-inducing situations, significantly impact individuals' mental well-being. These factors exert a considerable influence on the psychological state of modern individuals living in dynamic environments.[2] This adds to the alarming state of the individual's detachment from society, religion and public reality. In turn, today's society is deprived of good virtues and a sense of humanity. A survey done on the state of moral values in the U.S. was marked by a four-percentage-point increase since 2022 where 54% of adults rated moral values in the country as "poor".[3]

Adolescence is an important stage in every individual's life and a critical phase for achieving human potential. It is characterized by rapid brain development in which the interaction with the social environment shapes the capabilities an individual takes forward into adult life.[4] Hence, the moral and spiritual values embedded at this stage will last a lifetime and will be reflected in their mental well-being. The current situations have pushed teens away from society and those with mental health conditions are particularly vulnerable to social exclusion, discrimination, stigma (affecting readiness to seek help), educational difficulties, risk-taking behaviors, physical ill-

[2] Liana Spytska, "Anxiety and Depressive Personality Disorders in the Modern World," *Acta Psychologica* 246 (June 1, 2024): 104285–85, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.actpsy.2024.104285.

[3] Megan Brenan, "Views of State of Moral Values in U.S. At New Low," Gallup.com, June 9, 2023, https://news.gallup.com/poll/506960/views- state-moral-values-new-low.aspx.

[4] George C Patton et al., "Our Future: A Lancet Commission on Adolescent Health and Wellbeing," *Lancet (London, England)* 387, no. 10036 (2016): 2423–78, https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(16)00579-1.

health and human rights violations.[5] World Health Organization data also indicates that the number of deaths due to suicide every year reaches more than 700 thousand people.[6] This proves how the crisis of attitude and mental weakness has been an unmanaged predicament in society.

Every human being faces problems in their daily life. The difference lies in how he reacts and resolves these problems. This in turn is related to the concept of resilience or psychological resistance. Resilience is widely viewed as the ability to adapt well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or even high levels of stress and remain positive. Resilience, as seen through an Islamic lens, is explored in Qur'ān, *Sūrah al-Ra'd*: 11 and *al-Baqarah*: 155-156. It is characterized as the capacity and fortitude of an individual to endure and adapt amid challenging circumstances, while maintaining patience and surrendering to God, even in the face of disasters or hardships.[7] Accordingly, Islam has made it abundantly clear how to remain positive in the face of life's struggles. Islam highlights the Holy Qur'ān as a primary source of guidance in dealing with the human experience as its wisdom encompasses all aspects of life.[8] Thus, those who suffer from emotional distress can find guidance in the Holy Qur'ān.[9]

Depression, the main argument of this study, refers to a mental health disorder characterized by a decreased level of interest in daily activities, as well as a disturbed and depressed mood and excessive

[5] World Health Organization, "Mental Health of Adolescents," World Health Organization, October 10, 2024, https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/adolescent-mental-health.

[6] World Health Organization, "Suicide," World Health Organization, March 25, 2025, https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/suicide.

[7] Fauzi Rochman et al., "Jurnal Studi Islam Dan Kemuhammadiyahan (JASIKA) Concept of Resilience in Islamic Perspective," April 25, 2025, https://jasika.umy.ac.id/index.php/jasika.

[8] Steven M. Southwick et al., "Why Are Some Individuals More Resilient than Others: The Role of Social Support," *World Psychiatry* 15, no. 1 (February 1, 2016): 77–79, https://doi.org/10.1002/wps.20282.

[9] Frankie Samah, "The Qur'an and Mental Health - the British Psychological Society," www.bps.org.uk, May 14, 2018, https://www.bps.org.uk/psychologist/quran-and-mental-health.

anxiety. Depression may be caused by internal and external factors including bullying, severe problems and violence. As depression worsens, this study explores the coping mechanisms and support system provided in the Holy Qur'ān to help with the issue of depression among adolescents through three main arguments. The three main arguments presented in this study include spiritual development through meditation and contemplation (*tafakkur*), behavioral activation, and building supportive relationships.

Beyond its therapeutic insights, this paper contends that the Qur'ān provides a civilizational framework for understanding and addressing human well-being—one that is rooted in *Tawḥīd* (Divine Unity), the *fitrah* (primordial nature), and the ethical-metaphysical order of life. In doing so, it challenges the secular fragmentation of modern psychology by offering a unified, purpose-driven vision of mental health grounded in revelation, reason, and spiritual consciousness. This vision resonates with Seyyed Hossein Nasr's argument that the desacralization of knowledge in modernity has led to existential dislocation, and that true healing must return to a sacred cosmology where the human soul is anchored in divine truth. Similarly, Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas contends that the crisis of contemporary knowledge stems from the loss of *adab* and the misplacement of meaning, both of which must be restored through a worldview rooted in Islamic metaphysics and ethics.[10]

2. Framing the Crisis: Moral Dislocation and Adolescent Vulnerability

The worsening state of moral decadence, coupled with the rapid development of technology, has led society to a state of destructive behaviors and morals. As a result, teenagers these days are finding it difficult to maintain healthy relationships and connections, which negatively affects their mental and psychological well-being. We can see this from data collected by the American Mental Health Association which shows that more than 2.7 million people are

[10] Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Knowledge and the Sacred* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989), 5–6.

suffering from major depression in 2023. [11] The devastating outcome of this data urges us to take action to create a better society for future generations.

A study conducted on the deterioration of mental health in children and adolescents during the COVID-19 pandemic shows that factors such as prior mental health status, change in daily routine, reduced physical activity, excessive screen time, overuse of electronic devices, and reduced social support have been reported to have a significant effect.[12] The decline in mental health however has not only been limited to the COVID-19 time but has also continued after it to the present. This has influenced the lives of teenagers and poses concerns that are linked to other significant health and developmental concerns, such as educational achievements, substance use and abuse, violence, and reproductive and sexual health.[13]

From an Islamic civilizational perspective, this crisis is not merely the result of social and biological disruption, but also a deeper rupture in the human soul's orientation toward the divine. The loss of moral grounding and purpose reflects a disconnection from *fitrah*—the innate nature inclined to truth and balance—and reveals the consequences of a worldview that neglects spiritual well-being. Hence, any comprehensive response to adolescent mental health must also address this spiritual vacuum through meaningful reconnection with divine guidance and part of a broader disintegration of value-based living in the postmodern condition.

Thus, poor mental health can hinder life chances, impacting both lifespan and quality of life. Therefore, improving young people's mental health by addressing modifiable social risk factors

[11] Mental Health America, "Youth Data 2023," Mental Health America, 2023, https://mhanational.org/issues/2023/mental-health-america-youth- data.

[12] Eunkyung Jo et al., "Deterioration of Mental Health in Children and Adolescents during the COVID-19 Pandemic," *Journal of the Korean Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry* 34, no. 1 (January 1, 2023): 21–29, https://doi.org/10.5765/jkacap.220041.

[13] Jean M. Twenge et al., "Age, Period, and Cohort Trends in Mood Disorder Indicators and Suicide-Related Outcomes in a Nationally Representative Dataset, 2005–2017.," *Journal of Abnormal Psychology* 128, no. 3 (April 2019): 185–99.

through effective prevention strategies is a critical social justice issue and should be addressed at the earliest.[14]

3. Civilizational Relevance and Transformative Potential of the Study

Adolescents play a major role in determining the future of society and civilization; hence it is of utmost importance for the public to help reduce and improve the condition of youth. Therefore, this paper aims to explore the methods in combating the growing problem of depression among adolescents through insights and guidelines from the Holy Qur'ān which is not restricted to being applied for the Muslim community but a holistic approach for the global communities regardless of their faith background.

By integrating Qur'anic wisdom into mental health discourse, this research aspires to revive a model of care rooted in spiritual ethics, communal responsibility, and metaphysical coherence—values central to Islamic civilization and universally relevant in addressing modern crises.

4. Methodological Pathways: Bridging Revelation and Psychology

This study employs a qualitative research design for a text analysis of the Qur'anic perspective on confrontation mechanisms and support systems for depression among adolescents. The methodological approach includes thematic coding, comparative and contextual analysis, and integration of perspectives that ensures a comprehensive exploration of religious, psychological and societal factors. The primary source of data is the Qur'ān, with an accurate choice of verses related to emotional well-being, resilience, and social support. Secondary sources include scholarly interpretations, current psychological research, and academic discussions on mental health and faith-based coping strategies.

To systematically analyze the text, thematic coding framework

[14] Patrick McGorry et al., "The Youth Mental Health Crisis: Analysis and Solutions," *Frontiers in Psychiatry* 15 (January 21, 2025), https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyt.2024.1517533.

is applied by identifying the core themes from the Qur'anic verses related to emotional wellbeing, divine support and resilience. Contextual analysis ensures the historical, cultural, and theological significance of Qur'anic verses is appropriately considered and is done with identification of relevant verses from Qur'ān as well as the modern psychological scholarly literature to find a holistic framework that aligns and complements each other. To assess the alignment between Qur'anic insights and modern psychology, a comparative approach is employed in which Qur'anic references to emotional regulation are analyzed alongside psychological techniques such as 'cognitive restructuring and behavioral activation',[15] teenagers' personal experiences with faith and mental health are incorporated from empirical data to ensure relevance. This methodology bridges the prophetic model of inner healing with modern therapeutic tools, recognizing that spiritual insight and empirical evidence are not mutually exclusive but mutually enriching. Ethical considerations, restrictions related to interpretations, and the inclusion of various academic speeches are recognized.

5. Reclaiming Wholeness: Insights and Outcomes in the Age of Fragmentation

The prevalence of depression among adolescents is a significant concern globally. According to the World Health Organization, approximately one in seven 10-19-year-olds experiences a mental disorder, with depression being a leading cause of illness and disability in this age group.[16] Self-esteem can affect an individual's confidence and will reflect their performance. With the increased use of technology and the internet, a study found that self-esteem and internet use were significantly associated with depression among

[15] Feldhaus, Claudia G., Rachel H. Jacobs, Edward R. Watkins, Amy T. Peters, Katie L. Bessette, and Scott A. Langenecker. "Rumination-focused cognitive behavioral therapy decreases anxiety and increases behavioral activation among remitted adolescents." Journal of Child and Family Studies 29 (2020): 1982-1991.

[16] World Health Organization, "Mental Health of Adolescents," World Health Organization, October 10, 2024, https://www.who.int/news-room/ fact-sheets/detail/ adolescent-mental-health.

adolescents. Low self-esteem was associated with 47.5% of depression, whereas high self-esteem was associated with only 2% of depression among adolescents.[17] It is hence important to ensure that the self-esteem of teens is taken care of to improve depressive symptoms. In Malaysia, a study reported that 19% of young adolescents exhibited depressive symptoms, with a higher prevalence among females.[18] Another study also shows that there are chances for females to experience depression twice as often as men.[19]

Over time, there have been notable trends in the rates of adolescent depression. Research indicates that rates of emotional problems, including depression, have increased among adolescents over the past few decades.[20] In the Malaysian context, according to the Malaysian Health and Morbidity Survey 2017, one in five teenagers in Malaysia are depressed, two in five suffer from anxiety and one in 10 are stressed.[21] In the United States, depressive symptoms among adolescents have shown a marked increase from 1991 to 2018, particularly among girls.[22]

Another study highlighted that between 2009 and 2017, rates of depression among kids ages 14 to 17 increased by more than

[17] Shahril Nizam Zulkipli et al., "Understanding the Rise of Teenage Depression in Malaysia: Trends, Causes, and Societal Impact," *International Journal of Advanced and Applied Sciences* 11, no. 3 (March 1, 2024): 265–73, https://doi.org/10.21833/ijaas.2024.03.025.

[18] Sarbhan Singh et al., "Prevalence and Determinants of Depressive Symptoms among Young Adolescents in Malaysia: A Cross-Sectional Study," *Children* 10, no. 1 (January 1, 2023): 141, https://doi.org/10.3390/ children10010141.

[19] Office on Women's Health, "Depression | Office on Women's Health," OASH | Office on Women's Health, 2018, https://womenshealth.gov/mental- health/mental-health-conditions/depression#references.

[20] Markham Heid, "Depression and Suicide Rates Are Rising Sharply in Young Americans, New Report Says. This May Be One Reason Why," Time (Time, March 14, 2019), https://time.com/5550803/depression-suicide- rates-youth/.

[21] Dr Azhar, "Vital to Get Help Early in Treating Depression in Teens," NST Online (New Straits Times, June 27, 2022), https://www.nst.com.my/ opinion/columnists/2022/06/808590/vital-get-help-early-treating-depression-teens.

[22] Matthijs Oud et al., "Effectiveness of CBT for Children and Adolescents with Depression: A Systematic Review and Meta-Regression Analysis," *European Psychiatry* 57, no. 1 (January 16, 2019): 33–45, https://doi.org/ 10.1016/j.eurpsy.2018.12.008.

60%.[23] This hence points to the alarming need for solutions or treatments to address this globally affected mental health condition.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is recognized as an effective treatment for adolescent depression. It has proven effective in the treatment of depression[24] and is a form of psychotherapy that helps individuals learn how to identify and change destructive or disturbing thought patterns that negatively influence behavior and emotions. It combines cognitive therapy, which focuses on modifying the way individuals think, with behavior therapy, which concentrates on changing the way individuals act. Systematic reviews and meta-analyses have found moderate-quality evidence for CBT reducing depressive symptoms at the end of treatment and at follow-up. Moreover, CBT interventions that include a combination of behavioral activation and challenging thoughts, or involve caregivers in the intervention, have been associated with better long-term outcomes for youth.[25] Also, CBT is the most proven form of talk therapy, also called psychotherapy. It sometimes works as well as antidepressant drugs for some types of depression. Some research suggests that people who get CBT may be half as likely as those on medication alone to have depression again within a year.[26]

Although CBT originated in a secular psychological framework, its therapeutic principles—such as behavioral activation, cognitive reframing, and emotional regulation—are not inherently antithetical to Islamic values. Islam, as a comprehensive religion, encourages introspection (*tafakkur*), behavioral transformation (*islāh al-nafs*), and spiritual discipline (*tazkiyah*), which align with many aspects of CBT. Recognizing the empirical success of CBT does not

[23] Robert Friedberg PhD, "CBT for Youth with Depression," Beck Institute, May 22, 2020, https://beckinstitute.org/blog/cbt-for-youth-with-depression/.

[24] See Butler, Chapman, Forman, & Beck, 2006; Cuijpers et al., 2013

[25] Kristine Trettø Sverre et al., "Comparing the Efficacy of Mindfulness-Based Therapy and Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy for Depression in Head-To-Head Randomized Controlled Trials: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of Equivalence," *Clinical Psychology Review* 100, no. 102234 (December 5, 2022): 102234, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cpr.2022.102234.

[26] Camille Noe Pagán, "Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Depression: Does It Work?," WebMD, November 28, 2022, https://www.webmd.com/depression/cognitive-behavioral-therapy-for-depression.

imply an acceptance of its philosophical assumptions; instead, it allows for an integration that situates such techniques within a holistic, God-oriented worldview. As Nasr affirms, the desacralization of knowledge in the modern world must be countered by a return to sacred meanings, where healing is part of the soul's journey toward God.[27]

In the framework of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), the implementation will encompass three strategic interventions: behavioral activation, spiritual development and supportive relationships. Thus, the therapeutic encounter becomes not only a means of coping but a means of returning to one's primordial nature (fitrah), fulfilling the Qur'anic vision of well-being as a sacred responsibility.

5.1 Behavioral Activation

Recent research highlights a compelling intersection between the principles of the Qur'ān and the techniques of Behavioral Activation (BA) within Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT). Behavioral Activation is a specific CBT skill. It can be a treatment all by itself, or can be used alongside other CBT skills such as cognitive restructuring. Behavioral activation helps us understand how behaviors influence emotions, just like cognitive work helps us understand the connection between thoughts and emotions.[28] It is a therapeutic strategy that promotes participation in fulfilling and rewarding activities. Notably, the Qur'ān highlights the importance of charitable deeds, aiding others, and fostering positive relationships. This congruence offers a significant avenue for adolescents dealing with depression to improve their well-being. Behavioral activation is a technique in mental health care where actions are used to positively impact one's emotional state, advocating for involvement in activities that provide pleasure and a feeling of achievement.

---

[27] Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Knowledge and the Sacred* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989), 9.

[28] Pim Cuijpers et al., "Individual Behavioral Activation in the Treatment of Depression: A Meta Analysis," *Psychotherapy Research* 33, no. 7 (April 17, 2023): 1–12, https://doi.org/10.1080/10503307.2023.2197630.

Behavioral Activation is predicated on the concept that deliberate actions can positively influence one's emotional state. It motivates individuals to partake in fulfilling activities to cultivate joy and a feeling of success. This approach can be a vital tool in the management of mental health. In the Islamic worldview, such deliberate actions are not only instruments of psychological transformation but also vehicles for spiritual elevation. The Qur'ān repeatedly emphasizes the significance of *ʿamal ṣāliḥ* (righteous deeds) as both ethical imperatives and means to inner peace. Islamic teachings recognize that external behavior, when guided by divine intent, reinforces the soul's alignment with truth. As al-Attas notes, the proper integration of knowledge and action (*ʿilm* and *ʿamal*) forms the essence of *adab*, ensuring both personal well-being and metaphysical balance.[29] Therefore, when integrated within an Islamic framework, behavioral activation does more than alleviate depression—it reorients the self toward its sacred purpose.

5.2 Fundamental Concepts of Behavioral Activation

Behavioral Activation operates on several underlying fundamentals to address depression effectively**.** It is an extensively examined treatment for depression which is relatively simple to apply when compared to other psychotherapies. BA aims to increase positive interactions between a person and the environment.[30] One critical concept is the cycle of depression, where reduced activity levels lead to decreased enjoyment and a sense of helplessness, reinforcing withdrawal and inactivity. BA aims to break this cycle by initially increasing activity levels. Engaging in pleasurable activities provides positive reinforcement, strengthening the connection between the activity and positive emotions, which, over time, naturally boosts motivation and enjoyment.

Additionally, BA helps individuals identify activities that foster a sense of mastery and competence, enhancing self-confidence

[29] Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, *Islam and Secularism* (Kuala Lumpur: ABIM, 1978), 35.

[30] Pim Cuijpers et al., "Individual Behavioral Activation in the Treatment of Depression: A Meta Analysis," *Psychotherapy Research* 33, no. 7 (April 17, 2023): 1–12, https://doi.org/10.1080/10503307.2023.2197630.

and a sense of accomplishment, thereby improving mood. The concept of behavioral momentum is also integral to BA; as individuals engage in more activities, they gain momentum and are more likely to continue participating. This snowball effect helps them overcome the initial resistance to engaging in activities when depressed. Since there will be initial struggles when starting an activity, it could be made easier by setting the SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time Bound). The clarity about what, where, when, and how will help in actually doing it and continuing as well.[31]

From an Islamic perspective, the concept of behavioral activation aligns deeply with the emphasis on righteous action (*'amal ṣāliḥ*) as a transformative force. The Qur'ān repeatedly reminds believers that purposeful action, grounded in sincerity (*ikhlāṣ*) and divine consciousness (*taqwā*), leads not only to psychological relief but also to spiritual elevation. Engaging in beneficial and intentional behavior is seen not as mechanical, but as an act of worship, especially when driven by a noble *niyyah* (intention). As such, the motivation to overcome depressive inertia is not only personal or therapeutic, but a sacred duty to nurture the soul's resilience and fulfil its divinely-ordained purpose. Islamic teachings also reinforce the role of *tawakkul* (trust in Allah (ﷻ)) and *ṣabr* (patience) in maintaining momentum during moments of struggle, making behavioral activation both a psychological and spiritual intervention.

5.3 Qur'anic Perspectives on Behavioral Activation

The Holy Qur'ān, the sacred book of Islam, offers a treasure trove of guidance that surprisingly complements modern psychological approaches to behavioral activation. The principles of behavioral activation align with the teachings of the Holy Qur'ān in many ways. The Qur'ān emphasizes the importance of action and encourages initiative and the pursuit of good in this world. Allah (ﷻ) says:

> Whoever does good, whether male or female, and is a believer, We will surely bless them with a good life, and

[31] Amy Mezulis, "Behavioral Activation Yields Positive Mental Health Benefits," www.joon.com, June 29, 2023, https://www.joon.com/blog/behavioral-activation.

> We will certainly reward them according to the best of their deeds.[32]

This aligns with BA's focus on increasing participation in activities that bring enjoyment and a sense of accomplishment. Furthermore, although the Qur'ān does not directly address cognitive restructuring, it encourages a positive outlook and trust in Allah (ﷻ) will and destiny, as explained in *Sūrah al-Baqarah*, verse 286:

> God does not charge a soul except [with that within] its capacity.[33]

This positive outlook can help counteract negative thought patterns that contribute to depression, a core concept of BA. Furthermore, the Qur'ān emphasizes the importance of maintaining strong social ties and participating in the Muslim community. In *Sūrah al-Hujurat*, verse 10 says:

> The believers are but brothers, so make a settlement between your two brothers.[34]

What differentiates the Qur'anic framework from secular BA, however, is its teleological nature—action is not only healing, but an act of servitude (*'ubūdiyyah*) and moral striving. The intent (*niyyah*) behind one's actions, the remembrance of God (*dhikr*), and the cultivation of inner sincerity (*ikhlāṣ*) turn ordinary behavior into spiritual purification. This embeds behavioral activation into a civilizational paradigm where therapy is simultaneously worship, meaning-making, and soul realignment.

This aligns with BA's focus on promoting social interaction, which is crucial for improving mood and reducing feelings of isolation. These examples highlight the potential for integrating Qur'anic and secular approaches to treatment, demonstrating how it can be tailored to meet the needs of Muslim adolescents with depression and the importance of such integration in providing comprehensive care.

[32] al-Qur'ān, 16:97
[33] al-Qur'ān, 2:286
[34] al-Qur'ān, 49:10

5.4 Positive Effects of Behavioral Activation

Behavioral activation offers numerous benefits for individuals suffering from depression. One of the most important benefits is improved mood. Increased participation in pleasurable activities leads to increased positive emotions and decreased depressive symptoms. The positive effects of these activities also boost motivation and energy. Another major benefit is improved social functioning, as participation in social activities helps reduce feelings of isolation and strengthen social bonds. Depression can make the individual feel isolated and avoid doing things but it is important to actually start the activities first even if it is uncomfortable because firstly, activating changes our brain state and can make us feel better, right away. For example, exercise can produce "good chemicals" in the brain that lift mood while they are in the bloodstream. Secondly, the more we activate, the more situations we find ourselves in that can give us positive experiences. The technical term for this is "reinforcing positive context contingencies." Keeping technicalities aside, we need to "get out there" and give ourselves the best chance of feeling better, even if we don't feel like it at the time.[35] Furthermore, when individuals achieve mastery and accomplishment through these activities, they develop a greater sense of self-worth and confidence, which enhances their self-esteem. Studies show that BA can improve depressed mood, reduce anxiety and increase energy levels of individuals.[36]

In conclusion, BA is an effective, evidence-based technique designed to help individuals, including adolescents, who are experiencing depression break out of a cycle of inactivity and passivity. By encouraging participation in meaningful activities, BA aligns with the Qur'ān's teachings on the importance of work, maintaining a positive outlook, and fostering strong social bonds. This approach promotes positive emotions, boosts motivation and

[35] Dan DeSena et al., "Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT) Group Program for Depression Adult Patient Manual Behavioral Activation Department of Psychiatry," n.d., https://psych.med.umich.edu/anxiety-program/pdf/ Behavioral-Activation-for-Depression.pdf.

[36] Amy Mezulis, "Behavioral Activation Yields Positive Mental Health Benefits," www.joon.com, June 29, 2023, https://www.joon.com/blog/behavioral-activation.

energy, improves social functioning, and enhances self-esteem. For adolescents, who are more prone to feelings of isolation and self-doubt, CBT can be particularly helpful in building resilience and self-confidence during a critical developmental period.

More importantly, from an Islamic perspective, behavioral activation becomes not merely a therapeutic tool but a spiritual discipline. When grounded in sincere intention (*niyyah*), trust in God (*tawakkul*), and remembrance (*dhikr*), these actions contribute not only to psychological recovery but to the soul's return to balance and harmony with the divine order. As the Qur'ān emphasizes, well-being (*ḥayātan ṭayyibah*) is promised to those who act righteously with faith.[37] Hence, BA, when situated within the Islamic framework, supports the cultivation of inner strength, gratitude, and meaning, restoring the self not just functionally but spiritually.

From the standpoint of Islamic intellectual tradition, the efficacy of BA is not only psychological but deeply spiritual and civilizational. In Islam, actions (*ʿamal*) are not valued merely for their outcomes but for their alignment with divine purpose and moral order. al-Attas emphasizes that meaningful action must be governed by *adab*—a proper recognition of one's place within the cosmos and in relation to divine truth.[38] This spiritual intentionality (*niyyah*) transforms habitual practices into acts of *ʿubūdiyyah* (servitude). Nasr further critiques the desacralization of modern therapeutic approaches, arguing that human well-being cannot be understood apart from the metaphysical structure of reality.[39] In this view, restoring sacred meaning to action is essential for true healing. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, drawing on Qur'anic psychology, affirms that continuous righteous habits purify the soul, soften the heart, and bring about deep emotional resilience.[40] When BA is grounded in such a framework, it becomes a form of *tazkiyat al-nafs* (purification of the soul), enabling adolescents not just to cope, but to flourish with

[37] al-Qur'an, 16:97.
[38] Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, *Islam and Secularism* (Kuala Lumpur: ABIM, 1978), 35–36.
[39] Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Knowledge and the Sacred* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989), 8–10.
[40] Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, *Al-Fawāʾid* (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-ʿArabī, 2004), 132.

purpose.

Ultimately, CBT fosters a sense of accomplishment and significantly improves overall well-being, making it a valuable tool in managing depression across all age groups. Thus, BA is an effective, relatively simple type of therapy that can be applied broadly in differing populations.[41]

5.5 Enhancing Spiritual Growth Through *Muraqabah* and *Tafakkur*

Spirituality can play a huge role in maintaining an individual's emotional stability. *Muraqabah* is a practice of mindfulness and spiritual awareness of Allah (ﷻ). This practice is used to help people relax by focusing on the presence of Allah (ﷻ), which calms their hearts and their mental state. In spiritual *muraqabah* it typically restructures the mind to respond to negative feelings and thoughts in a different way. This practice helps adolescents monitor their thoughts and creates mental barriers between them and their depressive systems. It is also expressed through contemplation, which is called *tafakkur*, and includes the act of deliberation. *Tafakkur* is the process of a person deeply contemplating and reflecting and thinking about Allah (ﷻ) [42] When faced with difficulties in life, these two tools can be invaluable to put the mind at peace and keep going forward without losing hope, knowing ang trusting that Allah (ﷻ) will not leave them in misery and provide the best support. Both *muraqabah* and *tafakkur* connect the individual to their Creator and lighten or even remove the burdens they feel when depressed. This is possible with the strong connection and beliefs achieved through deep connection and good thought about the Creator.

The second pillar of Islam, prayer, is a form of *muraqabah*,

[41] Pim Cuijpers et al., "Individual Behavioral Activation in the Treatment of Depression: A Meta Analysis," *Psychotherapy Research* 33, no. 7 (April 17, 2023): 1–12, https://doi.org/10.1080/10503307.2023.2197630.

[42] Dr. Nazia Zaman , Dr. Naila Maqsood , and Dr. Fakhara Aziz, "The Noble Quran as a Coping Mechanism with Stress: A Descriptive Study," *Journal of Positive School Psychology* 6, no. 9 (2022): 76–87, http://mail.journalppw. com/index.php /jpsp/article/view/12041.

performed with concentration between the servant and his Lord. Praying five times a day establishes a strict routine for the mind, providing a moment of calm and guidance in life. Since the five prayers are obligatory for a Muslim, no matter how low they feel at a point, they will still have to push themselves to perform their prayers and that will in return bring a sense of accomplishment and hope. Therefore, prayer brings a sense of purpose, tranquility, and stability. Allah (ﷻ) affirms this in *Sūrah al-Baqarah*, verse 153, when He says:

> O you who have believed, seek help through patience and prayer. Indeed, Allah is with the patient.[43]

Another Islamic spiritual practice for remembering Allah (ﷻ) is *dhikr*. This repetition involves specific phrases such as "*SubhanAllah"* and *"Alhamdulillah*." These phrases are said with the intention of remembering Allah (ﷻ). This is mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān in *Sūrah al-Ra'd*, verse 28:

> Those who have believed and whose hearts find rest in the remembrance of Allah. Unquestionably, in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest.[44]

The concept of *dhikr* provides a source of peace and psychological comfort. In addition, Allah (ﷻ) mentions in *Sūrah Āl Imrān*, verse 191, that another way of contemplating is to deeply reflect on Allah (ﷻ) creation:

> Those who remember Allah while standing, sitting, and lying on their sides, and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth and say, Our Lord! You have not created any of this without purpose. Glory be to You! Protect us from the punishment of the Fire. [45]

This verse encourages Muslims to use their minds to understand the world around them and to remember Allah (ﷻ) in all their daily activities by contemplating His creations. *Tafakkur* is the

[43] al-Qur'ān, 2:153
[44] al-Qur'ān, 13:28
[45] al-Qur'ān, 3:191

focus of the mind not only on Allah (ﷻ), but also on His attributes, creations, and signs in the world. It also highlights the need to contemplate the wonders of creation in the heavens and on the earth. Teenagers often feel an overwhelming sense of separation or alienation. Contemplating Allah (ﷻ) creation reminds them that they are part of His wondrous creation. Therefore, practicing this habit cultivates a sense of gratitude, enriches their inner contentment, and strengthens their connection with the Creator. The simple recitation of Qurʾān can also bring in positive change in mental health as the study by Khadijeh Moulaei et al., concludes that the recitation of the Qurʾān has a notable positive influence on mental health factors.[46] Particularly, it can alleviate anxiety, reduce stress levels, mitigate symptoms of depression, and foster overall mental well-being. Thus, the connection to Allah (ﷻ) and his book, the Holy Qurʾān can have deep healing effects for teenagers who are depressed if done with intention and certainty of relief from Allah (ﷻ).

These spiritual practices—*muraqabah, tafakkur, dhikr, and ṣalāh*—are not simply emotional or meditative exercises; they are deeply embedded within the Islamic civilizational view of the self as a spiritual-moral being (*nafs*) journeying toward God. Classical scholars such as al-Ghazali and al-Jawziyyah emphasize that the soul is refined and healed through sustained remembrance, focused reflection, and consistent ritual. In this light, emotional regulation and psychological healing are seen as effects of aligning the heart (*qalb*) and self (*nafs*) with divine presence and cosmic purpose. The Qurʾanic imperative to reflect on the signs of God in the self and creation reinforces a spiritual anthropology in which mental well-being arises not from self-centered introspection, but from God-centered awareness.[47]

[46] Khadijeh Moulaei et al., "The Effect of the Holy Quran Recitation and Listening on Anxiety, Stress, and Depression: A Scoping Review on Outcomes," *PubMed* 6, no. 12 (December 1, 2023), https://doi.org/10.1002/hsr2.1751.

[47] Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī, *Iḥyāʾ ʿUlūm al-Dīn*, vol. 3, *Kitāb Riyāḍat al-Nafs* (Cairo: Dār al-Maʿārif, n.d.), 25; Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, *Al-Fawāʾid* (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-ʿArabī, 2004), 132.

5.6 Nurturing Meaningful Connections Through Supportive Relationships

All of humanity is like a forest with tangled roots, whether hidden or unseen. Therefore, close relationships are a lifeline, without which people feel isolated and helpless. These close relationships have tremendous power to dispel misunderstandings, doubts, insecurities and overcome loneliness. Close relationships resolve all kinds of difficulties and pave the way to friendship. Where there is an emotional bond, there is sharing, a willingness to go the extra mile to give and forgive, and this can have a significant impact on their mental health. Teenagers suffering from depression may benefit from the understanding and emotional support provided by supportive relationships, such as family. The family environment and parenting practices play a vital role in children's physical and psychological development as well as their behavioral patterns. Substantial evidence has suggested the robust associations between parental socioeconomic status, mental health status, family dynamics (i.e., the way family members interact), and children's mental health problems.[48]

Another study showed that emotional support provided by family members can improve a person's ability to manage stress, increase self-confidence, and reduce the prevalence of depression in adolescents. Teens who have a good, trusting relationship with their parents are more likely to talk about their personal problems, which may reduce the likelihood of making unwise decisions or falling into the traps that give false hopes of friendship and security. These relationships can provide a sense of belonging, social support, and opportunities for positive social interactions that can help alleviate the loneliness and isolation associated with depression.

The Holy Qur'ān highlights the importance of companionship and community support. Teenagers can benefit from seeking out friendships that share their views and positively influence them. Regular dialogue and fun activities with peers enable a depressed

[48] Jiayu Lin and Wuyuan Guo, "The Research on Risk Factors for Adolescents' Mental Health," *Behavioral Sciences* 14, no. 4 (April 1, 2024): 263, https://doi.org/10.3390/bs14040263.

person to see their situation from a different perspective and help alleviate feelings of depression, while love, respect, and compassion flourish. The Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) always listened to each other's needs and feelings. Today's teens should emulate and practice these ideals. Peer support plays an important role in reducing a person's sense of loneliness. Allah (ﷻ) says in *Sūrah al-Hujurat* verse 10:

> The believers are but one brotherhood, so make peace between your brothers. And be mindful of Allah so you may be shown mercy.[49]

The verse highlights the importance of unity and brotherhood. Therefore, building supportive relationships with peers is very beneficial for teens suffering from depression. They can gain solace, empathy, understanding, and support from their peers by fostering a sense of brotherhood.

In addition, it is important to maintain strong family ties and treat family members with kindness and respect. Family is the primary source of support, providing care and assistance. Families can support each other during difficult times by offering moral and practical support. Allah (ﷻ) highlighted in *Sūrah al-Baqarah* verse 83:

> And [recall] when We took the covenant from the Children of Israel, [enjoining upon them], 'Do not worship except Allah, and to parents do good and to relatives, orphans, and the needy. And speak to people good [words] and establish prayer and give zakāh.' Then you turned away, except a few of you, and you were refusing.[50]

This verse emphasizes the importance of speaking kindly and treating others with kindness, without exception, whether family members or others. A good relationship between parents and children reduces the likelihood of a teen developing depression. Lack of care and

[49] al-Qur'ān, 49:10
[50] al-Qur'ān, 2:83

overprotection are major risk factors that may lead to undesired responses from a teenager, who is facing a difficult state of mind already during those years of life. A strong relationship with a caregiver prevents depression and covers up negative life events. Peer relationships can act as a buffer, as a friend can provide the support a teen cannot receive from family. Parents are encouraged to provide comfort to their children and their families through the Holy Qur'ān as they grow up. Support through sharing Islamic stories contributes to shaping a personal worldview based on the spiritual, emotional, and spiritual parables contained in the divine scripture.

In Islamic heritage, many supportive relationships are documented that highlight the importance of family, friendship, and community, demonstrating support for people facing difficult life challenges through acts of unconditional love and kindness. These relationships were a true foundation for each other, partners in goodness, in times of prosperity and despair. Documented examples include the intimate and loving relationship between Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) and Khadija (عليها السلام), his first wife, who supported him even after her death. The unexpected support for Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) from his close friend, Abu Bakr (عليه السلام), after the Quraysh mocked him. The well-intentioned support for Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) from his uncle Abu Talib (عليه السلام) is also well documented. His relationship with his cousin Ali (عليه السلام) also includes his support after the deaths of his daughter Fatima (عليها السلام), his son-in-law Ali (عليه السلام), and their grandson Hussein (عليه السلام), with kindness, assistance, and unconditional love. So, providing supportive relationships for adolescents with depression is an important way to build a comprehensive care model for them. Supportive relationships positively impact their mental health. Family, peers, and the community all play important roles in providing this support for adolescents with depression. Nurturing these strong relationships will prevent depression even before it can occur because in the majority of cases, depressed adolescents do not have strong connections in their family or friend circles that gradually take them down the dark tunnel of depression. Hence, strong and meaningful relationship bonds act as both prevention and cure for adolescent depression.

Within the broader framework of Islamic civilization,

relationships are not merely social constructs but are part of the divinely ordained structure of communal life. Human beings, according to the Qurʾān and classical Islamic thought, are created to live not in isolation but in interconnected harmony as part of the *ummah*. Scholars like al-Ghazālī have written extensively on the concept of *ḥusn al-ʿishrah*—beautiful companionship—as both a moral virtue and a spiritual discipline.[51] Nurturing relationships are thus not just psychologically restorative but also acts of *ʿibādah* (worship), reflecting values such as *raḥmah* (compassion), *ukhuwwah* (brotherhood), and *sabr* (patience). As such, supporting adolescents through loving kinship and righteous friendship revives an Islamic model of communal care where emotional healing is inseparable from moral-spiritual growth.

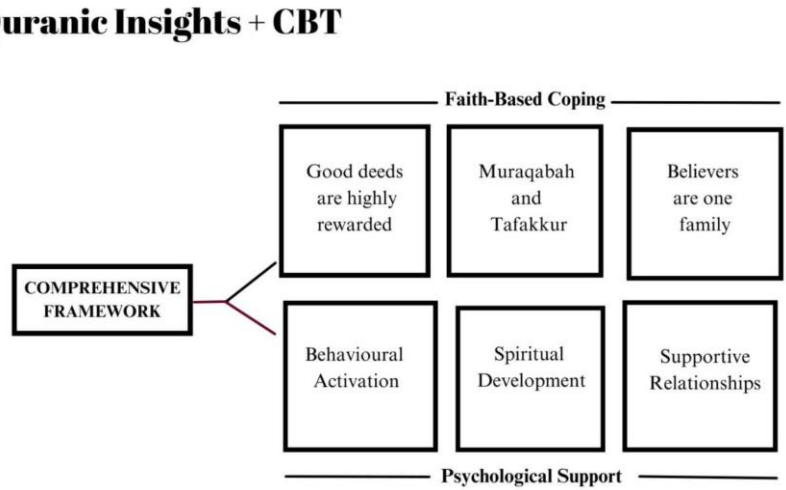


Figure: 01 Source: Author, (2025)

6. Conceptual Framework Summary

6.1 Limitations and Scope of Application

[51] Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī, *Iḥyāʾ ʿUlūm al-Dīn*, vol. 2, *Kitāb Ādāb al-Muʿāsharah* (Cairo: Dār al-Maʿārif, n.d.), 42.

While the integration of Qur'anic guidelines with CBT has been shown to be highly effective in addressing depressive symptoms, this framework may have contextual limitations in application. Individuals especially teens, who struggle to establish even a basic spiritual connection, as well as those from other faith backgrounds, may find it challenging to fully contextualize Qur'anic teachings within their personal experiences. Additionally, this framework is not intended as a self-treatment manual. Addressing depressive symptoms requires professional guidance and structured therapeutic support to ensure effective intervention. From an Islamic perspective, seeking expert assistance is strongly encouraged, particularly for individuals who lack social support or are uncertain about how to navigate their mental health challenges.

This consideration is especially relevant in mental health care, as improper self-treatment or isolation in managing depression can lead to serious consequences. The guidelines presented in this article serve as a complementary resource, offering valuable insights for professionals seeking to develop a holistic approach that integrates spiritual and psychological therapeutic frameworks. They are also beneficial for individuals who already engage with Qur'anic contemplation, as such practices can deepen their spiritual connection and strengthen their relationship with Allah (ﷻ).

6.2 A Civilizational Perspective on Integrating Islamic and Psychological Frameworks

Islamic psychology does not merely complement modern cognitive-behavioral therapy; it represents a broader civilizational paradigm in which mental well-being is inseparable from the soul's alignment with divine order. Thinkers like al-Attas and Nasr argue that healing and knowledge must return to their metaphysical roots to overcome the epistemic fragmentation caused by secular modernity. As al-Attas notes, "the confusion and error in knowledge... have created a condition in which the self is no longer true to its real nature."[52]

In this view, therapy must engage the inner self (*nafs*) as a

[52] Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, *Islam and Secularism* (Kuala Lumpur: ABIM, 1978), 100.

spiritual reality, not just a psychological construct. Nasr likewise reminds us that "the crisis of modern man is above all a crisis of knowledge... he no longer knows what it means to know."[53] Hence, true healing lies not merely in cognitive restructuring but in reorienting the self to the sacred and restoring meaning through divine anchoring.

7. Conclusion

The study concluded that Islam, as a comprehensive religion, helps humans behave in a dignified and beneficial way in this world. The guidance revealed in the Holy Qur'ān provides a model that enables humanity to endure and progress. The study highlighted the devastating effects of moral decay in today's technologically advanced world, highlighting the troubling issue of depression, which can be fatal if not properly addressed. In the context of the discussion, the study explores the methods indicated in the Holy Qur'ān regarding coping mechanisms and support systems for combating and overcoming depression. It addresses three arguments: behavioral activation, spiritual development through contemplation and meditation, and building supportive relationships.

The study describes how the Holy Qur'ān emphasizes taking steps to achieve life satisfaction. It encourages individuals to engage in pleasurable activities, provided they are within the framework of Islamic teachings, maintain a positive outlook on life, and integrate the Holy Qur'ān and therapeutic approaches in treating depression. The analysis also addresses the importance of dealing with depression through mindful *muraqabah* and awareness of the body, emotions, and mind, which can be achieved through reflection (*tafakkur*) and contemplation. Connecting with oneself and one's Creator contributes to enhancing physical, mental, and spiritual health. This Qur'anic study also emphasizes that humans, as social beings, must seek companionship and build and maintain supportive relationships, which contribute to psychological support in the face of depression. Thus, the study concludes by emphasizing the need for

[53] Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Knowledge and the Sacred* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989), 9.

the individual, society, and even society as a whole to work together to limit and mitigate the devastating effects of depression, in light of the teachings of the Holy Qur'ān, to ensure a better life for all of humanity.

Addressing the increasing prevalence of depression and anxiety among adolescents requires adaptation, innovation, policy development, and budget allocation from both mental health policymakers and institutions. These efforts are essential for the early identification and management of mental health issues within adolescent institutional settings. While institutions primarily focus on academic achievement, research suggests they also provide valuable opportunities for social and emotional learning. Governments, institutions, parents, and adolescents must recognize and, where possible, openly acknowledge the role institutions can play in mental health development. To support this, policymakers should integrate mental health literacy programs into curriculum design and implementation. These programs would raise awareness, enhance understanding, reshape attitudes, reduce stigma, and equip children with vital life skills necessary for a healthy and productive future.

Beyond its therapeutic efficacy, this integrated framework reflects a deeper civilizational imperative: restoring a sacred worldview in which the self is viewed as a moral and spiritual entity, not merely a clinical subject. Islamic psychology, grounded in the Qur'anic worldview, offers a unified understanding of human nature, where healing entails mental regulation and spiritual realignment. Thinkers like Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas and Seyyed Hossein Nasr argue that the modern crisis of mental health is inseparable from the loss of metaphysical meaning and the desacralization of knowledge. Reintegrating revelation with psychological practice is, therefore, not merely a therapeutic act but a civilizational project that restores *adab*, purpose, and the soul's connection to the divine order. This study hopes to contribute to that revival.

PRINCIPLES AND CASE STUDIES OF AN ISLAMIC APPROACH FOR SCIENCE EDUCATION

Ahmed Hassan Mabrouk[1]

Abstract:

The way of teaching science in Western schools has become the main channel for developing secular minds. Due to the strong technological and economic impact of science in today's world, teaching science through a religion-averse approach would be a successful recipe for developing a secular society. Islamization efforts aimed at deprogramming the secular orientation in science teaching and restoring the compatible position of science with the Islamic world view. In continuation of such efforts, this article is written for Muslim scientists and educators who aspire to align science presentation with their faith. The article discusses ten aspects to be mended in the current practices of science teaching. Each aspect is presented through an Islamic principle, supplemented with a few case studies. Science presentation through an Islamic lens is meant to elevate science from a collection of dry, technical points to a discipline that arouses our sense of appreciation of the wisdom and perfection in our world. As such, this article could serve as a link between the general principles of Islamization of knowledge on one hand and the teaching approaches of science on the other hand. Similar efforts of Christian scientists are also surveyed. At last, recommendations for building a conducive environment for an Islamic-friendly presentation of science are given.

Keywords: Islamization of Science, Secular Education, Islamic Worldview, Science Pedagogy, Faith-Based Teaching.

[1] Former Associate Professor, Department of Computer Science, Kulliyyah of Information and Communication Technology, International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) and Currently CEO and Founder, SKILIK Robo Advisory Sdn. Bhd. Email: asic4unwire@yahoo.com.

1. Scope and Objectives of Islamization of Science

Knowledge is a reflection of the values of its generators. When Muslims were pioneers in knowledge creation, their knowledge naturally embodied Islamic values. However, when colonization controlled Muslim countries and impeded the inculcation of Islamic values in new branches of knowledge, the need for Islamization of knowledge appeared. Islamization of science in particular is critically important as a result of their economic impact and their prevailing influence on our lifestyle. Nonetheless it is instructive to clarify exactly what is meant by Islamization of science to gather momentum for this vital initiative and to avoid groundless criticism of it.

Following the Ghazalian style,[2] Islamization of science education involves two major tasks, namely removing the anti-Islamic elements from science, and infusing Islamic values into science. The second task should enable a synergy between science curricula and Islamic studies curricula. An obvious example of an anti-Islamic element is a statement like 'the configuration of an organism is the result of the way nature evolved over billions of years.' Denial of divine acts should be eliminated from science. Furthermore, science should not be reduced to mere material views. Islamic perspectives should augment the empirical presentation. For example, it is not sufficient to physically characterize the spine anatomically and physiologically, such a description should be used to foster our servitude to God and to mandate ethical and responsible utilization of our abilities. The elements of the Islamization of science will be outlined in more details in Table 1, which follows the discussion of the ten principles to be established in science education. The synergy between science and Islamic studies will be discussed in *The Way Forward* section.

To avoid any misunderstanding regarding the intent of the Islamization of science education, it is instructive to state the aspects to be maintained in science education as follows:

[2] Al-Ghazālī (d. 1111) often used the terms *takhliyyah* and *taḥliyyah* to refer to the process of removing undesirable traits and cultivating virtuous ones.

1.1. The economic dimension of science investigation should be maintained. Islamic economy does not restrict technology development for commercial purposes. As such, governmental agencies, and public and private companies are entitled to develop scientific solutions for profit. The Islamic education of science does not aim at confining science to mere philosophical discussions.

1.2. Experimentation is an essential means for verifying hypotheses and exploring new dimensions. Observation and confirmation are deep-rooted in the Islamic thought and practice of Muslim scientists. Nonetheless, it should be realized that controlled experiments, where independent variables are accessible, are limited to a narrow domain of cases.[3]

1.3. The quantitative character of science is desirable. Mathematics is the language of science. Accurate measurements and quantitative modelling are vital tools for delivering concrete results. However, fuzziness is unavoidable in many applications, for which fuzzy logic has been devised.[4] Additionally, qualitative reasoning is also needed for an adequate characterization of many scenarios.[5]

2. Stages of Secularizing Science

During the golden era of Islamic civilization, science used to be practiced under the blessing of religious figures. Scientists, such as Jabir ibn Hayyan (d. 813), Father of Chemistry, al-Zahrawi (d. 1013), Father of Surgery, and al-Jazari (d. 1206), Father of Mechanical Engineering, were motivated by their Islamic sentiment to break new

[3] See "16 Advantages and Disadvantages of Experimental Research," *Vittana*, accessed July 18, 2024, https://vittana.org/16-advantages-and-disadvantages-of-experimental-research

[4] S. Sivanandam, S. Deepa, and S. Sumathi, *Introduction to Fuzzy Logic using MATLAB* (Berlin: Springer-Verlag, 2007).

[5] S. Tracy, *Qualitative Research Methods*, 2nd Ed. (New Jersey: Wiley Blackwell, 2019).

grounds and elevate their societies.[6] Unfortunately, this love-based marriage between science and Islam was terminated when the torch of civilization moved to Europe during renaissance. European scientists had a very different experience with the church. Scientific discoveries were rejected based on the views of religious authorities. Even worse, scientists, like Galileo (d. 1642), were persecuted and forced to retract their findings. Others like Copernicus (d. 1543) concealed their writings in anticipation of the reaction of the church.[7] Accordingly scientific advancement and economic development had to be sought away from religion in the western world, which paved the way to secularism.

Secularism brought dramatic changes to the relationship between science and religion that reshaped the culture in both of western and Muslim societies. At present, it is considered inappropriate to mention 'God' in scientific works. This sweeping change has take a few centuries, until we reached the point of open animosity of science to religion. The important milestones of the path of secularizing science are summarized below:

2.1. The attempt of the church officers to thwart scientific investigations that did not comply with their views triggered the clash between science and religion. In 1551, the Pope declared that "People should not just follow reason, but should confirm their opinions with the Holy Scripture, traditions of the Apostles, and sacred and approved Councils."[8] In response to the Pope's statement, following the Holy Scripture would not be a problem. The problem lied in giving a definite, undebatable authority to the views of the church officers that the Pope referred to as approved

[6] G. Sarton, *Introduction to the History of Science* (Baltimore: The Williams and Wilkins Company, 1931).

[7] See "Copernicus, Galileo, and the Church: Science in a Religious World," *Inquiries Journal*, accessed July 18, 2024, http://www.inquiriesjournal.com/articles/1675/copernicus-galileo-and-the-church-science-in-a-religious-world

[8] M. Allaby, and D. Gjertsen, *Makers of Science-1* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 18.

Councils, based on which scientific findings were discredited.

2.2. August Comte (d. 1857) claimed that the only valid knowledge is the one gained through observation and experimentation.[9] For some reason, this claim was termed as Positivism. With Positivism, the domain of valid knowledge was confined to the limits of our senses, and even tighter to that can be confirmed by experimentation. Positivism automatically marginalizes human sciences. Following Positivism, various social sciences with long legacy would fail to qualify as science.[10] Furthermore, the study of complex systems, which are hard to test, would face the same difficulty. The predominant experimental trend of Positivism diminishes the role of rational faculties, or at least gives it less attention.

2.3. Not only did Positivism limit knowledge, but it also degraded religion in favor of science. Comte claimed that in the early stage of human history, people had a lot of unanswered questions about the world, and in particular about how natural phenomena occur. Religion, according to Comte, was used to fill the gap by attributing these phenomena to God. However, as science advances, it will be able to answer such questions, which directly eliminates the need for religion. Apparently, Comte had a major misunderstanding about the purpose of religion. He assumed that religion should explain natural phenomena!

2.4. Then, Darwin (d. 1882) introduced evolution as a mechanism to replace creation. Evolution relied on autonomous mechanisms, such as mutation and the survival of the fittest, that do not need an external supervisor.[11] According to evolutionists, the current status of the species is the result of the work done by nature over billions of

[9] Auguste Comte, *A General View of Positivism* (London: Trubner and Co., Paternoster, 1865).

[10] H. Kincaid, *Philosophical Foundations of the Social Sciences, Analyzing Controversies in Social Research* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

[11] Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species* (New York: P. F. Collier & Son, 1909).

years. In the last phase of this work by nature, apes evolved to those spices called men. Rather than thinking of ourselves as dignified creatures, to whom angels were ordered to bow, we are considered the successors of monkeys in the context of evolution. Darwinism paved the way for atheism by pushing creationism into the realm of old-time fictions.

2.5. Marx (d. 1883) proposed that human history is shaped based on the material needs of people. He assumed that there are continuous struggles in the society, such as the struggle between workers and business owners, that shape the way events progress. Under materialism, noble qualities and ethical norms are no longer influential factors in real life. Materialism also conflicts with long standing and widely accepted notions. Among others, people tend to accept that some leaders are endowed with exceptional qualities that prepared them for outstanding achievements. However, materialists think that such heroes are the outcomes of the burning pressure of the circumstances. In short, materialism strips man of his distinctive merits and reduces him to a thinking mammal.

2.6. Then, Russell (d. 1970) introduced the theory of Definite Descriptions, which aims at removing ambiguous references from scientific theories.[12] The theory states that predicates, or the descriptions of entities in a theory, must correspond to concrete and empirically defined entities in the external world. The theory, hence, serves as a further step to tighten the grip of empiricism on the structure of scientific theories.

2.7. Vienna Circle[13] has undertaken the task of secularizing science in education. The circle members rejected metaphysical arguments. Such arguments are not limited to the World of the Unseen, such as heavens and angels. Metaphysical arguments extend to abstract entities like wisdom and beauty. Accordingly, metaphysical arguments have been declared unscientific and should thus be removed

[12] : Bertrand Russell, "On Denoting," *Mind* 14, no. 4 (October 1905): 479–493.

[13] A group of philosophers and scientists who used to meet in the years of 1924-1936 to discuss issues of the philosophy of science.

from the vocabulary of science. After the Second World War, some members of the Circle moved to USA. There, they implemented their views in universities and communities of applied research. Vienna Circle managed to bring secularism to Western universities. Nowadays, college students have to follow the restrictive framework laid out by the Circle in order to be considered real scientists!

2.8. Finally, union emerged between Comte's Positivism and Russell theory of Definite Descriptions, giving rise to Logical Positivism.[14] Logical Positivism considers the abstract arguments, namely metaphysical, spiritual, and ethical arguments, unscientific because they lack the empirical character and do not refer to cognitively concrete entities. After removing these three abstract components of science, the leftover is merely measurements and lab experiments. An Islamic renaissance is needed to restore the rational and insightful character of science and bring mind back atop of its kingdom.

3. Glimpses at the Islamization of Knowledge Project

In the second half of the twentieth century, the colonial armed forces left Muslim countries. The next logical step was to free Muslim minds from the intellectual impact of colonialism. In 1977, prominent Muslim thinkers gathered in Makkah through the *First World Conference on Muslim Education* to discuss ways for dealing with the increasingly invasive secular impact on Muslim education.[15] In this conference, Ismail al-Faruqi and Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas played a pivotal role in formulating the concept of Islamization of Knowledge (IOK), which aims at aligning all fields of knowledge, including science, with the principles and values of Islam.

In his seminal work in 1982 entitled "*Islamization of Knowledge: General Principles and Work Plan*," al-Faruqi addressed

[14] The term "Logical" refers to Russell's proposal that the conclusions of scientific theories should conform to the structure of mathematical logic.

[15] S. Ashraf, *Islamic Education Movement, An Historical Analysis, 1977-1990* (Kuala Lumpur: Muslim World Research Center, 2017).

the divide between religious and secular education systems. This divide "severs the connection between Muslims and their heritage, hindering their enthusiasm for creative expressions of Islam."[16] Al-Faruqi highlighted that public funds are made available only under the terms of secularization, which resulted in two bifurcating systems, one Islamic and one secular.[17] Al-Faruqi called for a comprehensive overhaul of the education system for a genuine revival of the Ummah.[18]

In his seminal work in 1978 entitled "*Islam and Secularism*," al-Attas stated that the "Holy Qur'an is God's invitation to a spiritual banquet on earth, and we are exhorted to partake of it by means of acquiring real knowledge of it."[19] Accordingly, the Qur'ān is the real and true source of knowledge, to which all other branches of knowledge must comply. Al-Attas further stated that "Education is the instilling and inculcation of *adab*[20] in man,"[21] where *adab* encompasses the spiritual and material life of man, and instils the quality of goodness in him/her.[22] Through instilling *adab* in man during the educational process, a good man that brings justice[23] to himself and to the society is produced.

In his seminal work entitled "*Tawhid and Science: Islamic Perspectives on Religion and Science*," Osman Bakar "seeks to reveal different dimensions of the organic link that exists between al-

[16] J. Khowaja "Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi's Islamization of Knowledge: A Critical Analysis," *Islam Perceptions and Perspectives* (2024): 3.

[17] Ismail al-Faruqi, *Islamization of Knowledge: General Principles and Work Plan* (Herndon: International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1989), 6.

[18] J. Khowaja "Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi's Islamization of Knowledge: A Critical Analysis," 3.

[19] Syed Naquib Al-Attas, *Islam and Secularism* (Kuala Lumpur: International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization, 1993), 150.

[20] Al-Attas emphasized that *adab* is the only appropriate and adequate term that pertains to education. According to him, it is a mistake to use the term *tarbiyyah*, or upbringing, in relation to education because of its physical connotations and universal application to man and animals alike. See S. Al-Attas, *Islam and Secularism*, 151-152.

[21] al-Attas, *Islam and Secularism*, 152.

[22] Ibid., 151.

[23] See how Al-Attas defined justice in al-Attas, *Islam and Secularism*, 149.

tawhid and science as seen through Muslim scientific eyes."[24] Bakar also discusses the shared features between Islamic science and modern science "such as the rational and logical nature of its language, the adoption of scientific and experimental methods of inquiry, and the international character of its scientific practice and organization."[25] Chapter 4 about "*The Unity of Science and Spiritual Knowledge: The Islamic Experience*" discusses the Tawhidic perspective of science which knows God through nature and knows nature through God.[26] This perspective stands in contrast to the spirit of reductionism which characterizes modern science.

The above works and many others[27] laid out the theory and principles of the IOK project. An important component of the *work plan* of this project is to produce science curricula for school students that implement these principles. This was the initiative taken by Kamal Hassan and his team. In *Natural Science from the Worldview of the Quran: An Introduction,* the Quranic worldview of the study of natural sciences is laid, alongside the fundamental concepts of biology and physics. Even though it is declared by the authors that the book is intended for high school students, a considerable amount of work is still needed before the book can be actually used for this purpose. However, the book can be used by high school science teachers for supplying a complementary Islamic background to be conveyed in class instruction. To better understand the educational contribution of the book, a limited survey on selected physics topics was conducted. This analysis highlights how the integration of Qur'anic worldview and scientific concepts was operationalized. Based on this review, the following Islamic elements were identified in the curriculum design:

3.1. Attributing the favors of God to Him, such as the provision

[24] Osman Bakar, *Tawhid and Science, Islamic Perspectives on Religion and Science, Second Edition* (Kuala Lumpur: ARAH Publications, 2008), ix.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Ibid., 61-76.
[27] The list of works discussed in this section is not meant to be comprehensive or inclusive by any means. The author acknowledges the fact there are other significant works that are not included in this list.

of energy through the sun,[28] and the use of the energy of wind in sailing ships.[29]

3.2. Giving practical examples of the impact of divine favors on our daily life, such as the conversion of the sun's energy to other forms and using them in powering modern transportation.[30]

3.3. Linking the laws of physics that form the physical order in the world to divine actions, (*tadbīr Allāh al-kawnī*), such as the dispersal of energy as measured by the entropy.[31]

3.4. Giving Islamic guidelines for protecting the environment and reducing energy consumption.[32]

Muslim scholars were not the only ones concerned about the secular orientation of contemporary science works. A group of Christian scientists and scholars in the USA have done a substantial amount of work in refuting evolution. They coined the term 'Intelligent Design' in reference to the diligent and complex functions of living organisms that would inevitably need a Designer.[33] However, this group was not labelled as creationists because they did not explicitly specify the identity of the Designer.[34] Michael Behe, an American molecular biologist, is the leading scientific spokesperson for Intelligent Design. In *Darwin's Black Box*, Behe presented three irreducibly complex organisms whose diverse functions must exist at the same time in order for these organisms to survive.[35] The notion of 'irreducible complexity' is

[28] Muhammad Kamal Hassan, *Natural Science from the World View of the Qur'ān*, vol. 2 (Kuala Lumpur: Institut Terjemahan & Buku Malaysia, 2018), 104.
[29] Ibid., 113.
[30] Ibid., 105.
[31] Ibid., 447-448.
[32] Ibid., 107.
[33] This term was used in P. Davis, D. Kenyon, and C. Thaxton, *Of Pandas and People: The Central Question of Biological Origins* (Dallas: Haughton Pub. Co., 1993).
[34] Even though some people assume it is straightforward to understand that references to "God" in such discussions pertain to the Christian conception, the underlying theological implications are often left unexplored.
[35] Michael Behe, *Darwin's Black Box: The Biochemical Challenge to Evolution*

antagonistic to the notion of gradual development of organisms as proposed by evolutionists. Also, Phillip Johnson, a Law Professor, has done rigorous analysis of evolution that showed the flaws and logical inconsistency of its concepts and mechanisms.[36]

In 2004, the Kitzmiller Dover School District Board required presentation of the concept of Intelligent Design in ninth grade biology classes, alongside evolution. However, a group of student parents sued the board challenging the constitutional validity of the Board policy. In 2005, Judge John Jones ruled against the Board and barred any reference of Intelligent Design in science classes, on account of violating the constitution of Pennsylvania. In the 'findings of facts', Judge Jones stated that Intelligent Design is of religious nature, or 'religion in disguise'. He further stated that Intelligent Design violates a centuries-long legacy of scientific investigation.[37] It is worth mentioning that Judge Jones simply reiterated the stands of Positivists. The verdict was criticized as it resorted to censorship and imposition of a single direction, instead of recommending open discussions and presentation of evidence. Ironically, the Pa. Court decision in the twenty first century is no different from the church decision to persecute scientists in the sixteenth century.

4. Ten Principles to be Established in Science Education

Islamization of science education goes through two phases: establishing the principles and the conceptual framework and then implementing these principles according to the prescribed framework. Through excellent and insightful research by many prominent Muslim thinkers, the first phase has been completed successfully. As far as the implementation phase is concerned, there is still considerable work to be done. According to al-Faruqi, there are important methodological principles of Islam, which include the unity of truth, the unity of knowledge, the deliberate nature of creation, and the relationship of servitude between creation and

(New York: Free Press, 1996).

[36] P. Jonhson, *Darwin on Trial* (Washington, D.C.: Regnery Gateway, 1991).

[37] "Kitzmiller v. Dover Area School District," *Wikipedia*, accessed May 18, 2024, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kitzmiller_v._Dover_Area_School_District.

humanity, and between humanity and Allah (ﷻ).[38] These principles must be incorporated into the body of modern science by removing, revising, reinterpreting, and adjusting its elements in accordance with the Islamic worldview.[39] Al-Faruqi listed seven areas to work on towards achieving the above aim, including mastery of modern science and mastery of Islamic legacy.[40] Apparently, the scarce of personnel who concurrently master these two fields[41] and the lack of productive dialogues between religious scholars and scientists hindered the advancement of the implementation phase. As a humble step towards implementing the Islamization of science education, this article pinpoints ten aspects to be mended in science education in general, and in applied sciences education in particular. These ten aspects collectively form a conducive framework for science to achieve its utilitarian purpose and to fit harmoniously into the Islamic legacy. Each of these aspects is discussed below, starting with the Islamic principle to be considered and followed with practical case studies.

First principle: The hierarchy of human knowledge consists of various layers, on top of which come revelation-based concepts. Applied sciences occupy lower layers in accordance with their credibility and authenticity. This principle is a direct result of recognizing the source of each type of knowledge. Divine statements – when expressed in a definitive manner – are not subject to error, since their originator is the creator of the universe. On the other hand, applied sciences are the outcomes of the ongoing human endeavor with the cosmos. They endure successive stages of authenticity, accuracy, and comprehension. In fact, according to Popper, such sciences can never be certain.[42] Even though I have some reservations on Popper's view,[43] it nonetheless points out the

[38] al-Faruqi, *Islamization of Knowledge: General Principles and Work Plan*, 20.
[39] Ibid., 18.
[40] Ibid., 59-79.
[41] It should be noted that al-Faruqi was among the rare scholars who mastered both domains; he held a PhD in Western philosophy as well as a PhD in Islamic studies from al-Azhar University.
[42] Karl Popper, *The Logic of Scientific Discovery* (London: Routledge Classics, 2007), 17-20.
[43] Ahmed Hassan Mabrouk "*Towards a Scientific Approach for Integrating*

doubtful nature of applied sciences. As a result, when divine statements explicitly state a point, scientific research should not attempt to prove the opposite.

Case Study 1: God says: "They ask you O Prophet about the spirit. Say, its nature is known only to my Lord," *al-Isrā'*, 85, stating that the soul is beyond the domain of human knowledge. Islamic theology regards soul as a non-physical matter that inhibits the human body while alive and is taken out by the angel of death when the respective human dies. As God says: "Say, O Prophet, your soul will be taken by the Angel of Death, who is in charge of you. Then to your Lord you will all be returned," *Sūrah al-Sajdah*, 11. Accordingly, research that is solely dedicated to reviving dead bodies, as well as medical procedures of freezing dead bodies in anticipation of medical doctors being able to bring them back to life are both against Islamic teaching.

Case study 2: God says: "Indeed, We created humans in the best form," *Sūrah al-Tīn*, 4, stating that the human functions and configuration are in their best possible status. Physical human characteristics are coded into the human genes. The International Islamic Fiqh Academy resolved that "If genetic treatment is sought for the mere sake of acquiring specific characteristics such as shape alteration, it becomes prohibited because it involves the prohibited act of changing the original form of Allah (ﷻ) creation."[44] Accordingly, genetic research aiming at changing inherent human characteristics of healthy people[45] should cease.

It is important to note that the statements of Islamic revelation about cosmic-based issues have been focused on demonstrating the divine perfection and mercy of creatures. Only in limited and specific issues did Islamic revelation state science-related facts, such as those in the above two case studies. For this reason, Islamic history never

---

Science's Outputs and Islamic Concepts – Part 1," TAFHIM: IKIM Journal of Islam and the Contemporary World 16 No. 1 (June 2023): 17-19.

[44] International Islamic Fiqh Academy, *Resolutions and Recommendations of the International Islamic Fiqh Academy*, 3rd ed. (Jeddah: www.iifa-aifi.org, 2024), Resolution no. 203, 496.

[45] Apparently, treating malfunctioning gene that causes disability or ailment should be allowed. Similarly, devising defensive measures against military genetic weapons should be pursued.

witnessed persecution of scientists by a religious authority similar to those inflicted on the western scientists by the church during the renaissance era. On the contrary, Muslim scientists have been motivated by their religious attitude to explore the universe and uncover its secrets.[46]

Second principle: Divine acts are to be solely attributed to God. One of the integral components of monotheism, *tawhid*, is that no other gods are to be associated with God. The Qur'ān expounds this principle in many places. For example, the verses of *Sūrah al-Naml*, 60-64, bring to our attention the creation of heavens and earth, the landscape formation on earth, replying to the distress, and guiding people on land and sea. In particular, verse 61 asks, "Who made the earth a place of settlement, caused rivers to flow through it, placed firm mountains upon it, and set a barrier between fresh and salt bodies of water? Was it another god besides Allah SWT? Absolutely not!" Furthermore, in *Sūrah al-Wāqi'ah*, 63-74, God reminds people of His favors in their livelihood, such as the growing plants, the drinking water, and the fire we kindle.

Case study: Many science books refer to nature as a creator with free will and executive power. It is common to find statements like, "Landform was formed naturally …" and "What we see now is the outcome of work done by nature over several billions of years." Instead of referring to a vague and nonconcrete entity like nature, God is to be acknowledged!

*Third principle***:** Both deterministic processes as well as stochastic processes are fully known to God beforehand and governed by His will. Deterministic processes follow predictable formulae with regard to all components involved. For example, it is known at which temperature water boils. Likewise, the acceleration of a ball that is kicked by a known force can be determined in advance. On the other hand, the agents of a stochastic process follow a probabilistic framework. For example, which sperm is going to fertilize the egg, which virus is going to lead to sickness, and which seed is going to split and produce the seedling are all stochastic processes. We can only characterize such processes with likelihood

[46] al-Qur'ān, 29:19-20.

figures. Stochastic processes demonstrate the divine will in enabling some agents and prohibiting others. In *Sūrah al-An'ām*, 59, God says, "Not even a leaf falls without His knowledge, nor a grain in the darkness of the earth or anything—green or dry—but is written in a perfect Record." As the verse names various stochastic processes, it shows that all the events of such processes are fully known in advance to God and controlled by His will.

Case study: Weather conditions, including rainfall, follow a stochastic process in our human sense. However, it is fully documented in the decree of when and where every drop of water is going to fall on earth. Alongside meteorological analysis for rainfall prediction, scientists should realize that all weather conditions, including precipitation, are fully controlled by God. Interestingly, Muslims pray for rainfall, *ṣalat al-istisqa'*, based on this belief.

It is worth noting that randomness, as shown in stochastic processes, has been used by the Western scientific community as a tool to obscure the divine acts. Darwin resorted to the random mutations of cells to claim the emergence of spices with new characteristics.[47] The same concept was generalized to the formation of galaxies and our solar system for the purpose of denying the creation of heavens and earth as depicted in Qur'an and other holy books.[48] In *The Society of Mind*, D. Minsky attempted to show that the functions of a central processor can be equivalently conducted by small agents, each of which is unaware of the other agents. In other words, Minsky tried to show that the central leader can be replaced by small, distributed agents, and the self-conscious supervisor can be replaced by unconscious micro agents.[49]

In the past few decades, the above concept was imported to the field of machine learning and utilized to portray neural networks as self-learning systems, even though the mechanism of updating the parameters of neural networks is neither learning nor autonomous.[50]

---

[47] Harun Yahya, *Darwinism Refuted* (New Delhi: Goodword Books Pvt. Ltd., 2002), 27-30.

[48] Osman Bakar, *Quranic Pictures of the Universe, The Scriptural Foundation of Islamic Cosmology* (Gadong: UDB Press, 2016).

[49] M. Minsky, *The Society of Mind* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1986).

[50] "Overview of Neural Network's Learning Process," *Medium*, accessed August 3,

Apparently, randomness is being used as a mental trap for confusing the intellect and obscuring divine acts under the hood of micro, self-adapting agents.

Fourth principle: Scientific theories should not be crafted in accordance with a preset assumption. Rather, they should be based on verified hypotheses. As God said, "Do not follow what you have no sure knowledge of. Indeed, all will be called to account for their hearing, sight, and intellect," *Sūrah al-Isrā'*: 36. When significant pieces of information are lacking and, as a result, some conclusions are made based on best guess, this should be highlighted, in order to distinguish evidence-based points from guess-based claims. Scientific theories are not the right place for triggering imagination to guess missing links when tangible facts are scarce.

Case study 1: Anthropologists portray first man and early communities on earth as primitive, undeveloped creatures whose behavior and manners were close to animals. As a matter of fact, the father of men, Adam, peace be upon him, was a Prophet with intelligence and good social manners. Furthermore, as far as social sciences that shape morals and behavior are concerned, the depth and insight of these sciences were higher in early generations than later ones. Regarding the Muslim *Ummah* in particular, our Prophet indicated that as time goes by Muslim generations will not be as good as early generations. He said, "The best generation is mine, then the one after, then the one after."[51] Our Prophet named some of the signs of the Last Day as, "Work decreases, stinginess becomes rampant, and killings increase."[52]

Once again, the picture of less developed early humans is aligned to the vision of evolution, which assumes that organisms improve gradually as they interact with the surrounding environment. The Qur'ān, however, presents a totally different picture. The first man was created in the best fashion, knowledgeable of his Creator, able to communicate, and capable of recognizing, naming, and

---

2024, https://medium.com/data-science-365/overview-of-a-neural-networks-learning-process-61690a502fa

[51] al-Bukhari, *Ṣaḥīh al-Bukhari* (Damascus: Dar Ibn Katheer, 2002), The Book of Testimony, Ḥadīth number 2651.

[52] Ibid., Ḥadīth number 6037.

classifying things. In line with this Qur'anic picture, recent archaeological findings suggest a considerable level of sophistication in selecting material and building specific tools by Paleolithic (Old Stone Age) humans, who have been regarded as primitive species relying on hunting and fishing for livelihood.[53]

Case study 2: Theories of cosmology that address the temporal formation of the universe have been established after the fact. They lack observability of the actual events as they unfold over time. As God says, "I never called them to witness the creation of the heavens and the earth or even their own creation, nor would I take the misleaders as helpers," *Sūrah al-Kahf*, 51. The big bang, the formation of galaxies, and the composition of the layers of earth could have happened in totally different ways than those described in cosmology literature. When the observed facts do not stand alone to establish credible theories, it is just fair to acknowledge that the relevant theories are guess-based. For brevity, it suffices to mention that the meaning of the big bang as an ultimate beginning to all types of existence is no longer accepted among cosmologists.[54]

As ideology and culture have a strong influence on scientists, it is common to have bias towards unislamic tendencies among western scientists. Hence, it is the role of Muslim scientists to critically assess the above theories of anthropology and cosmology for the sake of producing fact-based views about the early history of man on earth and the creation of the universe respectively.

Fifth principle: Many of the natural systems are facilitated for the benefit of mankind. For example, the cycle of day and night, the rainfall and plantation, metals and fuels buried into the earth, cattle and domesticated animals, and forests and oceans are all given to people for free. In fact, most of the economic activities capitalize on natural resources, without which no economic growth could have been realized. God says, "He also subjected for you whatever is in

[53]See "Stone Tool Discovery Challenges Entire Theory of Early Human Intelligence and Evolution," *Earth.com*, accessed February 21, 2025, https://www.earth.com/news/stone-tool-flint-discovery-challenges-theory-of-human-cultural-evolution/.

[54]"The Big Bang No Longer Means What It Used To," *Big Think*, accessed February 21, 2025, https://bigthink.com/starts-with-a-bang/big-bang-meaning/?utm_source=mailchimp&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=weeklynewsletter.

the heavens and whatever is on the earth—all by His grace," *Sūrah al-Jāthiyah*: 13. In addition, man is privileged over many creatures. For example, cognitive and reasoning abilities, innovation and imagination, and mercy and compassion are all differential advantages to humans. God says, "Indeed, We have dignified the children of Adam, carried them on land and sea, granted them good and lawful provisions, and privileged them far above many of Our creatures," *Sūrah al-Isrā'*: 70. All these gifts should be acknowledged verbally and in action. Instead of thanking nature for its continuous work over 13.7 billion years, we should thank God for His continuous nurture since the inception of the universe.

Case study 1: Anatomical and physiological properties of animals are amazing demonstrations of how suitable and adaptable these animals are to the purpose of their creation and to their environment respectively. The anatomies of the knee joint and the shoulder plate enable a wide range of movements, which contribute directly to the diverse and complex tasks conducted by legs and arms.[55] Lions are given sharp canines to eat meat, which is the main ingredient of their diet. Likewise, deer and cows are given incisors to cut plants, and fish are given gills to survive in water. Examples of this sort are countless. All these forms of adaptation are direct application of the Quranic verse, "Our Lord is the One Who has given everything its distinctive form, then guided it," *Sūrah Ṭāhā*: 50.

Case study 2: Behavior of animals can be classified into learned and instinctive behavior. Examples of instinctive behavior are the turtles' burial of their eggs under sand, the sucking of milk by newborns from their mothers, and the migration of whales from cold to warm regions.[56] These instinctive behaviors have been ingrained by God into respective animals to save their lives and maintain their livelihood. Secular thinkers describe the behavior but disable the

[55] See "Shoulder," *PhysioPedia*, accessed August 18, 2024, https://www.physio-pedia.com/Shoulder.

[56] "Instinct vs Learned Behaviour," *Animal Behavior Corner*, accessed August 18, 2024, https://animalbehaviorcorner.com/instinct-vs-learned-behavior-unveiling-natures-blueprint/

causality law to inhibit the attribution of these bounties to their Originator.

Sixth principle: Human knowledge is severely limited.[57] We learn about the world through our senses with the support of auxiliary instruments such as telescopes and microscopes. Since the universe dimensions far exceed billions of light years, and light is the fastest speed that an object can travel with, the part of the universe that is within our observation is extremely tiny. On the other hand, there are so many micro creatures beyond our detection. For example, viruses can only be probed with electron microscopes, which show limited aspects of the object under observation. Particularly important, the subatomic particles and their quantized energy levels are beyond direct observation, which resulted in conflicting interpretations of the experimental results of Quantum Physics and inconsistent views of their implications.[58] Beside the creatures we are aware of, there may be other creatures around us or in different parts of the universe, but beyond the scope of our senses. For example, we know that we cannot see angels in their original forms; they have to take the form of humans to enable communication with Prophets. All the above limitations of human sensation and perception are summed up in the Quranic verse that simply states the divine reminder, "And you O humanity have been given but little knowledge," *Sūrah al-Isrā'*: 85. Such a realization of knowledge limitation motivates people to be humble and cautious of falling in error. A deeply rooted practice among Muslim scholars is the humble admission, "I do not know," grounded in the conviction that acknowledging one's limits is itself a form of knowledge—indeed, that half of knowledge lies in the ability to say so..[59] As God said, "We elevate in rank whoever We will. But above those ranking in knowledge is the One All-Knowing," *Sūrah Yūsuf*: 76. In

[57] J. Vazhayil, *Limits and Limitations of the Human Mind* (Bangalore: Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., 1996).

[58] Ahmed Hassan Mabrouk "Quantum Physics and the Boundaries of Human Perception," *TAFHIM: IKIM Journal of Islam and the Contemporary World*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (June 2020): 23–55.

[59] M. ʿAwāmah, Adab al-Ikhtilāf fī Masāʾil al-ʿIlm wa al-Dīn (The Manners of Differences in the Issues of Knowledge and Religion) (Beirut: Dār al-Bashāʾir al-Islāmiyyah, 1997), 172–174.

consideration of our limited knowledge of ourselves and the universe, it makes sense to accept revelation as the setter of the principles governing our knowledge.

Case study: Numerous phenomena in all fields of natural sciences are partially explained. For example, the methods of coding, processing, and retrieving information into and from our brains are far from being understood. Similarly, the chemistry of sleep and its peculiar case of hibernation are still beyond comprehension. During hibernation, breath rate, heartbeats, and body temperature are all reduced to enable the survival of the animal with the lowest amount of energy. The hibernating animal is released from searching for food in unfavorable environmental conditions. Such unexplained phenomena should arouse the sense of gratitude to the divine nurture, which takes place through processes that are totally beyond our control, and even perplexing to our intelligence.

Seventh principle: The universe is not an isolated closed system. It is worth noting that, the universe has gateways for bidirectional connections between our world and the world of the unseen, *ʿĀlam al-Ghayb*. Angels come down to earth for several reasons, the most famous of which is the descent of the Angel Jabril for conveying Holy Scriptures to Prophets.[60] Human souls are sent to earth to be breathed into their embryos.[61] In the journey of our Prophet to the Heavens accompanied by Jabril, the latter knocked the gates of the seven heavens, one after the other, until they reached the seventh heaven.[62] The carriers of the Throne seek forgiveness for the believers and ask their Lord to grant forgiveness to the repenting servants.[63] Devils are thrown by meteoroids when they attempt to listen to the news of the unknown.[64] There is also a limited communication between living people and the souls of the deceased ones through true visions. Our Prophet, (ﷺ), is informed every time

[60] al-Bukhari, *Saḥih al-Bukhari, the Book of the Commencement of Revelation*, Ḥadīth number 2-4.
[61] Ibid., Ḥadīth number 3208.
[62] Ibid., Ḥadīth number 3887.
[63] al-Qur'ān, 40: 7.
[64] Sūrat Aṣ-Ṣāffāt, 7–8, and the commentary on these verses in al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī* (Beirut: Muʾassasat al-Risālah, 1994), 6:295–296.

someone sends his/her prayers to him.[65] God injects bursts of energy into the universe, which contribute to its expansion.[66]

Case study: Scientists are intrigued by the question: "Are we alone in the universe?" They go alien hunters and try to detect extraterrestrial life. Scientists search for cosmic signals coming from the outer space, they examine the possibility of life, even in bacterial form, on planets of our solar system, and they look for bugs that breath hydrogen on the moons of Jupiter and Saturn.[67] When scientists look for aliens, they have to keep into consideration that forms of life in different parts of the world might be quite different from ours on earth. Thus, our fuzzy cognitive abilities should be employed such that we do not ignore evidence or clues we do not expect to encounter. As a direct application of this line of thinking, we have definitive evidence from the Qur'ān that there are six other skies above ours, in each of them God set its own order and creatures. God says, "So He formed the heaven into seven heavens in two Days, assigning to each its mandate,"[68] *Sūrah Fuṣṣilat*: 12. As scientists are busy looking for aliens and they try to contact them, they should also state the existence of six extraterrestrial worlds that hosts different families of angels, as well as other creatures only known to Allah (ﷻ), each with its distinct order and mandate.

Eighth principle: The cycle of human life should be framed in line with the Islamic vision of life and death. The stages of human life are depicted in science literature as a sequence starting with the embryo and ending with death. As a matter of fact, human life starts with breathing the soul into the embryo and concludes with entering

[65] "The Meaning of the Reply of the Prophet to Those Who Greet Him," *IslamOnline*, accessed September 1, 2024, https://fiqh.islamonline.net/%D9%85%D8%B9%D9%86%D9%89-%D8%B1%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%86%D8%A8%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B3%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%85-%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%89-%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%B3%D9%84%D9%85-%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%8A%D9%87/.

[66] al-Qur'an, 51: 47.

[67] "Extraterrestrial Evidence: 10 Incredible Findings About Aliens from 2020," *Live Science*, accessed May 7, 2024, https://www.livescience.com/alien-discoveries-2020.html.

[68] The Organization of Islamic Research in Al-Azhar, *Al-Tafsīr al-Wasīṭ*, 3rd ed. (Cairo: Maṭbaʿat al-Muṣḥaf al-Sharīf, 1992), 8:686.

Paradise or Hill Fire. At the final stage when people experience everlasting happiness or misery,[69] "The earth will shine with the light of its Lord, the record of deeds will be laid open, the prophets and the witnesses will be brought forward—and judgment will be passed on all with fairness. None will be wronged," *Sūrah al-Zumar*, 69.

Case study 1: The Islamic holistic view of life has been captured by Muslim historians. When Imam Ibn Kathir compiled his famous book, "*Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah"*, which translates to '*The Beginning and The End'*, he did not present human history as a series of battles; he started his book with the creation of heavens and earth and then the creation of Adam,[70] Peace be upon him, and ended it with the scenes of the Day of Judgement and the description of Paradise and Hill Fire.[71] The work of this great scholar is a good example of blending history and theology in a cohesive framework.

Case Study 2: Life does not end as a result of mere tangible reasons, such as accidents or medical conditions. Life ends when the angel of death pulls the soul out of the body. The soul is an entity, not a symbol or a state. The overwhelming majority of Muslim scholars believe that soul is an actual entity that goes through the body as water goes through plants.[72] In *Jawharat al-Tawḥīd*, one of the most authentic compilations of the tenets of Islamic faith, Imam al-Laqqaani addressed this point in Paragraphs 88-89, which translate as follows:

It is compulsory on us to believe in death, where the soul is seized by the Messenger of death [Par. 88]; The assassinated person dies at the moment predestined by his Lord, any other (conflicting) view is unacceptable [Par. 89].[73]

Ninth principle: Natural catastrophes convey a divine message to people that they should cease oppression and abandon sins. Such calamities should drive people towards self-accounting and getting

[69] al-Qur'ān, 11: 105.
[70] Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidayah wa al-Nihayah* (Cairo: Hajr for publication and Distribution, 1997), V1.
[71] Ibid., V20.
[72] Al-Bajuri, *Hashiyat al-Bajuri ala Jawharit al-Tawhid* (Cairo: Dar al-Salam, 2002), 261.
[73] Ibid., 18.

closer to God. The Qur'ān says, "Why did they not humble themselves when We made them suffer? Instead, their hearts were hardened, and Satan made their misdeeds appealing to them," *Sūrah al-An'ām*: 43.

Case study: Earthquakes, floods, tornedos and the like have physical causes and divine wisdom. Physical causes can be sought in the sciences of Physics and Astronomy. The wisdom of sending natural catastrophes is to punish the disbelievers, to warn the deviants, and to examine the good servants. While it is Islamically recommended to seek physical explanations of natural calamities, and to devise ways for predicting their occurrences and alleviating their effects, such a physical view should not overshadow the wisdom behind these calamities. Early Muslims regarded natural calamities as divine warnings that should motivate people to repent and to scrutinize their behavior, as they render a chance to learn about their physical triggers.[74]

When an earthquake took place in Kufa, Iraq, the knowledgeable companion, Ibn Mas'ud (d. 32H) said, "Oh people, your Lord reprimands you, so do appease Him."[75] In other words, Ibn Mas'ud considered the quake a sign of the dissatisfaction of God with people. When another quake happened during the reign of 'Omar bin Abd Al-'Aziz (d. 101H), he instructed people to resort to prayers and to give away charity as an application of the Qur'anic verses,[76] "Successful indeed are those who purify themselves, remember the Name of their Lord, and pray," *Sūrah l-A'lā*: 14-15.

To sum up, natural calamities are part of the divine actions, which cannot be devoid of wisdom. This wisdom is either punishment or examination in accordance with who is inflicted with. Secular views hold tight on the physical causes while they ignore or deny the divine wisdom. Conversely, Muslims acknowledge both; they study the physical causes in natural sciences, and they reflect on

[74] "Earthquakes in the History of Muslims," *Al Jazeera*, accessed May 9, 2024, https://www.aljazeera.net/turath/longform/2024/4/23/تنبأ-فلكيو هم-بوقت-وقو عها-وأحصوا

[75] Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*, commentary on Sūrat al-Isrāʾ, verse 59 (Cairo: Muʾassasat Qurṭubah, 2000), 9:36.

[76] A. Ibn Abī Shaybah, *Muṣannaf Ibn Abī Shaybah*, ḥadīth no. 8550 (Riyadh: Dār Kunūz Ishbīliyā, 2015), 5:318.

the appropriate reaction to mend their relationship with God and to come to terms with hardships. Both facets of the phenomenon are important and worthy of pursuit.

Tenth principle: The aesthetic factor affects creatures and influences their behaviors. Not only are creatures meant to fulfil utilitarian purposes, but their beauty also delights our senses and calms our souls. The majestic mountains stabilize the earth, the beautiful flowers participate in pollination, and cattle render many services to us and please us at home and in fields. God says, "And He created the cattle for you as a source of warmth, food, and many other benefits. They are also pleasing to you when you bring them home and when you take them out to graze," *Sūrah al-Naḥl*: 5-6. It is also interesting to note that how rocky planets and blazing stars are positioned in the sky in such a way that we perceive them as a cheerful moon and twinkling lamps, respectively. As God says, "And We adorned the lowest heaven with stars like lamps for beauty and for protection. That is the design of the Almighty, All-Knowing," *Sūrah Fuṣṣilat*: 12.

Case study: The mechanisms proposed by evolutionists failed to account for the concept of beauty in creation. One stunning demonstration of the unconstrained divine power is how beauty emerges from unappealing predecessors. The ladybug – adorned with fantastic patterns– comes from the insect larvae.[77] The butterfly – proud of its vivid colors – comes from caterpillars, most of them are scary or at least unappealing.[78] This dramatic transformation upsets the fictitious scenarios of evolution. Beauty points to a Beautiful Creator[79] who has taken care of our needs, as well as our pleasure. Living in natural, refreshing places enhances our inner peace. It also makes us more protective to the environment, leading to a sustainable

[77] See "Ladybug Life Cycle," *Leafy Place*, accessed May 10, 2024, https://leafyplace.com/ladybug-larvae-and-eggs/.

[78] See "67 Types of Caterpillars with Identification Charts and Pictures," *Leafy Place*, accessed May 10, 2024, https://leafyplace.com/types-of-caterpillars/.

[79] Some Muslim scholars consider "Beautiful" (*al-Jamīl*) to be one of the names of Allah (I), based on the ḥadīth, "Allah is Beautiful and loves beauty," recorded in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, ḥadīth no. 147. However, this name is not included in the well-known ḥadīth enumerating the 99 names of Allah (ﷻ).

utilization of the natural resources, rather than economic exploitation.[80]

Table 1: Ten Key Aspects for Reforming Science Education Through an Islamic Framework

Islamic Principle	Case Studies	Secular Problem	Islamic View	Category of Islamization
Revelation-based Knowledge comes on top of the hierarchy of human knowledge	- Medical research aiming at reviving the dead is against Islamic teaching - Genetic alteration of human characteristics is against Islamic teaching	Medical practices conflict with religious stands	Divine guidance should govern scientific research	Removal of contradicting elements
Divine acts are to be solely attributed to God	Nature should not be posed as a doer instead of God	Denial of divine acts	God is the creator and the only executive power in the universe	*Tawhidic* implications to be asserted
Stochastic processes are known to and controlled by God	Weather conditions and associated micro events are documented in the *Tablet* before creating the universe	Reducing science to a tool for capturing material events	Random events demonstrate the divine Will	Reinstating the Islamic view of randomness
Scientific theories should be verified using credible proofs	- Anthropology portrays the first man as underdeveloped creature, in contrary to the Quranic view of his intelligence	Anthropology and cosmology theories of early history of man and universe are guess-based	Quranic pictures of our first parents and the early stages of the universe should be acknowledged	Reviewing guess-based views to assess their authenticity

[80] Osman Bakar, *Environmental Wisdom for Planet Earth: The Islamic Heritage* (Kuala Lumpur: Centre for Civilizational Dialogue, University of Malaya, 2007).

Islamic Principle	Case Studies	Secular Problem	Islamic View	Category of Islamization
	and good character - Scenarios describing the emergence of the cosmos are guess-based			
Natural systems in heavens and on earth are facilitated for the benefit of mankind, a fact worthy of gratitude	- Physiological properties of spices make them adaptable to their environment - Instinctive behaviors in animals are divine favors to maintain their livelihood	Divine favors on creatures are either ignored or attributed to nature	Natural systems are facilitated for man to enable him discharge his duties as a *Khalifa* on earth	Linking scientific facts to Islamic values
Human knowledge is limited in type and in details	Many unexplained phenomena work for our advantage	Relying on limited knowledge, that is subject to error, while denying the guidance of the all-Knowing	One reason for accepting revelation as a setter of our principles is in consideration of our limited knowledge; God maintains man via processes that he knows a little about	Developing the sense of servitude in man towards God
Our universe has gateways to *'alam al-ghayb*	As scientists consider the possibility of extraterrestrial life, they should also acknowledge the parts of the unseen world mentioned in the	*'Alam al-ghayb* is considered unscientific, in essence denied	Holy scripts provide an authentic source of knowledge, through which we learn about *'alam al-ghayb*	Restore the authentic sources of knowledge

Islamic Principle	Case Studies	Secular Problem	Islamic View	Category of Islamization
	Qur'an			
Human life starts with breathing the soul into the embryo and concludes with entering Paradise or Hill Fire	- Muslim historians conveyed a holistic view of the history of man - Death does not occur due to mere tangible reasons; it occurs when the angel of death takes the soul away	Exclude the unobservable events from the cycle of human life	Man is honored for breathing the soul into him; human endeavor concludes at the gates of Paradise or Hill Fire	Restore the purpose-driven aspect of human life
Natural calamities alert people to mend their relationship with God	The wisdom of earthquakes is either to punish the deviants or to examine the good servants	Only physical causes of natural calamities are considered, whereas the wisdom behind them is ignored	Muslims should reflect on how to get closer to God in response to natural calamities	Wisdom behind hardships is considered alongside their physical causes
Creatures are equipped with executive abilities as they are endowed with beauty	Beautiful creatures emerge from unappealing predecessors	Evolutionists did not account for beauty as an objective of creation	Concurrent fulfilment of our needs and pleasure is a form of divine nurture	Restore the aesthetic factor as an Influential factor beside the empirical properties

Upon reflecting on the last three columns of Table 1, it becomes clear that most of the problems caused by secularization stem from reducing science to bare empirical study that is totally detached from human values and purpose-driven analysis.

5. A Teaching Strategy for an Islamic Education of Science

Such a teaching strategy should be founded on a conceptual framework as well as practical training. The conceptual framework

encompasses the principles that science teachers should appreciate for a successful implementation of an Islamic education. These principles are as follows:

5.1. Science is not privileged with a superior position among fields of knowledge. As a matter of fact, it is *one* channel of human quest for knowledge, which comes next in credibility after revealed knowledge.

5.2. There is no real conflict between science and religion. This means that a divine statement would never indicate a point that may be proven wrong by trusted science.

5.3. If science explains the material causes of the events in the natural world, religion explains their philosophical meanings that pertain to the purpose of our existence. As such, science and religion should harmoniously complement each other.

Regarding practicing an Islamic education of science, the Islamic elements should be integrated into the Science Process Skills (SPS). SPS are widely accepted as essential skills for deep comprehension of science concepts by students. SPS consist of basic skills and integrated skills.[81] Basis skills include observation where information about the phenomenon under observation is gathered, and inference where conclusions are drawn about observations. The whole purpose of teaching is to move from familiar material to more complex or abstract material for the sake of interpreting happenings and capturing patterns. It is critically important that data analysis and inference are conducted with an objective, unbiased attitude.[82] Such an attitude is an adequate guarantee to eliminate any potential conflict between science and religion. A more detailed analysis of a teaching strategy for Islamic science education could be the topic of a future research.

[81] G. Gizaw and S. Sorsa "Improving Science Process Skills of Students: A Review of Literature," *Science Education International,* 34(3): 216-224.

[82] See "How to Develop Science Skills in Students," *Home Science Tools Learning Center*, accessed February 25, 2025, https://learning-center.homesciencetools.com/article/how-to-develop-science-skills-in-students/

6. The Way Forward

In order to create a conducive environment for the transformation to an Islamic education of science, the following prerequisites should be fulfilled:

6.1. Raise the awareness of the importance of applied sciences among Muslim youth, in recognition of their vital role in building strong economy, robust defense system, and high-quality communication, medical, and educational facilities. To create a large base of science enthusiasts, scientific material should be presented using non-technical language that can be comprehended by the public.[83] Science programs should be given a larger share in school curricula, public media, and governmental funding.

6.2. Synergize science curricula with Islamic studies curricula. Islamic study classes should present the Islamic stand of science-related issues. For example, the Quranic and Prophetic statements related to the creation of Adam, Peace be upon him, should be taught to prepare students for rejecting Darwinism. A one-to-one correspondence between the two disciplines can be realized by inserting *Connect-to-Islamic-Study* and *Connect-to-science* checkpoints in science and Islamic studies textbooks respectively. *Connect-to-Islamic-Studies* should refer students to the Islamic view of a science issue. Similarly, *Connect-to-science* should refer students to credible scientific views of a religious issue. Accordingly, social and ethical aspects of scientific issues can be adequately addressed. It is also a good mechanism for eliminating contradicting views between religion and science, which resulted in the dual Islamic-secular mindset that many Muslims suffer from.

6.3. Call upon Muslim scientists to revise and rewrite scientific theories that conflict with Islamic teachings. In particular, Muslim cosmologists have to scrutinize theories addressing

[83] A good example of simplifying science without sacrificing its accuracy can be found in S. Hawking, *A Brief History of Time* (New York: Bantam Books, 1996).

the inception of the universe for the purpose of distinguishing elements that rely on credible evidence from those relying on scanty evidence and been guessed by western scientists in line with their ideological orientation, as discussed in the fourth principle. A similar argument applies to Darwinism. It is direly needed to review the fossil records and to examine the logical consistency of the field observations of species in order to sort out inferences with scientific merits from artistically produced ones.

6.4. To form an international league that gathers a homogenous blend of scientists and religious scholars for the purpose of addressing the challenges of the Islamization of science education. This league should steer research toward addressing the areas of tension between science and religion. It should also provide consultation and resources for educational institutes undergoing the transformation from secular presentation of science to an Islamic one.

7.0 Conclusion

As the secular approach of teaching science is adopted, Muslim schools are effectively acting as factories for breeding secular minds. This article provides concrete guidelines to scholars and educators for transforming science education to the Islamic domain. Ten fundamental Islamic principles to be upheld in science education are discussed with references to their roots in Islamic teaching. Each principle is supplemented with relevant case studies. The discussion of the said principles and their associated case studies revealed the secular elements to be removed and the Islamic concepts to be established in their place, or alternatively the ailments to be treated and the cures to be used. Accordingly, the categories of Islamization in science education were identified. One ailment that repeatedly appeared in the secular approach is the axiom of evolving from primitive to advanced entities in favor of random interactions. This trend is not limited to the field of biology; it rather extended to anthropology, cosmology, and history. To give the Islamization of science initiative a better chance to succeed, a teaching strategy and few practical measures were recommended, most notably is the

synergy between science and Islamic study curricula. The overall aim of this article is to enhance the methodological clarity of the Islamization of Knowledge project.

Manuscript Studies

Mastur: The Veiled
The Legacy of a Forgotten 18th century Female Iranian Poet
A Rare Manuscript from SMNA Library

Amir H. Zekrgoo[1]

Abstract

Mastur, a little-known young female poet from 18th century Iran, composed a romantic epic of over 4000 couplets that had long been forgotten until recent discoveries. The manuscript narrates a fantastic love story between a Chinese prince, Jamshid, and an Indian princess, Khorshid. Amazingly, it is art that sparks their love: an artist shows Jamshid his painting of Khorshid, igniting his passion; later, on his return journey to Kashmir, he paints Jamshid's portrait and displays it in the Indian court, capturing Khorshid's in return. Jamshid's journey to reach Khorshid across distant lands is marked by a series of unexpected and dangerous adventures, adding elements of suspense and making the trans-cultural epic more compelling. To properly contextualize this work, three areas of inquiry are essential: the identity and character of Mastur, the youthful genius behind Jamshid and Khorshid; a synopsis of the narrative emphasizing key episodes; and a detailed codicological study of the manuscript. Given the breadth of these topics, addressing them all in a single article proved impractical. Therefore, the research has been divided into two complementary essays, of which the present paper is the first.

This essay is structured around two principal sections: 'About

1 Professor Fellow, International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC-IIUM) and Honorary Professor (Middle Eastern Manuscripts), Faculty of Historical and Philosophical Studies, University of Melbourne. Email: ahzekrgoo@gmail.com

the Poet' and 'About the Manuscript.' The first section explores Mastur's persona through four subheadings: A Discontented, Rebellious Soul; From a Lineage of Poets; Lonely and Loveless; and Fearful of Being Forgotten. The second section offers a codicological examination of the manuscript, organized under five subheadings: Sections in Turkic; Layout, Illustrations, Physical Condition, and From Outside the Text.

Selected poems from the epic have been translated by the author. The original Persian versions are provided at the end of the essay as appendices.

Keywords: Mastur, Persian manuscript, *mathnawi*, *ghazal*, Qajar, love story, Jamshid and Khorshid.

Introduction

The SMNA Library of ISTAC, IIUM, is the custodian of a rare and intriguing Persian manuscript. In the existing catalogue, the title of the manuscript is missing.[2] However, based on the style of its illustrations, it was evident that the work was produced during the Qajar era (1789–1925). Hoping to determine the title and uncover more information, I began reading the manuscript. It is a captivating love story, full of dramatic turns and engaging events.

While reading the entire manuscript, I took detailed notes on its content, aesthetic features, and physical condition. In parallel, I consulted several colleagues and shared selected couplets that could assist in identifying the volume. Eventually, the puzzle was solved: I had in hand a rare poetic work known by two titles—*Jamshīd va Khorshīd*, named after the main two characters, and *Shabestān-e Veṣāl*, which may be translated as "The Sanctuary of Love." While the first title, *Jamshid and Khorshid*, is more widely known, the second, *Shabestān-e Veṣāl*, is arguably more authentic, as it appears within the text itself.

Identifying a second copy of the same manuscript—dated 1306 AH/1889 CE—greatly aided my understanding of the work. I

[2] Haji Ali bin Haji Ahmad, *Catalogue of Persian Manuscripts in the Library of the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization* (Kuala Lumpur: International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization, 1994), 2–3.

conducted a comparative analysis of the two versions and observed numerous textual differences, both in the Persian passages and the shorter sections composed in Turkish. ISTAC's copy is older and, therefore, likely more authentic. It also contains twelve illustrations, which add a rich visual dimension to the manuscript. However, a few pages are missing, both in the middle and toward the end. The Borujerdi Library's version, by contrast, is complete and features neater handwriting.

Comparing the two copies offered a broader perspective on how the same story, written by the same poet-author, evolves in the hands of different scribes who may alter, correct, or embellish the text according to their own knowledge and preferences. It is also fascinating to observe how the presence of illustrations can shape and guide the reader's imagination.

About the Poet

The inscription beneath the *sarlowḥ* identifies the poet as a woman named Mastur, the daughter of one Muḥammad ʻAli Khān Shāmlū[3] (Image 1).

Image 1: The red inscription flanking the *Bismillāh* clearly identifies Mastur as the author of the poetic composition, and also records her father's name. It reads:

من کلام مستور، بنت مرحمت و غفران پناه، محمدعلیخان شاملو

[3] Gholam Hossein Bigdeli has recorded her name as Mastur Bigdeli. Sharing the same last name indicates that Mastur was perhaps a distant relative of the editor.

Our knowledge of the poet remains limited. However, a couplet in the manuscript records the date of the epic's completion as 1147 AH (1734–1735 CE).[4] Additionally, references within the poems to the poet's very young age at the time of composition suggest that she was born in the early 18th century.

A distinctive feature of *Jamshid and Khorshid* is the poet's visible presence throughout the text. A close examination of the manuscript reveals insights into Mastur's personality, worldview, and emotional state. An elaboration follows:

A Discontented, Rebellious Soul

While narrating the love story of Jamshid and Khorshid, the poet frequently pauses to reflect her own life. It is as if, while recounting the exciting tale with enthusiasm and a loud voice, the narrator quietly moans and weeps during the intervals, lamenting her personal misfortunes at home. *Mastur* often blames her fate, declaring time and again that the universe has been cruel to her—and to the learned and the virtuous in general!

Most depreciated are the people of virtue,
Crushed under the feet like chaff, with no value.

In the realm of the enlightened, they reign like kings,
But to the public's eye, they're road-dust in the wind.

The heavens bear a deep grudge against me,
My heart is weary from this cruelty. [5]

She resorts to sharp imagery and irony to criticize favouritism towards unworthy people. In a poetic satire, she uses the symbolism of 'donkey' (*khar*) and 'donkey bead' (*kharmohreh*)—familiar motifs in Persian literature, especially when condemning the appointment of underserving individuals to positions of power.

Wishes of fools are granted by heaven;
It befriends donkeys – I'm not mistaken!

[4] پی تاریخ اتمام خیالش فکن میم از شبستان وصالش (1147)

[5] English translation by Amir H. Zekrgoo. For original verses see Appendix 1.

Suddenly, it pulls a donkey from the stable,
And seats it proudly at the noblemen's table.

Adorns Bahaman's crown with 'donkey beads,'[6]
And hangs on donkeys' necks laces of ruby beads.[7]

From a Lineage of Poets

The poet often reveals her dissatisfaction in between the lines, declaring that despite the miseries that surround her life, she remains alive and present. She inserts herself in the story by sharing her emotions, not only about events of the narrative, but also about herself. *Mastur* proudly brags about her ancestry to poets and masters of eloquence.

The command of speech is not my skill alone,
It's an ancestral treasure, a trait well-known.[8]

She speaks of her talents, calling herself a 'nightingale of eloquence' who, due to misfortune, has been paired with an unworthy crow.

I lament this ill-turned fortune,
That aches my heart with a fate out of tune.

An ill-fated nightingale in the garden,
Paired with a worthless crow – my burden.[9]

We also learn that she was very young when composing *Jamshid and Khorshid*—perhaps under the age of twenty, which helps explain the emotional intensity, mood swing, and impassioned complaints that appear throughout the work.

Still at the dawn of my youth and passion,
In my first phase of singing with compassion.

[6] *Khar Mohreh*, literally 'donkey beads,' are cheap decorations made of baked clay with turquoise blue glaze, that were commonly used to decorate load-bearing beasts like donkeys and mules.
[7] English translation by Amir H. Zekrgoo. For original verses see Appendix 2.
[8] Ibid. For original verses see Appendix 3.
[9] Ibid. For original verses see Appendix 4.

From my sugary mouth, the milk scent spreads,
Yet out of my ruby lips, smooth melody threads.

It's still the dawning of subtle insight,
The start of reflection, poems to recite.

On the life's palm tree, I am still a fresh sprout,
A tiny blossom, with wisdom yet to shout.[10]

Lonely and Loveless

Towards the end of the book, as she describes the marriage ceremony of the characters in her story, she suddenly inserts a personal line, lamenting her loneliness, the absence of loyal friends, and a loveless life. From the following couplet, it becomes clear that she had given her heart to someone, but apparently the feeling has stayed hidden —but, like her own name, the feeling remained hidden!

Without the loyal ones, how long must I remain?
Veiled[11] *from my beloved, how long must I remain?*[12]

In the above couplet, she uses her own name, *Mastur*, as a metaphor, drawing on its literal meaning: "lidded," "covered," "concealed", "hidden," or "veiled." By invoking the term *masturi*—the state of being veiled—she portrays herself as the embodiment of a lonely, hidden soul.

Elsewhere in the text, using heartfelt tone and vivid imagery, she expresses her motivation for composing the love epic. She initiates an imaginary argument with fate, reiterating her initial belief that heavens bear a grudge against her, and she seeks to awaken heaven's sympathy for her misfortune.

With bitterness I walked the fate's path,
Enough O heavens! Enough of your wrath!

[10] Ibid. For original verses see Appendix 5.

[11] The literal meaning of the word 'Mastur' is 'lidded,' 'covered,' 'concealed', 'hidden' or 'veiled.' Here the poet deliberately uses the term *masturi* to present herself as the embodiment of a lonely soul.

[12] English translation by Amir H. Zekrgoo. For original verses see Appendix 6.

Beneath the same sky also I live,
I've needs like others; why don't you give?

My days are heavy with sorrow and pain,
Immersed in misery my nights remain.

Beyond this shelter, I have no place!
No earth, no sky, no other space.[13]

She then explains that in order to relieve herself of the bitterness caused by ill-fate, she has turned to the game of words. Just as caged parrots bring joy to those who hear them speak, she hopes to spread happiness through the sweet words that flow from her tongue.

What can I do, when fate turns against me?
When pleasure has left – gone for eternity!

No remedy can cure my mournful state,
So I play with the words that I create.

With a hundred wounds on my heart's own page,
I sing like a parrot, caged in a cage.

From my pen's tongue, sweet verses flow,
To tell a tale that makes happiness grow.

So your minds may bloom, and your spirits unfold,
I'll tell you a story that's never been told.[14]

Fearful of Being Forgotten

The poet extends her imagination beyond her lifespan. With touching and evocative language, she envisions death and declares her expectations of relatives and friends. Her burning desire is for them to preserve her name. A fear of being forgotten and a deep yearning to leave behind a legacy resonate through her words. It is as if she has accepted her fate of being '*Mastu*r'—invisible and unappreciated—yet she keenly hopes that people will one day

[13] Ibid. For original verses see Appendix 7.
[14] Ibid. For original verses see Appendix 8.

recognize her talent after she is gone.

When the messenger of death comes through the gate,
To end my precious life – to seal my fate.

When my orchard of living turns pale and yellow,
Let heaven wrap my things – prepared to go.

I hope that when my kin begin to gather,
With heavy hearts, before they scatter,

While speaking of the witty, and those of fame –
They'll think of me, and speak my name.

To guard my memory, after I'm gone,
Recite 'Al-hamd' – let my soul move on,

It's my wish that through the time's stages,
My name won't vanish in the forgotten pages.[15]

In a creative, imaginary argument with fate toward the end of the manuscript, she delivers a touching message of pain and betrayal, and issues a final warning. She threatens the cosmos: if it does not turn in a way that repays her, she will take the matter to the Almighty on the Day of Judgement.

Once I had the patience to gather my needs,
But I suffered deeply from your hostile deeds,

My strength has faded – my patience gone,
Troubles have crushed me – I'm withdrawn.

Seek forgiveness now – It's your final chance,
To right your wrongs, to change your stance.

Or else I will plead for justice Divine –
On the Day of Judgement, I'll claim what's mine.[16]

[15] Ibid. For original verses see Appendix 9.
[16] Ibid. For original verses see Appendix 10.

About the Manuscript

The love epic is known by two titles. The more popular one, *Jamshīd va Khorshīd,* is named after the main characters of the love story. The other, more authentic title, *Shabestān-e Veṣāl*, which can be translated as *The Sanctuary of Love*, is the title given by the author herself and appears in the text.

> *With the grace of Almighty, I finished it all.*
> *And named it with love: "Shabestān-e Veṣāl"*[17]

Shabestān-e Veṣāl comprises over 4000 couplets. There is very little information about this fantastic love epic in the sources I have studied. The only other manuscript I was able to identify is a more recent copy, dated 1306 AH/1889 CE, scribed in Turkey, and preserved in Iran[18] (see Image 2).

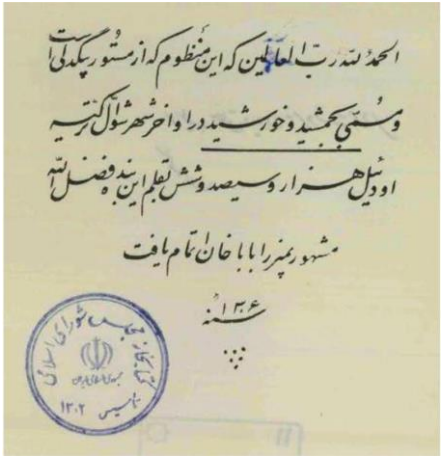


Image 2: Colophon of *Jamshid and Khorshid* manuscript from the Borujerdi Library, Qum, Iran. The present image is from a facsimile edition published in Tehran.

[17] Ibid. For original verses see Appendix 11.

[18] A manuscript by the hand of Mirza Abu al-Fazl Bigdeli Shamlu is preserved in Ayatullah Borujerdi Library in Qum, an edited version of which was published in Tehran. See Mastur Bigdeli, *Jamshid va Khorshid*, edited by Gholam Hossein Bigdeli and Heshmat al-Muluk Bigdeli Azari, Gholam Hossein Bigdeli Publication 1373 Sh./ 1994-95 CE.

Studying this version alongside the manuscript in hand has provided deeper insight and a broader understanding of the work. As the last few pages of the manuscript, along with the colophon, are missing, the exact date and place of production cannot be determined. However, the style of writing, layout, and illustrations suggest that it was produced during the early Qajar era—late 18th to early 19th century. A brief report of the specifications of the volume follows.

Title (s)	• Jamshid and Khorshid (جمشید و خورشید), or • '*Shbestān-e Vesā*l' (شبستان وصال)
Accession No.	Persian MSS-9
Author	Mastūrī, daughter of Muḥammad 'Ali Khān Shāmlū
Language	Persian/Farsi, a small section in Turkish
Script	Average Nasta'liq in black ink, Headings in red ink
Folios Line per page	146 folios 12 lines per page in two columns
Dimensions H x W (cm)	Page size: 21x13 cm11 Text area: 14.5 x 8.5 cm
Binding / Auxiliary support	Contemporary binding
Decorative elements	Faded illuminated *sarlowḥ* in gold, lapis lazuli, and cinnabar, on the top of the opening page The text area is defined by fine double lines in blue and red
Illustrations	12 miniature paintings in Qajar style

Sections in Turkic

An interesting feature of the manuscript, which adds to the vivid presence of the poet, is the inclusion of passages composed in Turkic. This aligns with the narrative: Jamshid, a prince from a Turkic-speaking royal family from western China, naturally writes a

poetic letter to her beloved Khorshid in Turkic. These passages exhibit Mastur's notable command of the Turkish language. A close examination of the Persian and Turkish dialogue exchanged between Jamshid and Khorshid reveals the striking linguistic proximity between the two languages. In fact, aside from a few vocabulary differences and some variations in verb restructure, the dialogue remains largely intelligible to a Persian-speaking audience. While in certain passages the resemblance is so pronounced that Jamshid's speech reads almost as a dialect or branch of Persian (see image 3).

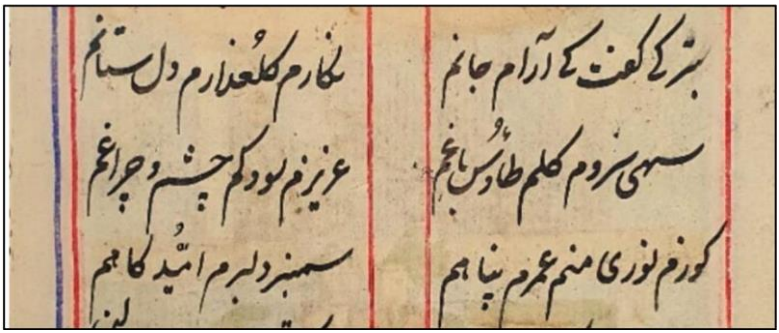


Image 3: Selected verses from Jamshid's Turkic expression of love to Khorshid.

به ترکی گفت کی آرام جانم — نگاریم، گلعذاریم، دلستانم
سهی سروم، گلم، طاووس باغم — عزیزم، سودکم، چشم و چراغم
گوزُم نوری، منُم عمرُم، پناهُم — سمنبر دلبرم، امیدگاهُم

He said in Turkic: O remedy of my heart,
My rose-cheeked darling, O stealer of my heart.

My cypress, my peacock, my delicate flower,
My cherished one, my vision, my light, my treasure,

The brightness of my eyes, my life, my haven,
My Jasmine-bodied love, my hope's station[19] *(p. 129 R)*

[19] English translation by Amir H. Zekrgoo.

Layout

The volume is penned in average *Nasta'liq* style. Main body of the text is penned in black ink, while headings have been made visually distinct by the use of red ink, each placed on a separate line above its corresponding section. The present manuscript is divided into 43 sections, each introduced by a unique heading in red. The first two headings are primarily introductory in nature and include praises of the Almighty – a conventional format that has been employed for centuries across texts of various genres. The actual narrative begins with the third and fourth headings. I have included the first four headings below to provide a sense of the literary style and structure.

در مدح جناب ختم مرسلین و اولاد و احفاد طاهرین

In praise of the Seal of the Messengers, and his pure children and descendants (p. 4-L)

در اظهار دیباچه کتاب و سخنوری انتساب

On the Preface of the Book and its Eloquent Attribution (p. 5-R)

ابتدای داستان بعون ملک منان

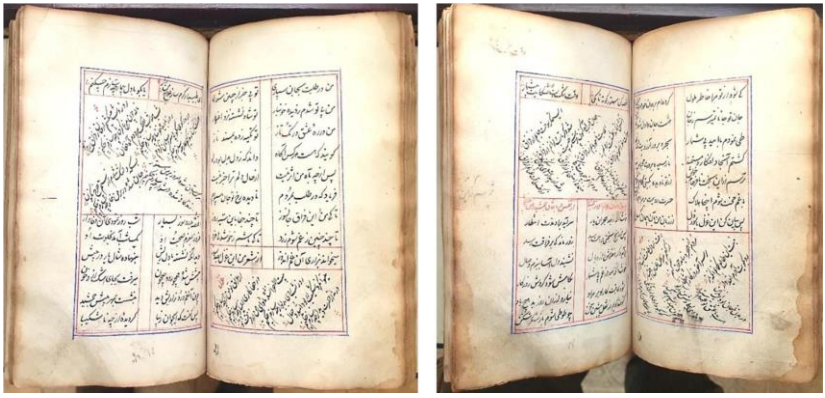
Commencement of the Story by the Grace of the Almighty Bestower (p. 14-L)

رفتن جمشید در فصل بهار به شکار، و برخوردن به مرد صورت نگار، و گرفتار شدن به صورت خورشید

Jamshid's hunting journey in the spring season, his encounter with a portrait painter, and his captivation with the image of Khorshid.

There are 12 lines per page in two columns. These changes in certain pages are due to a shift from one style of poetry to another. In fact, a charming aspect of the epic is combining two styles of Persian poetry—*mathnawi* and *ghazal*—each serving distinct purposes. While the *mathnawi* style is maintained throughout the text as the primary medium for narrating the main story, *ghazal* was reserved for expressing Prince Jamshid's longing for his beloved Khorshid. The alternate use of *mathnawi* and *ghazal* is presented visually and tastefully through distinct layout formats. The main narrative, composed in *mathnawi* style, follows the traditional Persian poetic layout: two columns to accommodate two hemistiches of each

couplet. In contrast, *ghazals* are visually set apart by being written diagonally – some in a formal *chalipa* arrangement, others in a more free-form style. Such creative layouts are seen in pages 19-L continued to 20-R, 25-L,27-L,36-R, 37-R continued to 37-L, 39-L continued to 40-R, 41-R, 65 R, 65-L, 77 R continued to 77-L, 77 L, and 134 R (Image 4 and 5).



Images 4 and 5: Pages 65 R&L (left), and pages 77 R&L (right)
A creative layout was adopted to visually separate mathnawi and ghazals. The main couplets follow the traditional Persian poetic layout: two columns symmetrically arranged on the page. The *ghazals* are visually set apart by being written diagonally in a freer style.

Illustrations

The manuscript is adorned with twelve finely executed miniature illustrations rendered in the Qajari style—a visual tradition distinguished by its delicate brushwork, refined figural representation, and vibrant colour palette. The miniatures are located on folios 30R, 31R, 53R, 57R, 78L, 85L, 90L, 108R, 116L, 126R, 128L, and 143L. Each painting corresponds to a key episode in the romantic narrative and functions as a visual extension of the text, inviting deeper engagement from the reader. However, since the tale of *Jamshid and Khorshid* is relatively obscure to contemporary audiences, the narrative context of these images may not be immediately evident. To address this, I am currently preparing a

separate scholarly essay—forthcoming in the next issue of the *Journal*—which will present a synopsis of the epic and situate each illustration within its narrative framework, alongside an analysis of the stylistic and symbolic features of the artwork.

Physical Condition

The manuscript is overall in fairly good condition. It has undergone a proper restoration and has been given a new binding. However, there are missing pages here and there. I was able to identify missing folios between 18-L & R, 117L & R, and 139 L & R. Also, the final part of the manuscript, which likely contained the colophon, is also gone.

The illuminated *sarlowḥ on the Iftitāḥ* page is damaged (see Image 1). Ink is smudged on facing pages 95-R and 95-L, rendering the text unreadable (Image 6). Water stain marks are observed throughout the volume, and signs of restoration are visible along the page edges (Image 7). In certain illustrations, the paint has sped through the paper, leaving marks on the reverse side (Images 8-9). While the illustrations retain much of their original charm, they have visibly aged and now exhibit signs of deterioration, including fading pigments and flaking paint (Image 10).

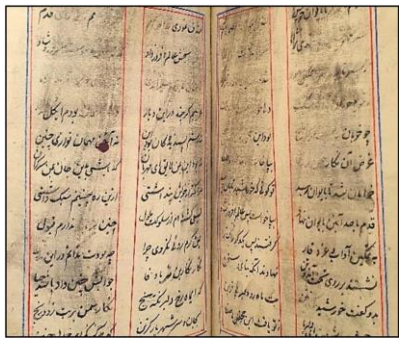
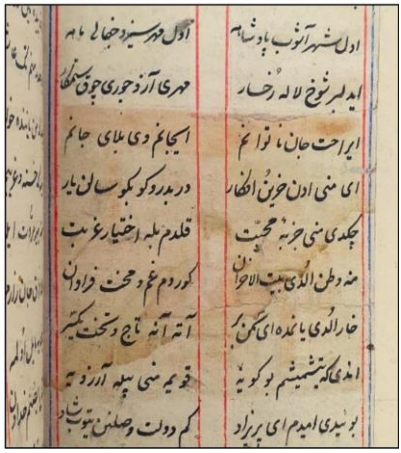


Image 6: Ink smudges.

Image 7: Wormholes and traces of restoration.



Images 8 and 9: Wet paint from the illustration on folio 90-L (left) has permeated the paper, leaving a visible stain on its verso, folio 91-R (right).

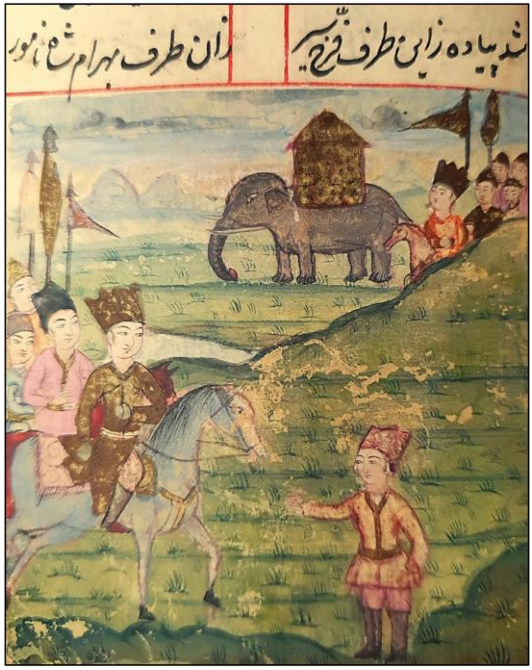


Image 10:
Farrokh Siyar, the king of Kashmir, accompanied by his son Timur, rides forward from the left to welcome King Bahram and his entourage, who have arrived from Husnabad, depicted entering from the top right of the picture.

Like most of the twelve illustrations in the manuscript, this painting shows visible signs of deterioration; the fading of colours and flaking of paint are especially pronounced

From Outside the Text

The handwritten note by Muhammad Abd al-Rahman Barker (1929-2012)[20] on the first page of the modern bindings provides valuable insight into the manuscript's recent history. On the fly-leaf, Barker recorded the date 26th August 1964 and location Montreal, Canada (see Image 11). This brief yet significant annotation suggests that the manuscript was accompanied during his travels from the Subcontinent, where he most likely acquired the manuscript, to Montreal in Canada. Eventually, the manuscript reached its current home in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in the 1990s.[21]

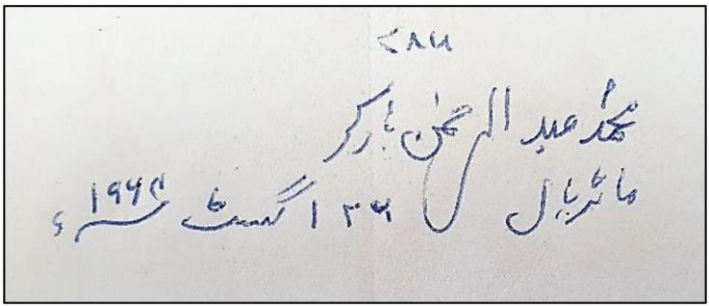


Image 11: Urdu handwriting by Abd al-Rahman Barker recording his own name, Montreal, and the date 26th August 1964.

On the verso of the opening page appears an inscription in bold *Nastaliq* script – obviously a later addition. It contains a series of reflections on the value of education and the vital role of teachers (see Image 12).

[20] Philip Barker, an American born and raised (whose ancestors settled in America in 1661) converted to Islam in 1951, at the age of 22. Barker then adopted Muhammad Abd al-Rahman as his first name and continued his career using his Muslim name onwards.

[21] For an account of the journey Barker's collection to Malaysia see Amir H. Zekrgoo, "'Treasures of Sciences in the Lovely Realm of Sights': An Investigation into Āmulī's Manuscript of *Nafāʾis al-Funūn fī ʿArāʾis al-ʿUyūn*," *Al-Shajarah: Journal of the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC)*, International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) 25, no. 1 (2020): 175–76.

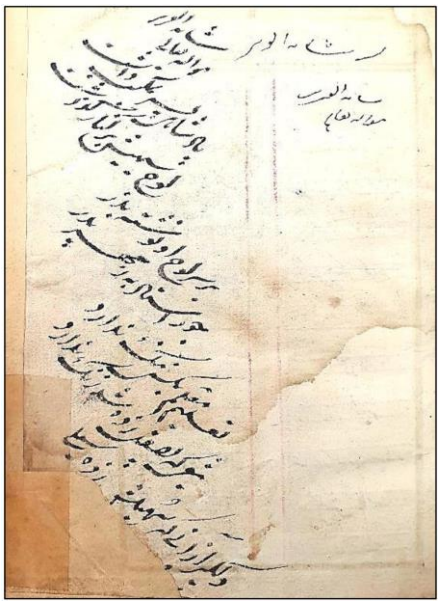


Image 12: The bold *Nasta'liq* inscription on the verso of the opening page begins with God's praise. Then follow couplets from Sa'di's *Golestan*, a celebrated Persian literary work that blends prose and poetry. These are succeeded by proverbial couplets from oral tradition that all emphasize the vital role of teachers in shaping character and intellect. The text and its meanings are as follows:

هوالله تعالی شانه العزیز

He is Allah, exalted in His Majesty, Almighty

پادشاهی پسر به مکتب داشت　　لوح سیمینش بر کنار گذاشت
بر سر لوح او نوشته به زر　　جور استاد به ز مهر پدر

There was a king whose son was sent to school,
He gave the prince a silver board – wisdom's jewel.
Engraved in gold upon it's polished face:
"Teacher's sternness exceeds father's grace."

تعلیم معلم به کسی ننگ ندارد　　تیغی که به صیقل زده شد، زنگ ندارد
دلگیر از آنی که سهیلش زده سیلی　　سیبی که سهیلش نزنذ رنگ ندارد

Don't be ashamed of the corrections of a master,
It burnishes the blade; it won't cause disaster.
Don't be offended if Canopus gives a slap,
It wakes pale apples from their colorless nap.

Acknowledgement

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Mahmoodreza Esfandiar of the Encyclopaedia Islamica Foundation for his invaluable assistance in identifying the manuscript and for introducing me to an edited version of a more recent copy of the same work. I am also deeply thankful to Dr. Ehsanollah Shokrollahi, Director of the Publications Department at the Library, Museum, and Documents Centre of the Islamic Consultative Assembly (Majlis), for providing access to the PDF version of the edited text, based on a manuscript housed in the Ayatollah Borujerdi Library in Qum.

My appreciation extends to Dr. Hamid Reza Ghelichkhani, Manuscript Evaluation Committee Member from the National Library of Iran, who generously consulted *Farhang-e Sokhanvaran* and other reference sources on my behalf in search of information about Mastur. His report that no record of her appears in these major literary indexes further underscored both the rarity of the manuscript and the anonymity of its author.

I am also grateful to the Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas Library at ISTAC for providing a quiet and supportive environment that facilitated the progress of this research. Special thanks are due to Mr. Ahmad Zaki, Senior Librarian, for his kind assistance in granting regular access to the manuscript during my visits.

Appendices

Appendix 1.	ز هر کس خوارتر اهل کمال اند به ملک معرفت هرچند شاه اند	در این ایام چون خس پایمالند برِ اهل زمان چون خاک راه اند
Appendix 2.	فلک بود پیوسته با من به کین	دلم بود دایم ز جورش حزین
Appendix 3.	به تنها خود نگشتم من سخن سنج	بود موروثی از اجدادم این گنج
Appendix 4.	مرا شکوه ز بخت واژگون است منم آن بینوا بلبل در این باغ	دلم از طالع ناساز خون است که کرده چرخ دونم همدم زاغ
Appendix 5.	هنوزم اول شور و جوانی است هنوزم بوی شیر آید ز شکر هنوزم ابتدای نکته دانی است همان نورسته نخل زندگانی	هنوزم ابتدای نغمه خوانی است ز لعلم میتراود لیک گوهر هنوز آغاز فکر و شعرخوانی است همان غنچه است گلهای معانی
Appendix 6.	فلک دایم به کام دیگرانست خری را برکشد ناگه ز پاگاه نهد خرمُهره را برتاجِ بهمن	نگویم گر غلط، یار خران است نشاند بر سریر عزت و جاه خران را لعل ساز و زیب گردن
Appendix 7.	به تلخی رهِ عمر گردید طی منم نیز در زیر این آسمان! همه روز بر من به سختی گذشت ندارم جز اینجا مکانی دگر	بَسَست ای فلک، این جفا تا به کی نکردی به کامم چرا چون کسان؟ شبم نیز در شوربختی گذشت زمینی دگر، آسمانی دگر
Appendix 8.	چه سازم چونکه اختر در وبال است نباشد چون غمم را چاره سازی بود در دل مرا صدگونه حرمان زبان خامه را سازم شکر ریز که خاطرها شود از وی شکفته	دگر شادی برای من محال است دهم خود را در این گفتار بازی چه طوطی در قفس گردم نواخوان بگویم تازه نقل بهجت انگیز بگویم داستانِ کس نگفته
Appendix 9.	چو پیک مرگ آخر از در آید ... چو گلزار حیاتم زرد گردد همین باشد تمنایم ز خویشان چه نام نکته سنجان را شمارند غرض بعد از وفاتم یاد سازند همینم آرزو باشد به دوران	مرا عمر گرامی بر سر آید بساطم را فلک در هم نوردد چه جمع آیند بعد از این پریشان مرا هم در حساب جمله آرند روانم را به حمدی شاد سازند نماند نام من بر طاق نسیان

Appendix 10.	به محنت مرا بود تا صبر و تاب نمانده است دیگر توانایی ام کنون از در عذرخواهی درآ وگرنه به محشر برِ دادگر	کشیدم ز جورت فراوان عذاب به رنج و مشقت شکیبایی ام تلافی مافات را کن ادا بگیرم ز جورت شکایت ز سر
Appendix 11.	ز فضل ایزدش اتمام کردم	شبستان وصالش نام کردم

Manuscript Studies

Bridging Tradition with Science in Persian Manuscript Restoration: A Comprehensive Review of Eremurus (*Seriš*) *Adhesive*

Mandana Barkeshli[1]

Introduction

The illustrious history of bookmaking in Iran is a testament to the synergy of art and craftsmanship. It reflects an era when a collective of artisans, from papermakers to bookbinders, converged within the royal *kārkhāne* (workshops) to create literary masterpieces. These skilled individuals not only crafted new codices but also played a pivotal role in restoring manuscripts affected by time and the elements, thereby blending art with preservation.

Persian bookbinders, traditionally known as *ṣaḥḥāfi* or *jeld-sāzi*, were custodians of both the aesthetic and structural integrity of books, undertaking tasks ranging from binding to conservation. Their expertise extended to an array of related crafts, underscoring their central role in the cultural stewardship of written heritage.[2]

In the crucible of these time-honored practices, Eremurus (*Seriš*) emerged as a vital material, valued for its adhesive qualities essential for manuscript conservation. This paper review aims to elucidate the intersection of traditional restoration practices and modern scientific research on *Seriš*. By synthesizing recent advances

[1] Professor, De 'Institute of Creative Arts and Design, UCSI University, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Email: mandana@ucsiuniversty.edu.my, mandana.barkeshli@gmail.com

[2] Iraj Afshar, "Bookbinding (Article 2)," *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, accessed December 29, 2022, https://iranicaonline.org/articles/bookbinding-sahhafi-jeld-sazi-2.

with historical insights, the review underscores *Seriš*'s enduring significance and potential to enhance contemporary conservation methods, drawing from a rich legacy of Persian craftsmanship to inform and elevate modern practices.[3]

In examining the evolution of terminology and practice—from the *warrāq* and *mojalladgar* of the past to the *maremat-gar* of today—the review contemplates the transformation of conservation roles.[4] It explores how the wisdom of yesteryears, encapsulated in the use of *Seriš,* can be harmonized with innovative scientific approaches to secure the legacy of Persian manuscripts for future generations.

Figure 1 - 16th Century Persian book cover and flap in dark brown leather in gilded technique complemented with a colorful doublure (inner cover) in light brown leather, overlaid with gold filigree work using colored papers as background of the filigree and arranged into an all-over honeycomb pattern. (Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia collection, Acc. No. 2013.7.97).

Historical Significance of Seriš in Restoration Practices

Tracing the history of *Seriš* reveals a profound legacy rooted in the Iranian art of bookbinding and manuscript restoration—a craft that has been enriched by generations of artisans. The binding and mending of manuscripts, once a regal enterprise, have endured the

[3] Mandana Barkeshli, Sadra Zekrgoo, and Nasim Koohkesh, "Seriš (Eremurus) Adhesive and Its Use in Traditional and Modern Iranian Manuscripts Conservation Practice," 2023.

[4] Iraj Afshar, "Bookbinding (Article 2)," *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, accessed December 29, 2022, https://iranicaonline.org/articles/bookbinding-sahhafi-jeld-sazi-2.

test of time, adapting to the shifts of eras while preserving the sanctity of texts through disasters both natural and man-made. Renowned for its restorative qualities, *Seriš* has been immortalized in historical records, its significance resonating through the annals of literary and scientific heritage. Among the historical sources are literary references, such as *Al-Saydaneh fi al-Tebb*[5] by Abu Raihan Biruni (11th century) and *Farrokhnameh*[6] by Jamali-ye Yazdi (12th century). *Resāleh dar Bayān-e Ḵaṭṭ va Morakkab va Kāḡaḏ va Sāḵtan-e Ranghā*[7] by Anonymous (15th century.), *Ādāb al-Mašq*[8], *Rasm-al Katt*[9], *Savād al-ḵaṭṭ*[10] by Majnun Rafiqi Heravi (16th century), *Adāb al-Mašq*[11] by Bābā Shāh Isfahanī (16th century), *Ṣerāt al-Ṣoṭur*[12] by Soltan Ali Mašhadi (16th century), *Ḵaṭṭ va Morakkab*[13]

[5] Abu Raihan Biruni, *Al-Saydaneh fi al-Tebb*, trans. Mozaffarzadeh (Tehran: Farhangestane-e Zaban va Adabiyat-e Farsi, 2004). [In Persian].

[6] Jamali Yazdi, *Farrokhnameh,* ed. Iraj Afshar (Tehran: Amirkabir Publication, 2007). [In Persian]. Portions also available in Najib Mayel Heravi, ed., *Ketab-Arayi Dar Tamaddun-I Eslami,* 533–542, 1046–1048 (Mashhad: Islamic Research Centre of Astan-e Quds-e Razavi, 1993).

[7] Anonymous, *Resāleh dar Bayān-e Ḵaṭṭ va Morakkab va Kāḡaḏ va Sāḵtan-e Ranghā* [A Treatise about Calligraphy, Ink, and Making Dyes], in *Ketab-Arayi Dar Tamaddun-I Eslami,* ed. Najib Mayel Heravi, 533–542 (Mashhad: Islamic Research Centre of Astan-e Quds-e Razavi, 1993). [In Persian].

[8] Majnun Rafiqi Heravī, *Ādāb al-Mašq,* in *Ketab-Arayi Dar Tamaddun-I Eslami,* ed. Najib Mayel Heravi, 533–542 (Mashhad: Islamic Research Centre of Astan-e Quds-e Razavi, 1993). [In Persian].

[9] Majnun Rafiqi Heravī, *Rasm-al Katt,* in *Ketab-Arayi Dar Tamaddun-I Eslami,* ed. Najib Mayel Heravi, 161–181 (Mashhad: Islamic Research Centre of Astan-e Quds-e Razavi, 1993). [In Persian].

[10] Majnun Rafiqi Heravī, *Savād al-ḵaṭṭ,* in *Ketab-Arayi Dar Tamaddun-I Eslami,* ed. Najib Mayel Heravi, 185–206 (Mashhad: Islamic Research Centre of Astan-e Quds-e Razavi, 1993). [In Persian].

[11] Bābā Shāh Isfahanī, *Adāb al-Mašq* [Manners of Writing], in *Ketab-Arayi Dar Tamaddun-I Eslami,* ed. Najib Mayel Heravi, 147–157 (Mashhad: Islamic Research Centre of Astan-e Quds-e Razavi, 1993). [In Persian].

[12] Soltan Ali Mašhadi, *Ṣerāt al-Ṣoṭur* [Bridge of Lines], in *Ketab-Arayi Dar Tamaddun-I Eslami,* ed. Najib Mayel Heravi, 533–542 (Mashhad: Islamic Research Centre of Astan-e Quds-e Razavi, 1993). [In Persian].

[13] Hossein Aqili Rostamdari, *Ḵaṭṭ va Morakkab,* in *Ketab-Arayi Dar Tamaddun-I Eslami,* ed. Najib Mayel Heravi, 323–342 (Mashhad: Islamic Research Centre of Astan-e Quds-e Razavi, 1993). [In Persian].

by Hossein Aqili Rostamdari (16th century), *Golzār-e Ṣafā*[14] by Ali Seyrafi (16th century), *Favāyed al-ḵoṭuṭ*[15] by Boḵāri, Mohammad Ibn-e Dust Mohammad (16th century) and *Makhzan al-Advieh*[16] by Mohammad Hossein Aghili Alavi Khorasani (18th century). This examination of *Seriš*'s historical context underscores its indelible mark on the preservation of cultural artifacts—a lineage of craftsmanship that has shaped the narrative of Iranian cultural identity.[17]

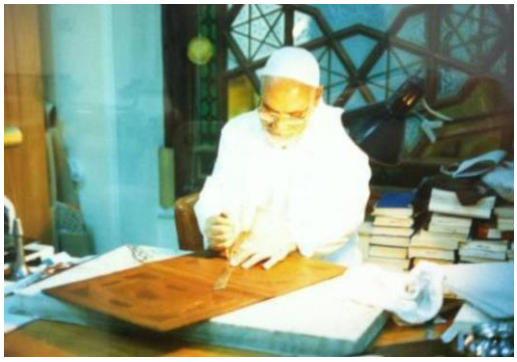


Figure 2- Ramzan Ali Moqadasi in his restoration workshop. (Image courtesy of Mojdeh Roohi-Azizi)

Integration of Traditional and Modern Conservation Methods

The past and present converge in the realm of conservation, where the use of *Seriš* represents an enduring bridge between age-old techniques and cutting-edge scientific advancements. The modern era has underscored the importance of integrating tradition with

[14] Ali Seyrafi, *Golzār-e Ṣafā,* in *Ketab-Arayi Dar Tamaddun-I Eslami*, ed. Najib Mayel Heravi, 533–542 (Mashhad: Islamic Research Centre of Astan-e Quds-e Razavi, 1993). [In Persian].

[15] Mohammad Ibn-e Dust Mohammad Boḵāri, *Favāyed al-ḵoṭuṭ* [Advantages of Scripts], in *Ketab-Arayi Dar Tamaddun-I Eslami*, ed. Najib Mayel Heravi, 533–542 (Mashhad: Islamic Research Centre of Astan-e Quds-e Razavi, 1993). [In Persian].

[16] Mohammad Hossein Aghili Alavi Khorasani, *Makhzan al-Advieh*, republished in 2009 (Tehran: Tehran University Press).

[17] Mojdeh Roohi-Azizi, Abdolrasool Vatandoust, and Hamid Malekian, "Sharhi Bar Maremmat-e Sonnati-e Kaghaz dar Iran," *Faslname-ye Kanjine-ye Asnad* 25, no. 3 (2015): 114–127.

innovation, elevating the potential of *Seriš* to new levels of restoration efficacy. Confronting challenges such as natural coloration and susceptibility to microbial degradation, current researchers are exploring revolutionary methods—among them nanotechnology and advanced solvent extraction—to optimize *Seriš* for contemporary use. This integration reflects a commitment to preserving the essence of cultural heritage while harnessing the transformative potential of scientific progress.[18]

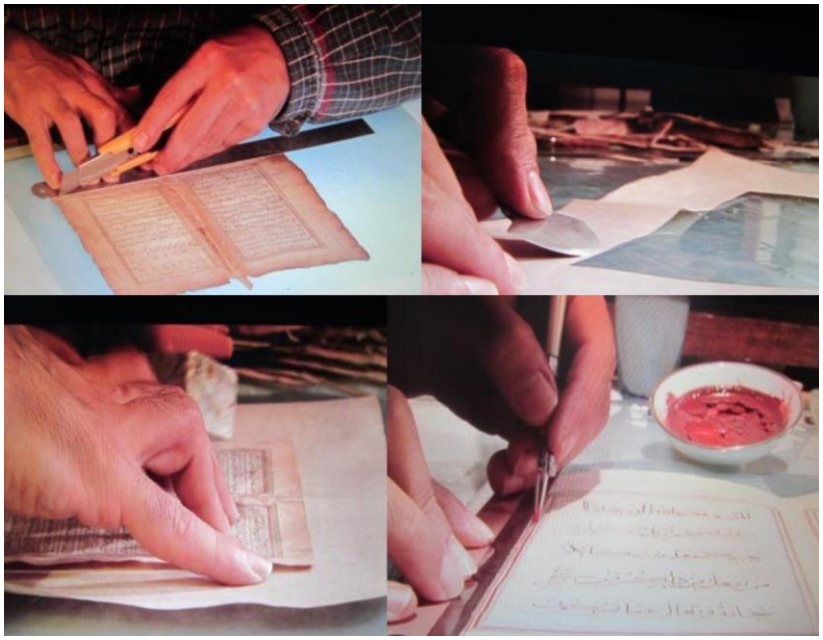


Figure 3- The process of traditional text panel and margin technique (*matn va hashieh*). Image courtesy of Mojdeh Roohi-Azizi

[18] Mandana Barkeshli, Sadra Zekrgoo, and Nasim Koohkesh, "Seriš (Eremurus) Adhesive and Its Use in Traditional and Modern Iranian Manuscripts Conservation Practice," 2023.

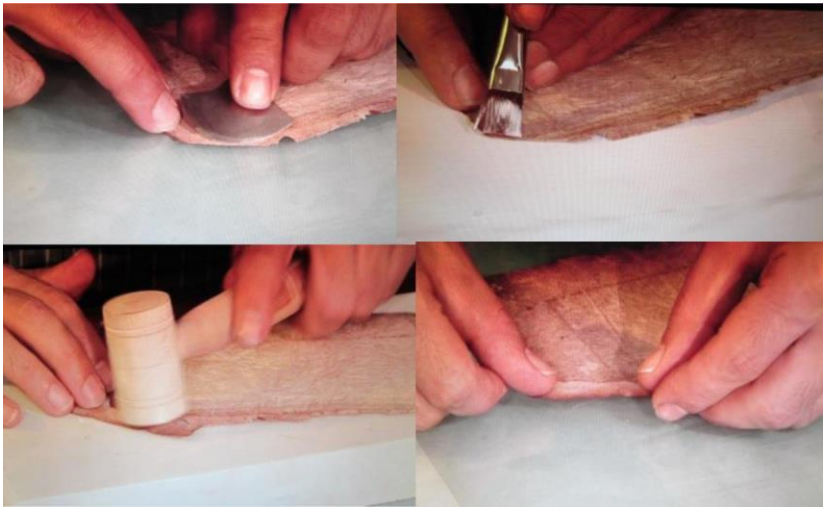


Figure 4 - The process of traditional mending technique (*vassāli*). Image courtesy of Mojdeh Roohi-Azizi

Figure 5 - Eremurus root, harvested from Binaloud mountain, Iran (Image by Nasim Koohkesh)

Botanical Background and Historical Usage

Known scientifically as *Eremurus* and regionally as *Seriš*, this resilient plant of the Asphodeloideae subfamily has adapted to the arid climates of Iran. For centuries, its roots, rich in glucomannans and fructans—particularly inulin—have been processed into a strong and flexible adhesive. This adhesive has played a vital role in the preservation of cultural documents, offering both durability and

versatility for manuscript restoration.[19] However, the natural yellowish hue of *Seriš* poses aesthetic challenges, prompting ongoing research to minimize its impact on historical manuscripts.[20]

Taxonomic Classification of Eremurus

The plant *Eremurus*, commonly referred to as *Seriš*, belongs to the Asphodeloideae subfamily and is well-suited to arid Iranian climates. Its botanical properties, specifically the presence of glucomannans and fructans, such as inulin, make it an essential component in manuscript conservation practices. Historically, its roots have been transformed into a reliable adhesive, crucial for preserving cultural artifacts.[21] Despite its environmental stability, the adhesive's yellowish tint remains a challenge for maintaining the visual integrity of historical manuscripts, necessitating continued research into its refinement.[22]

Traditional and Modern Interplay in the Use of Seriš

The use of *Seriš* by traditional restorers, particularly in the realm of bookbinding restoration, has demonstrated its durability and efficacy, a testament to its centuries-old application. The transition from traditional to modern restoration methods in Iran reflects a shift in conservation ethics, where minimal intervention and reversibility are paramount, leading to a gradual replacement of *Seriš* with modern synthetic adhesives.[23] This evolution underscores a pivotal challenge

[19] Mandana Barkeshli, Sadra Zekrgoo, and Nasim Koohkesh, "Seriš (Eremurus) Adhesive and Its Use in Traditional and Modern Iranian Manuscripts Conservation Practice," 2023.

[20] Mojdeh Roohi-Azizi, Abdolrasool Vatandoust, and Hamid Malekian, "Sharhi Bar Maremmat-e Sonnati-e Kaghaz dar Iran," *Faslname-ye Kanjine-ye Asnad* 25, no. 3 (2015): 114–127.

[21] Mandana Barkeshli, Sadra Zekrgoo, and Nasim Koohkesh, "Seriš (Eremurus) Adhesive and Its Use in Traditional and Modern Iranian Manuscripts Conservation Practice," 2023.

[22] Mojdeh Roohi-Azizi, Abdolrasool Vatandoust, and Hamid Malekian, "Sharhi Bar Maremmat-e Sonnati-e Kaghaz dar Iran," *Faslname-ye Kanjine-ye Asnad* 25, no. 3 (2015): 114–127.

[23] Mandana Barkeshli, Sadra Zekrgoo, and Nasim Koohkesh, "Seriš (Eremurus) Adhesive and Its Use in Traditional and Modern Iranian Manuscripts Conservation

in preserving the cultural authenticity of restoration practices while adhering to contemporary conservation standards.

Cultural Legacy and the Contemporary Significance of Seriš

Beyond its physical attributes, *Seriš* embodies the cultural legacy of Iran, representing an enduring link to the past. Its historical significance in literature and conservation, as captured by poets and scientists alike, evokes a collective memory that resonates with the identity of Iranian culture. Contemporary conservation practices must navigate this dichotomy, honoring the historical use of *Seriš* while embracing advancements that align with current ethical conservation frameworks.

Case Study – Eremurus (Seriš) in Modern Restoration

The case study on the modification of *Seriš* adhesive demonstrates the potential for integrating traditional materials into modern conservation efforts. Scientific analysis aimed at understanding the advantages and addressing the challenges associated with *Seriš*, such as its coloration, contributes to the development of innovative, sustainable conservation solutions that respect the material's historical context.[24]

Figure 6- Cross section of Eremurus root (left) and powder (right) - Image by Nasim Koohkesh

Practice," 2023.
[24] Ibid.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Seriš in Modern Conservation

The employment of *Seriš* as a traditional adhesive in the preservation of Iranian cultural heritage offers several noteworthy advantages. Its substantial adhesive strength, reversibility upon contact with water, and neutral pH make it an attractive option for manuscript restoration. Tousi et al. note that *Seriš*'s viscosity in water surpasses that of formaldehyde-based adhesives, enhancing its adhesion and binding power, particularly when freshly prepared, thus creating a strong bond with paper materials. [25]

Strengths as an Adhesive Material

*Seriš'*s composition, primarily due to its high glucomannan content, endows it with exceptional bonding strength, which is critical for maintaining the structural integrity of cultural artifacts. Its capacity to reverse in water, paired with its neutral pH, conforms with the ethical considerations of conservation, facilitating safe detachment and subsequent treatments as needed.[26]

Challenges and Modern Considerations

Despite these benefits, the application of *Seriš* is not without complications. The natural yellow coloration of this adhesive may lead to undesirable staining on paper artifacts.[27] Its organic nature also makes it susceptible to microbiological attacks, which pose a significant risk to the longevity and preservation of materials. *Seriš*, along with carboxymethyl cellulose, has been found to be particularly prone to fungal degradation by species such as Cladosporium and Penicillium. Moreover, the adhesive properties of *Seriš* begin to

[25] Ehsan Taghizadeh Tousi, Sabar Bauk, Rokiali Hashim, Mohammad Suhaimi Jaafar, Ali Mohammad Hamdan Abuarra, Khalid Saleh Ali Aldroobi, and Amer Mahmoud Al-Jarrah, "Measurement of Mass Attenuation Coefficients of Eremurus-Rhizophora spp. Particleboards for X-ray in the 16.63–25.30 KeV Energy Range," *Radiation Physics and Chemistry* 103 (2014): 119–125.
[26] Ibid.
[27]Kouros Samanian, "Traditional or Modern Conservation Materials and Techniques?" in *Care and Conservation of Manuscripts 13* (2011): 341–349.

diminish mere hours after preparation, necessitating its immediate use upon mixing.[28]

Toward a Hybrid Approach

The conservation community is increasingly favoring techniques that adhere to modern standards, which call for minimal intervention and reversibility. Yet, there is an ongoing discussion about incorporating the advantages of *Seriš* into modern conservation and bookbinding efforts. There is enough merit in this local adhesive to warrant further analysis and potential reintegration into current conservation practices, where its benefits could be harnessed effectively.[29]

Conducted Scientific Research on *Seriš*

The exploration of scientific studies on *Seriš* forms the crux of this review. While summarizing key findings, a deeper critique of the methodological soundness and contextual relevance of these studies is necessary to appreciate their contribution to the field of conservation.

Evaluation and Modification of Seriš for Restoration Purposes (1995)

Adnani's foundational study in 1995 initiated the scientific investigation of *Seriš* for conservation. Although instrumental, the study's reliance on limited solvent concentrations and a singular focus on decolorization necessitates a broader methodological spectrum for future research.[30]

Side Effects of Restoration Adhesives on Paper (2011)

[28] Nasim Koohkesh, Korous Samanian, and Maryam Afsharpour, "Investigation of Improvement of Viscosity and Viscidity of Eremurus (Seriš) Herbal Adhesive for Paper Restoration Aim," *Ganjine-ye Asnad* 29, no. 2 (2019): 124–148, https://doi.org/10.22034/ganj.2019.2363.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Sedigheh Adnani Hosseini, *Arzyābi va eslāh-e časb-e giāhi-ye seriš barāye ahdāf-e maremmat-e asnād va kotob-e farhangi* [Evaluation and Modification of *Eremurus spectabilis* for the Restoration Purposes of Cultural Documents and Books] (Master's thesis, Esfahan University, 1995). [In Persian].

Moradkhan's work in 2011 on adhesive side effects, including *Seriš,* presented groundbreaking findings on their influence on paper properties. However, its limitation to accelerated aging calls for extended research that includes natural aging processes to mimic real-world conditions better.[31]

Introduction of Seriš in International Restoration Forums (2013)

Samanian's 2013 presentation at the Copenhagen conference successfully placed *Seriš* in the global conservation narrative. Nonetheless, follow-up studies are needed to translate conference discussions into standardized conservation practices.[32]

Nanotechnology for Color Removal (2013)

In 2013, Golbon's research on utilizing nanotechnology for *Seriš* decolorization opened new avenues for adhesive modification. Despite this, the difficulty in separating nanomaterials from the adhesive matrix indicates a need for methodological refinements.[33]

Comparison with Formaldehyde-Based Adhesives (2014)

The comparative study by Tousi et al. in 2014 shed light on *Seriš's* properties in contrast to formaldehyde adhesives. Yet, its application to conservation remains indirect, suggesting an area ripe for direct comparative studies within the conservation field.[34]

---

[31] Zohreh Moradkhani, Mahnaz Abdullah Khan Gorji, Reza Vahidzadeh, Sedigheh Rouhi, and Roghayyeh Mahmoudi, "Barresi-ye Mizān-e Ta'sir-e Časb-hā-ye Maremmati dar Jazb va Rošd-e Avāmel-e Biolojik dar Hozeye Asnād-e Aršivi-ye Irān" [A Study on the Effect of Conservation Adhesives on the Absorption and Development of Biological Agents in the Archival Records of Iran]," *Ganjine-ye Asnad* 21, no. 2 (2011): 62–79. [In Persian].

[32]Kouros Samanian, "Traditional or Modern Conservation Materials and Techniques?" in *Care and Conservation of Manuscripts 13* (2011): 341–349.

[33] Raheleh Golbon, *Estefāde az nāno fannāvari dar erteqā'-e časb-e giāhiye seriš barāye hefāzat va maremmat-e nosax-e xatti* [Using Nanotechnology to Promote the Herbal Adhesive, *Eremurus spectabilis*, for Manuscript Protection and Repair] (Master's thesis, 2013).

[34] Ehsan Taghizadeh Tousi, Sabar Bauk, Rokiali Hashim, Mohammad Suhaimi Jaafar, Ali Mohammad Hamdan Abuarra, Khalid Saleh Ali Aldroobi, and Amer Mahmoud Al-Jarrah, "Measurement of Mass Attenuation Coefficients of Eremurus-

Elimination of Coloring Compounds through Solvent Extraction (2020)

Koohkesh's investigation in 2020 on solvent extraction techniques marked a pivotal point in *Seriš's* research by addressing its coloring issue. Future studies should expand upon this work, scaling it up to larger conservation projects and diverse manuscript types.[35] These studies collectively advance our knowledge of *Seriš,* yet they also underscore a persistent challenge: achieving the delicate balance between adhesive efficacy and the preservation needs of historical papers. Research going forward must navigate these complexities to forge enduring solutions for cultural artifact conservation."

Critical Analysis of Scientific Research

In scrutinizing the scientific research conducted on *Seriš* over the past three decades, it becomes evident that while significant strides have been made, there are critical aspects that warrant deeper examination and evaluation. Let's undertake a more detailed critical analysis of the key studies:

Evaluation and Modification of Seriš for Restoration Purposes

Adnani's 1995 pioneering research provided valuable insights into the adhesive properties of *Seriš* and its potential for restoration purposes. However, several methodological limitations hinder a comprehensive assessment of its findings. Adnani's focus on color removal, while crucial for restoration, overlooked broader aspects such as long-term durability and reversibility. Moreover, the study's reliance on a single solvent concentration for adhesive dissolution limits the generalizability of its conclusions. Future research should adopt a more systematic approach, considering diverse solvent concentrations and exploring additional modification techniques to enhance adhesive properties while addressing coloration issues.

Rhizophora spp. Particleboards for X-ray in the 16.63–25.30 KeV Energy Range," *Radiation Physics and Chemistry* 103 (2014): 119–125.

[35] Nasim Koohkesh, Kouros Samanian, and Maryam Afsharpour, "Eliminating Color from Seriš (Eremurus) Paste for Paper Conservation and Restoration," *Journal of Cultural Heritage* 44 (2020): 53–62, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.culher.2019.11.009.

Side Effects of Restoration Adhesives on Paper

Moradkhan's 2011 investigation into the side effects of restoration adhesives offered valuable insights into the complex interactions between adhesives and paper substrates. However, the study's scope was somewhat limited, focusing primarily on accelerated aging experiments without delving into real-world conservation scenarios. Additionally, the study's comparative analysis of adhesives could have been more comprehensive, incorporating a wider range of materials and substrates. To strengthen future research in this area, a more nuanced approach that considers diverse paper types, adhesive applications, and conservation contexts is warranted.

Introduction of Seriš in International Restoration Forums

Samanian's 2013 advocacy for *Seriš'*s inclusion in international restoration forums highlighted its potential as a sustainable alternative to synthetic adhesives. While the presentation served to raise awareness of *Seriš*'s advantages and disadvantages, its impact on actual conservation practices remains unclear. Future research should focus on bridging the gap between advocacy efforts and practical implementation, exploring strategies to overcome barriers to adoption and promoting *Seriš'*s integration into mainstream conservation methodologies.

Nanotechnology for Color Removal

Golbon's 2013 exploration of nanotechnology for color removal in *Seriš* represents a promising avenue for addressing its aesthetic limitations. However, the study's challenges in separating carbon nanotubes from the adhesive solution underscore the complexities inherent in nanomaterial applications for restoration purposes. Further research is needed to overcome these technical hurdles and optimize nanotechnology-based approaches for practical implementation in conservation settings.

Comparison with Formaldehyde-Based Adhesives

Tousi et al.'s 2014 comparative study offered valuable insights into *Seriš'*s adhesive properties relative to formaldehyde-based adhesives.

However, the study's focus on adhesion strength and viscosity overlooks broader considerations such as long-term durability, reversibility, and environmental impact. Future research should adopt a more holistic approach, considering a broader range of performance metrics and exploring *Seriš*'s suitability across diverse conservation contexts.

Elimination of Coloring Compounds through Solvent Extraction

Koohkesh's 2020 research represents a significant advancement in addressing *Seriš*'s coloration issue through solvent extraction methods. By stabilizing enzymes and employing ethanol extraction, Koohkesh demonstrated the efficacy of solvent-based approaches in improving *Seriš*'s aesthetic and adhesive properties. However, the study's focus on laboratory-based experiments limits its applicability to real-world conservation scenarios. Future research should focus on validating these findings in practical conservation settings, taking into account factors such as substrate compatibility, long-term stability, and cost-effectiveness.

In summary, while the scientific research conducted on Seriš has provided valuable insights into its potential applications in cultural heritage conservation, there remains a need for more comprehensive, interdisciplinary, and contextually relevant studies. By addressing methodological limitations, exploring innovative approaches, and bridging the gap between research and practice, future endeavors can further advance our understanding of *Seriš* and its contributions to the preservation of cultural artifacts.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the synthesis of scientific research on *Seriš* underscores its transformative potential in revitalizing traditional restoration practices and advancing contemporary conservation methods. By integrating insights from botanical studies, historical research, and scientific investigations, this review has illuminated the multifaceted significance of *Seriš* in the preservation of cultural heritage.

The potential contributions of *Seriš* to cultural heritage

conservation are manifold. Its adhesive properties—enhanced by recent advancements in research and technology—hold promise for improving the durability, reversibility, and aesthetic integration of restoration materials. By harnessing its strengths while addressing known limitations, researchers can develop innovative approaches that bridge traditional knowledge with modern conservation techniques.

Moreover, *Seriš* research opens avenues for interdisciplinary collaboration, encouraging partnerships among botanists, chemists, conservators, and cultural heritage professionals. Through such collaborative efforts, diverse expertise can be brought together to address complex challenges and devise sustainable strategies for preserving cultural artifacts and manuscripts.

Ultimately, the renewed interest in *Seriš* within the field of heritage preservation affirms the enduring value of traditional practices and reflects a continuing commitment to knowledge, innovation, and sustainability. By embracing both the historical legacy and the inherent scientific properties of *Seriš*, researchers can help forge a more inclusive and ecologically responsible future for conservation, ensuring that future generations inherit a world enriched by the wisdom and treasures of the past.

Manuscript Studies

Precious Insights into Knowledge, Ethics, and Household Expenditures: A Critical Edition of the Selected Excerpts from *Kitāb al-Mawāhib al-ʿAliyyah fī al-Jamʿi Bayn al-Ḥikam al-Qur'āniyyah wa al-Ḥadīthiyyah* (Book of the Exalted Gifts in the Integration of Qur'anic and Ḥadīth Wisdom)[1]

Mohamed Aslam Akbar[2]

Abstract

Kitāb al-Mawāhib of Alī al-Muttaqī (Book of Wisdom) is a compendium of one thousand pieces of wisdom from Holy Qur'ān and Ḥadīth. Among the early scholarships in the collections of wisdom, al-Muttaqī's book is one of the most excellent compilations ever made. A critical edition of this work provides an in-depth study of selected excerpts from the manuscript, focusing on the themes of knowledge, ethics, and household expenditures, presenting insights into the author's unique categorization and organization of this wisdom. It offers an enhanced understanding of the integration of Qur'anic and Ḥadīth wisdom, revealing valuable lessons and historical insights that remain relevant to contemporary readers,

[1] This article, denoted as Part B, serves as a sequel to the previously published article in an earlier issue of *Al-Shajarah*, in vol. 28 (1). It is an extension of the author's doctoral study submitted to the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC) at the International Islamic University Malaysia.

[2] Assistant Professor, Shari'ah and Social Sciences, Faculty of Economics and Management Sciences, International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM). Email: aslamakbar@iium.edu.my.

scholars, and researchers interested in Islamic thought and civilization.

Introduction

The term 'wisdom' (*ḥikmah*) finds a prominent place in both the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth, signifying its fundamental importance in Islamic teachings. The Qur'ān emphasizes that Allah sent prophets and messengers to impart wisdom to humanity, highlighting the divine origin of this essential knowledge. Allah is described as *Al-Hakīm,* the All-Wise, emphasizing the divine wisdom that permeates the Qur'anic teachings. The Qur'ān further features the significance of wisdom through various commands and exhortations. Believers are urged to seek and acquire wisdom, and those who possess it are praised. For instance, the Qur'ān states, "*and he, to whom wisdom is granted, indeed granted abundant good*,"[3] emphasizing the virtue of *ḥikmah*. This theme of seeking and valuing wisdom is recurrent in Islamic education objectives, aligning with the divine directive.

Prophet Ibrahīm, Mūsā, and 'Īsā, among others, were sent as messengers with the specific task of imparting wisdom to humanity alongside their respective Scriptures. This reflects the Qur'āns recognition of the inseparable connection between divine guidance and wisdom. As the Qur'ān states, "*But We had already given the family of Abraham the Scripture and wisdom*."[4] Sūrah Luqmān offers insight into the multifaceted nature of wisdom.[5] Scholars, in their commentaries on this chapter, distinguish between divine wisdom and human wisdom. Divine wisdom is regarded as the foundation of all wisdom, achieved by aligning with the Will of Allah. This distinction emphasizes the profound connection between divine wisdom, the Qur'ān, and the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad.[6]

Therefore, the study of wisdom (*ḥikmah*) has deep roots in Islamic intellectual heritage, with notable scholars contributing to

[3] Qur'ān, al-Baqarah 2: 269.
[4] Qur'ān, al-Mā'idah 5: 54.
[5] See Mālik ibn Anas, *Al-Muwaṭṭa' of Imām Mālik: The First Formulation of Islamic Law*. Translated by Aisha Abdurrahman Bewley (Kuala Lumpur: Islamic Book Trust Publications, 2011).
[6] Ibn Kathir, *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr* (Cairo: Dār al-Salām Publications, 2009).

this field. *Al-Ḥikam al-ʿAṭā'iyyah*, a masterpiece by Tāj al-Dīn Abū al Faḍl Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad al-Shādhilī, marks the first written compilation of wisdom. This work laid the foundation for subsequent scholars to delve into the study of wisdom, as reflected in their commentaries on *al-Ḥikam al-ʿAṭā'iyyah*. Before al-Muttaqī's era, numerous scholars were dedicated to the study and transmission of *ḥikmah* and they authored commentaries, verses, and treatises, enriching the understanding of *ḥikmah*.[7]

Ali al-Muttaqi, a 16th-century Islamic scholar, jurist, writer, and Sufi mystic, is celebrated for his monumental contributions to Islamic scholarship, particularly his renowned work, *Kanz al-'Ummāl*. Born in 1480 CE in Burhanpur, India, Ali al-Muttaqi's early

[7] The following scholars made significant contributions to this field including al-Muttaqī: Ibn ʿAbbād (d.792 AH), *Ghaith al-mawāhib al-ʿaliyyah fī sharḥ al-hikam and Tanbīh*; Ibn Zāghū (d.845 AH), *Sharḥ al-hikam li ibn ʿAbbād*; Abū ʿAlī al-Farāwḍī (d.882 AH), *Sharḥ al-hikam*; Abū al-Mawāhib al-shādhilī (d.882 AH), *Sharḥ al-hikam*; Abū al-Qāsim al-Ramāḥ (d.887 AH), *Sharḥ al-hikam*; Ibn al-Ṣābūnī (d.680 AH), *Sharḥ al-hikam*; ʿAlī ibn Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn ʿAlī al-Qarshi al-Mālikī al-Qulṣādī (d.891 AH), *Sharḥ al-hikam*; Ahmad ibn Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn ʿĪsā al-burunsī Zurrūq (d.899 AH), *Sharḥ al-hikam*; Ibrāhim ibn Mahmūd ibn Ahmad Al-Aqṣarā'ī (d.792 AH), *Iḥkām al-hikam fī sharḥ al-hikam*; Ahmad ibn ʿUmar al-Wafā'ī (d.919 AH), *Sharḥ al-hikam*; Ahmad Jalāl al-dīn ibn Muhammad Khair al-dīn al-Karkī (d.950 AH), *Murshid al-Umam li sharḥ al-hikam*; Muhammad ibn ʿAlī al-Kharūbī al-Ṭarablisī (d.963 AH), *Al-Jumal al-Mawāhibah ʿalā al-hikam al-ʿaṭā'iyyah*; Qāsim ibn Abū al-faḍl Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Hasan al-Saʿdī al-Ḥalabī (d.982 AH), *Sharḥ al-hikam*; Muhammad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Yūsuf Raḍi al-Dīn (d.971 AH), *Shaqā'iq al-Akamm bi daqā'iq al-hikam*; ʿAlī al-Muttaqī (d.975 AH), *Manhaj al-atamm fī tabwīb al-Ḥikam*, also called *al-Nahj* instead of *al-Manhaj*. He arranged and indexed the book *al-Ḥikam al-ʿAṭā'iyyah*. This book is printed and published. The book starts with a chapter on *ʿIlm, Tawbah, Ikhlāṣ, Ṣalāt, al-ʿazlah wa al-Khumūl, Riʿāyat al-waqt, al-Dhikr, al-Fikrah, al-Zuhd* and so on. The books consist of 30 chapters. (See: Rawd Rayaheen, from http://cb.rayaheen.net/showthread. php?tid=11919&page=1&next (accessed on June 2016). Some scholars were known for versification of wisdom in the form of poems, which is called *Naẓm* as follows: *Naẓm al-hikam* by Ibn ʿAbbād; *Faiḍ al-karam* by Kamāl al-dīn ibn ʿAlī Sharīf; *Al-Naẓm al-muḥtāj* by Abd al-karīm ibn Muhammad ʿarabī; *Naẓm* by Ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Mālik; *Faiḍ al-karam fī sharḥ al-hikam* by ʿAlī Shihāb al-dīn ibn Muhammad ibn Saʿd al-dīn; *Fātiḥah al-sālik li mawlāhu al-hikam* by ʿAbdullah ibn ʿAlī al-makkī al-Fāris; *Al-Ghurar al-Bahiyyah fī naẓm matn al-hikam al-sikandariyyah* by Muḥyu al-dīn ibn Husayn al-Malāḥ; *Al-Fayūḍāt al-rabbāniyyah fī sharḥ al-hikam al-ʿaṭā'iyyah* by Muhammad ʿEīd al-Shāfiʿī

education and spiritual development were greatly influenced by his father, Husam, and his mentor, Shaykh Bājan al-ʿUmarī. Orphaned at a young age, he worked as a scribe to make ends meet, but his unwavering passion for knowledge led him back to the tutelage of Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ḥakīm al-Jishtī. Under his guidance, Ali al-Muttaqi pursued a quest for knowledge and received his *Ijāzah*. He embarked on a journey across India to study *Tasawwuf, Tafsir Bayḍāwī, Kitāb ʿAin al-ʿIlm* and more. He also traveled to Makkah, Medina, and Gujarat, seeking knowledge and spiritual growth under various scholars. Ali al-Muttaqi's extensive scholarly works, including *Kitāb al-Mawāhib*, contain valuable insights into Prophetic traditions and ethics, many of which are documented in the footnotes.[8] His

[8] See Shaykh Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān, Shaʿrānī mentioned that when he met al-Muttaqī he saw all his compilations handwritten by al-Muttaqi himself in a paper. A line in the paper equals to a quarter of a book size:

1. *Al-Ḥikam al-ʿIrfāniyyah, fī maʿānī Irshādiyyah wa Ishārāt Qur'āniyyah.*
2. *Al-Aḥādīth al-Mutawātirah,* a manuscript, is available at Raza Library Rampur, India.
3. *Al-Burhān al-Jalī fī Maʿrifat al-Walī.*
4. *Al-Burhān fī ʿalāmāt al-Mahdī fī Ākhir al-Zamān.* Its an abstract from the book *al-ʿUrf al-wardī fī akhbār al-Mahdī by al-Suyūṭī.* He arranged the index and added some Ḥadīth from *Jamʿ al-Jawāmiʿ* and *ʿUqad al-Dār fi akhbār al-Mahdī al-muntaẓar*
5. *Al-Fuṣūl fī Sharḥ Jāmiʿ al-Uṣūl,* a manuscript by ʿAlī al-Muttaqī is in the collections of Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Public Library
6. *Al-Nahj al-atamm fī tartīb al-ḥikam*
7. *Al-ʿunwān fī sulūk al-niswān*
8. *Al-Riqq al-Marqūm fī gayāt al-ʿulūm*
9. *Al-Rutbah al-Fākhirah,* this deals with "*taṣawwuf*".
10. *Al-Wasīlah al-fākhirah fī salṭah al-dunyā wa al-ākhirah*
11. *Ghāyat al-Kamāl fī Bayān Afḍal al-Aʿmāl,* a copy of it is in the Dār al-ʿUlūm library of Peshawar; a copy also exists in the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts Leningrad.
12. *Irshād al-ʿIrfān wa ʿIbārah al-Īmān*
13. *Jawāmiʿ Kalim fī al-Mawāḍiʿ wa al-Ḥikam,* manuscripts of this work are available in many Indian collections also in Paris, Berlin, and al-Azhar.
14. *Kanz al-ʿUmmāl,* is his most famous work. This work is printed.
15. *Maṭlaʿ al-Ghāyah*, it is a summary of Ibn al-Athīr's "*Al-Nihāyah fī Gharīb al-Aḥādīth*". A manuscript of this was available in the Berlin Library.
16. *Majmaʿ biḥār al-anwār fī sharḥ mushkil al-ʻāthār*
17. *Manhaj al-ʿUmmal fī sunan al-aqwāl*

influence extended to his students and admirers, and he was known for his generosity. He passed away in 1567 CE, leaving behind a lasting legacy of scholarship and spiritual enlightenment. Ali al-Muttaqi's dedication to knowledge and profound contributions to Islamic scholarship continue to inspire scholars and seekers of knowledge to this day. His enduring legacy is preserved in works like *Kitāb al-Mawāhib*, cementing his place among the luminaries of Islamic history.

The *Kitāb al-Mawāhib*[9]

Kitāb al-Mawāhib revolves around the theme of Islamic wisdom. This compilation comprises one thousand pieces of wisdom drawn from both the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth, with five hundred extracted from the Qur'ān and the remainder derived from Ḥadīth sources. Within the manuscript, Qur'anic wisdom is referred to as *'al-iqtisābā'* (quotations), while Ḥadīth wisdom is termed *'al-Taḍmīnāt'* (inclusions or embodiments). The manuscript is meticulously organized, with the wisdom categorized alphabetically based on subject matter, such as *Īmān* (faith), *Iḥsān* (excellence), *Akhlāq* (morality), and *Imārah* (leadership), among others. This organizational structure spans the entire Arabic alphabet, from *alif* to yā. The result of al-Muttaqī's labor is the comprehensive work titled *Kitāb al-Mawāhib al-ʿAliyyah fī al-jamʿi bayn al-ḥikam al-Qur'āniyyah wa al-Ḥadīthiyyah*. *Kitāb al-Mawāhib* has, at times, been overshadowed by similar works, such as *Ghaith al-Mawāhib al-*

18. Mukhtaṣar al-nihāyah fī garīb al-ḥadīth li ibn al-Athīr
19. Mukhtaṣar Kanz al-ʿummāl
20. Mukhtaṣar Qatf al-azhār li Jalāl al-dīn al-Suyūṭī Sharh ʿAlī al-Muttaqī
21. Risālah fī ibṭāl daʿwā al-Sayyid Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Jonfūrī
22. Sharḥ al-hikam li ibn ʿubād
23. Tabyīn al-Ṭarīq, also "taṣawwuf".
24. Talkhīṣ al-Bayān, this book is regarding the Mahdi of the last time.
25. Talqīn al-ṭarīq fi al-sulūk

[9] Akbar, Mohamed Aslam. "*Kitāb al-Mawāhib al-ʿaliyyah fī al-Jamʿi Bayn al-Ḥikam al-Qur'āniyyah wa al-Ḥadīthiyyah* (Book of High Talents in the Integration of Qur'anic and Ḥadīth Wisdom): A Manuscript Study." *Al-Shajarah: Journal of the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC)* 28, no. 1 (2023): 143-162.

ʿAliyyah fī Sharḥ al-Ḥikam al-ʿAṭā'iyyah by Ibn ʿAbbād. This similarity in titles and content may have contributed to the obscurity of *Kitāb al-Mawāhib*. However, the study emphasizes that *Kitāb al-Mawāhib* remains an original and exceptional contribution by al-Muttaqī to the field of Islamic wisdom. This analysis sheds light on the authenticity and significance of *Kitāb al-Mawāhib* within the context of Islamic intellectual heritage. It confirms Shaykh Abū ʿAlī al-Muttaqī al-Hindī as the author and elucidates the manuscript's structure, subject matter, and sources. Despite the existence of similar works, *Kitāb al-Mawāhib* stands as a unique and valuable contribution to the realm of Islamic wisdom.[10]

[10] The manuscript housed in microfilm in the Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas Library at the International Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC), International Islamic University, Malaysia. The original version of the *Kitāb al-Mawāhib* manuscript is preserved in the Bodleian Library, Oxford. This library is renowned for its extensive collection of historic manuscripts. The Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas (ISTAC) version of the manuscript was microfilmed by Oxford University Libraries Imaging Services in 2005. It is recorded as one microfilm reel, positive, with a size of 35 mm (Microfilm no.: IM/0657/05 Reel 9; Manuscript no.: MS.Pococke 78). Aside from the version held at ISTAC, several other handwritten copies of *Kitāb al-Mawāhib* are found in different locations:
(i) Maktabah Asʿad Afandī (Esad Efendi): A handwritten copy of the manuscript is available at this library under the reference number 1769. Details of this manuscript can be found in Daftar Kutubkhānah Asʿad Afandī, Mahallah Sindah Caindar, Turkey, Mahmūd Book Maṭbaʿah sī 1262 AH, at page no. 103. (ii) Maktabah Dāmād Zādah, Turkey: Another handwritten copy is preserved at Maktabah Dāmād Zādah, Turkey, under the reference number 1259/2. Details of this manuscript can be found in Daftar Kutubkhāna Dāmād Zādah by Qāḍī ʿAskar Muhammad Murād, Dār Sʿādat, Turkey, 1311 AH, at page no. 100. It is indicated by the name of Jawāmiʿ al-Kalim wa mawāhib ʿalayh. This manuscript is also mentioned in Carl Brockelmann's book Tārikh al-Adab, Volume 2, page no. 519. (iii) Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyyah, Egypt: A handwritten copy is available at Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyyah, Egypt, under the reference number 309. Details of this manuscript can be found in Fahras al-Maktabah, vol. 1, p. 367. It is described as collection no. 309, Scroll 1 no. 091: 4572. This manuscript is written in Persian letters, with a black and red cover and a size of 25X19 cm. See: Fihrist Maktabah al-Makhtutah from http://41.33.22.69/uhtbin/ cgisirsi.exe/?ps=TMVF8F23uf/ ELDAR/177600022/9 (accessed on August 2016). (iv) Makhṭūṭāt al-Maṭrān Sulaimān al-Ṣā'igh and his brother Mūsā al-Ṣā'igh, Baghdad: Yet another handwritten copy is housed in this collection. Details of the manuscript can be found in Fahras Makhṭūṭāt al-Maṭrān Sulaymān al-Ṣā'igh and his brother Mūsā al-Ṣā'igh. This manuscript measures 22X16 cm, with 23 sheets and 28

Many scholars have contributed to the development and dissemination of wisdom in Islamic scholarship before the al-Muttaqī's era. However, the integration of Qur'anic and Ḥadīth wisdom, as exemplified in *Kitāb al-Mawāhib* by al-Muttaqī, emphasizes the profound connection between divine guidance and human knowledge. This manuscript, with its meticulous organization and comprehensive approach, serves as a testament to the enduring importance of wisdom in Islamic thought. The study of wisdom within the Islamic intellectual heritage remains a rich and vital field, drawing inspiration from the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth to guide individuals towards a path of enlightenment and righteousness.

Translated Excerpts from *Kitāb al-Mawāhib*: Wisdom of Knowledge, Conduct, and Household Expenditure

In the chapter of knowledge (*Ādāb al-'Ilm*), the manuscript of *Kitāb al-Mawāhib* underlines how actual knowledge is dignified and the responsibilities that come with it. Knowledge is not some quantity of facts but something uplifting an individual. This demands humility (*tawāḍu'*), sincerity (*ikhlās*), and ethics (*adab*) during its acquisition process. In the pursuit of wisdom, one understands the real essence of things and, therefore, presents himself in a transparent and responsible manner, making sure that the knowledge will serve a higher purpose than just the state of acquisition.

The *Kitāb al-Mawāhib* also insists upon behavior, sincerity, purity, and integrity (*al-akhlāq wa al-af'āl al-mahmūdah*). The teachings detest pretense and lies and teach, therefore, that intentions judge actions. Precisely, such behavior, based on exact and precise religious commitment and high moral standards, is perceived to be indispensable for the believer's spiritual health. The manuscript elaborates on the detailed framework of preservation of purity (*ikhlāṣ*) in one's actions and interactions that would entice one to live a life of moral excellence (*tafāwaq*) and authenticity (*salṭah*).

---

quires. It contains 27 leaves and is hardbound. It is referred to as collection No. 69 or 31/m. See: Internet archive from http://ia800503.us.archive.org/29/ items/majallat-almawred-from049to56/13-01-1984-049.pdf (accessed in August 2016).

In other words, in the aspect of the family budget, (*al-iqtiṣād fi al-mā'ishah*) the book is rich in practical advice regarding the planning and management of the family's finances. Indeed, it focuses on the golden mean (*al-iqtiṣād*) in spending and administering resources; therefore, it preaches against extravagance (*isrāf*) and stinginess (*bukhl*). Associating economic prudence with spiritual serenity, which eventually leads to salvation, *Kitāb al-Mawāhib* introduces the reader to such financial practices (*tadbīr*) that ensure both material and spiritual prosperity.

The chapters of work in *Kitāb al-Mawāhib* are distinct, and the wisdom of Alī al-Muttaqī is deep. The teachings from the manuscript can also be contemporarily understood and applied while enhancing views on ethics, behaviors, and even financial skills in life. It is in these dimensions that we take on timeless principles that ignite and serve.

Knowledge (*Bāb fī al-'Ilm wa Ādābuhu wa Āfātuhu*)

The excerpts from *Kitāb al-Mawāhib* offer profound insights into the nature and responsibilities of knowledge. Alī al-Muttaqī's manuscript combines Qur'anic and Ḥadīth wisdom, portraying knowledge as both a dignifying force and a heavy responsibility. The following analysis divides these insights into three parts, each focusing on different aspects of knowledge.

Part A: The Dignity (*Sharaf*) and Responsibility of Knowledge

Alī al-Muttaqī inscribes in *Kitāb al-Mawāhib*[11] as follow:

> Knowledge carries a certain dignity, evident when someone of lesser standing proudly proclaims to someone of higher standing, "*I have grasped which you*

[11] The author's phrases are kept unaltered, but the quotes from the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth are italicized with inward and outer commas to distinguish them from the author's expressions. Footnotes are used to cite all direct translations from Qur'ān and Ḥadīth.

> *have not grasped, and I have come to you from Saba' with true news*."[12]
>
> In one's speech, their rank is discerned, revealing their true nature: *"then, when he spoke to him, he said: "Verily this day, you are with us high in rank and fully trusted."*[13]

Knowledge confers dignity upon its possessor. The excerpts from *Kitāb al-Mawāhib* highlight that an individual of lower standing can rise to prominence through knowledge. This is illustrated by the story of someone from *Saba'*[14] who brings true news, signifying the value and honor that knowledge bestows. This demonstrates that through the acquisition (*iḥāṭah*) and dissemination (*tablīgh*) of valuable information (*naba'*), a person can attain a higher status and respect (*sharaf*) within society. Additionally, knowledge reveals one's true rank and nature, as evident when one's speech distinguishes their standing as Holy Qur'ān states in Surah Yūsuf: 12. This suggests that eloquence and the ability to convey knowledge effectively are key indicators of a person's stature and trustworthiness.

Silence and Understanding (*Sukūt*)

> When scholars choose silence in the face of a judgment, they are the ones who comprehend the following truth: "*Verily, the worst of living creatures with Allah are the deaf and the dumb, who understand not*".[15]

Scholars who choose silence over judgment often comprehend deeper truths. Silence (*sukūt*) in the face of judgment is a marker of wisdom, contrasting with those described as the '*worst of living creatures*' for

[12] Qur'ān, al-Naml 27: 22.
[13] Qur'ān, Yūsuf 12: 12.
[14] Saba' (Arabic: سبأ, saba'; from the city called "Sheba") is the 34th chapter (*sūrah*) of the Qur'ān with 54 verses (*āyāt*). It discusses the lives of Prophets Sulayman and Dawud, a story about the people of Sheba, challenges and warnings against the disbelievers as well as the promises related to the Day of Judgment.
[15] Qur'ān, al-Anfāl 8: 21.

their lack of understanding. This emphasizes that true knowledge often manifests in restraint and contemplation (*tafakkur*), where a scholar's decision to remain silent can be a sign of profound understanding and insight, rather than a lack of knowledge.

The Misuse of Knowledge (*Ḍalāl*)

> A scholar who succumbs to whims that divert them from humility and patience is a scholar whom God has led astray, despite their knowledge. "*and sealed his hearing and his heart, and put a cover on his sight*".[16]
>
> Knowledge and the love of wealth are incongruous: "*And recite to them the story of him to whom We gave our proofs*".[17]
>
> Should an unrighteous scholar renounce worldly pursuit, their status may rise in this life, but they risk being branded as a thief in the hereafter: "*but he clung to the earth and followed his own vain desire, so his parable is parable of a dog*".[18]

The excerpts from *Kitāb al-Mawāhib* warn against the misuse of knowledge. A scholar who succumbs to whims and deviates from humility (*tawāḍu'*) and patience (*ḥilm*) is led astray (*ḍalāl*) despite their knowledge. This serves as a cautionary tale that knowledge without humility and patience can lead to spiritual and intellectual blindness. The incongruity of knowledge and the love of wealth is emphasized in Sūrah al-Aʿrāf: 175. The story illustrates that a scholar who becomes obsessed with material wealth risks losing the true essence of their knowledge, *"...parable of a dog."* This metaphor emphasizes the degradation of a scholar who prioritizes material gains (*hubb al-māl*) over true wisdom, likening them to a dog that follows its base desires (*hawā*) rather than higher principles.

[16] Qur'ān, *al-Jāthiyah* 45: 23.
[17] Qur'ān, *al-Aʿrāf* 7:175.
[18] Qur'ān, *al-Aʿrāf* 7: 176.

Part B: The Moral Dimensions of Knowledge

Knowledge and Wealth (*al-ʻIlm wa al-Māl*)

Knowledge and the love of wealth are depicted as fundamentally incompatible in the excerpts from *Kitāb al-Mawāhib*. This is illustrated through a scholar who is driven by madness (*mudāhin*) to amass gifts and books without proper understanding is likened to a donkey which carries huge burdens of books. This comparison emphasizes the futility of accumulating knowledge (*asfāran*) without comprehension or the intention to apply it meaningfully. Similarly, a scholar consumed by wrath is compared to a braying donkey. This analogy highlights that knowledge should lead to calm and measured behavior rather than uncontrolled emotions.

> A scholar driven by madness to amass gifts and books is akin to "*is as the likeness of a donkey which carries huge burdens of books*".[19]
>
> A scholar consumed by wrath is comparable to a braying donkey: "*Verily, the harshest of all voices is the braying of the asses*".[20]
>
> One who becomes entangled in an argument will not easily relent, "*So his parable is a parable of a dog: if you drive him away, he lolls his tongue out, or if you leave him alone, he lolls his tongue out*".[21]

Here, the braying donkey symbolizes the discordant (*ankar*) and unpleasant nature of a scholar whose knowledge does not lead to calm and measured behavior, but rather to uncontrolled emotions and outbursts. Furthermore, the text emphasizes the consequences of pursuing wealth at the expense of scholarly integrity. A scholar who is driven by material desires is warned of spiritual degradation such as a dog lolls his tongue out. This parable illustrates that prioritizing worldly gains over the pursuit of true knowledge leads to a debased

[19] Qur'ān, *al-Jumuʿah* 62: 5.
[20] Qur'ān, *Luqmān* 31:19.
[21] Qur'ān, *al-Aʿrāf* 7:176.

and unfulfilled existence, akin to a dog that follows base desires rather than higher principles.

Stubbornness and Arrogance (*al-Kibr wa al-'Utuww*)

Stubbornness and arrogance are significant moral pitfalls for scholars. These traits can lead individuals to disavow their beliefs and deny truths out of pride (*kibr*). The excerpts from *Kitāb al-Mawāhib* highlight the dangers of such behaviors, condemning those who reject truth due to arrogance. This indicates that scholars who allow pride to cloud their judgment ultimately deceive themselves and stray from the path of wisdom. A knowledgeable scholar is cautioned against incessant prattling and is encouraged to seek wisdom and discernment instead.

> A stubborn individual who, at one point, perceives the truth as false, will eventually have to confront the undeniable reality before their Lord, "*Those who have been expelled from their homes unjustly only because they said: 'Our Lord is Allah'*".[22]
>
> Stubbornness leads one to disavow their own beliefs due to arrogance and pride, "*And they denied them wrongfully and arrogantly, though their own souls were convinced thereof.*"[23]
>
> A knowledgeable scholar does not secure victory by incessant prattling, "*They intend to put out the light of Allah with their mouths*".[24]

This metaphor emphasizes that victory and true understanding are not achieved through endless talking (*jadl*) but through the application of wisdom and the ability to discern truth from falsehood (*bāṭil*). The excerpts from *Kitāb al-Mawāhib* also point out that stubbornness can lead scholars to confront the undeniable reality of their errors before their Lord as mentioned in Sūrah al-Ḥajj: 40. This serves as a

[22] Qur'ān, *al-Ḥajj* 22:40.
[23] Qur'ān, *al-Naml* 27:14.
[24] Qur'ān, *al-Ṣaff* 61:8.

reminder that stubbornness in the face of truth not only leads to personal downfall but also to a broader moral and spiritual reckoning.

Gentleness in Discourse (*Līn fi al-Kalām*)

The moral dimension of knowledge also encompasses the manner in which scholars engage in discourse (*khaṣm*). The excerpts from *Kitāb al-Mawāhib* advise that to overcome adversaries, employing gentle and measured speech is often more effective. This suggests that humility (*tawāḍu'*) and a willingness to acknowledge the possibility of being wrong can facilitate more productive and respectful discussions. The text further advises restraint in speech (*līn*), noting that even a confrontational opponent may respond with moderation if approached calmly.

> To overcome an adversary, it is often more effective to employ gentle and measured speech, "*And verily, we or you are rightly guided or in plain error*".[25]
>
> Practice restraint in your speech, and your opponent may reciprocate with moderation, even if their initial demeanor was confrontational. "*And argue not with the people of the Scripture, unless it be in that is better*".[26]

Part C: The Pursuit and Dissemination of Knowledge

True Wisdom and Clarity (*Tabṣirah*)

The essence of wisdom is the capacity to discern the true nature of things, differentiating between good (*nāfi'*) and evil (*ḍarr*). This discernment (*tamīz*) is a hallmark of true wisdom, as the excerpts from *Kitāb al-Mawāhib* emphasize as in Sūrah al-Ḥashr: 2. Here, the ability to see clearly and understand the essence of situations is portrayed as vital. Those who possess wisdom can navigate life's complexities, making sound judgments that align with ethical and moral principles. In contrast, the lack of clarity and understanding is likened to blindness (*a'mā*). This stark warning emphasizes the

[25] Qur'ān, *Sabā'* :34:24.
[26] Qur'ān, *al-ʿAnkabūt* 29:46.

importance of seeking and applying true wisdom in life. The pursuit of knowledge must be aimed at achieving clarity and understanding, ensuring that one's actions are guided by insight and discernment.

> The essence of wisdom lies in the capacity to discern the true nature of things, differentiating between good and evil. "*then take admonition, O you with eyes*".[27]
>
> In matters of fact, clarity prevails over the abstract: "*And whoever is blind in this world, will be blind in the hereafter and more astray from the path*".[28]

The Role of Scholarly Opinions (*Fatwā*)

Issuing a *fatwā*, or scholarly opinion, is depicted as a profound act of devotion (*'ibādah*) and responsibility. Scholars are entrusted with the significant task of guiding others through their knowledge and insights. The excerpts from *Kitāb al-Mawāhib* caution against practicing scholarly opinions without proper knowledge as mentioned in Sūrah al-Baqarah: 79. This serves as a reminder that the role of a scholar is not to be taken lightly. Misguided advice can lead to significant harm, both to individuals and the community. Therefore, scholars must approach the issuance of *fatwās* with great care, ensuring that their opinions are well-founded and rooted in true understanding. The responsibility of scholars extends beyond mere knowledge. It encompasses the moral duty to provide guidance that is both accurate and beneficial, highlighting the profound impact that scholarly opinions can have on the lives of others.

> The act of issuing a *fatwā*, a scholarly opinion, is a profound act of devotion: "*Woe to one*"[29] who practices it without knowledge "*You will see, and they will see. Which of you is afflicted with madness?*".[30]

[27] Qur'ān, al-Ḥashr 59: 2.
[28] Qur'ān, al-Isrā' 17: 72.
[29] Qur'ān, al-Baqarah 2: 79
[30] Qur'ān, al-Qalam 68: 5-6.

Humility and Respect (*Istimālah*)

Humility is a recurring theme in the pursuit and dissemination of knowledge. Excessive self-praise is seen as ignorance, as highlighted by the caution in a Ḥadīth compiled in *Majma' al-Zawā'id*. This emphasizes that true scholars recognize the vastness of knowledge and their own limitations within it. Humility allows scholars to remain open to learning and growth, avoiding the pitfalls of arrogance. Courteous (*talaṭṭuf*) and respectful communication (*istimālah*) is also crucial, especially among scholars. The excerpts from *Kitāb al-Mawāhib* highlight the way Allah asked Mūsā.

> When communicating with scholars, it is essential to be courteous and respectful: "*And what is that in your right hand O Mūsā?*".[31]
>
> Excessive self-praise is incongruent with the character of a true scholar. As the saying cautions, "*Whoever claims that he is knowledgeable is indeed ignorant*".[32]
>
> Excessive intimidation has no place in the discourse of scholars. It is well-known that "*A Muslim is not allowed to scare off another Muslim*".[33]

This example illustrates the importance of approaching discussions and inquiries with politeness and respect. Even when addressing significant issues, scholars must maintain a demeanor (*sulūk*) that fosters mutual respect and constructive dialogue. Moreover, the excerpts from *Kitāb al-Mawāhib* highlight that knowledge and wisdom are not exclusive to those with formal recognition or titles. Valuable insights can come from various sources, and humility (*tawāḍu'*) allows scholars to acknowledge and appreciate these contributions. Humility in the pursuit of knowledge also involves recognizing the importance of asking good questions and approaching queries with patience and courtesy (*rifq*) such as

[31] Qur'ān, Ta-Ha 20: 17.
[32] Narrated by ʿAbdullah ibn ʿUmar, compiled by al-Haythamī, *Majmaʿ al-Zawā'id*, Page/No. 191/1, Grade: *Ḍaʿīf*.
[33] Narrated by Prophet's Companions, compiled by Abū Dā'ud, *Sunan Abū Dā'ud*, Page/No. 5004, Grade: *Ṣāliḥ*.

learning from a good question. This emphasizes that the pursuit of knowledge is not just about having answers but also about asking meaningful and thoughtful questions (*jard al-su'āl*). The quality of one's inquiries reflects their understanding and eagerness to learn.

> Before seeking answers, purify your queries from ignorance and approach with patience and courtesy: "*A good question is half of knowledge*".[34]
>
> Ask over about your religion, as ignorance is oppression and deviation. "*A question dissolves ignorance*".[35]

Good Behavior (*Bāb fī al-akhlāq wa al-afʿāl al-maḥmūdah*)

The next selected excerpts from *Kitāb al-Mawāhib* concerning behavior offer intense perceptions into the moral and spiritual dimensions of human actions. These teachings emphasize the importance of sincerity (*ikhlāṣ*), purity (*naqā'*), and integrity (*nazāhah*) in one's behavior, while warning against hypocrisy and the perils of external validation. The analysis will be divided into two parts, focusing on the themes of purity and sincerity in actions, and the dangers of hypocrisy (*nifāq*) and deceit (*khadā'*).

Part A: Purity and Sincerity in Actions

Purity in Actions (*Ikhlāṣ fī al-'Amal*)

The importance of purity in one's actions is emphasized through the metaphor of purified milk being separated from excretion and blood. This analogy in *Kitāb al-Mawāhib* illustrates that just as milk must be kept pure, so too must our actions be free from impurities. Verse 21 in Sūrah al-Mu'minūn serves as a reminder of the inherent lessons in nature, urging individuals to cleanse their actions of any moral or moral impurities.

---

[34] Narrated by ʿAbdullah ibn ʿUmar, compiled by al-Bayhaqī, *Shaʿb al-Īmān*, Page/No. 2239/5, Grade: *Ḍaʿīf.*

[35] Narrator by Jābir ibn 'Abdullah, compiled by al-Bayhaqī, *Sunan al-Kubrā li al-Bayhaqī*, Page/No. 1/228, Grade: not *marfū'*.

> Rescue your actions from impurity as purified milk is separated from excretion and blood. "*And verily in the cattle indeed there is a lesson for you*".[36]

Sincerity and the Heart (*Ikhlāṣ fī al-Qalb*)

A heart sincerely connected to God stands in stark contrast to one that is attached to worldly matters and subjected to humiliation. The comparison of a person belonging to many disputing partners versus one who belongs entirely to one master emphasizes the peace and integrity found in sincere devotion to God. Alī al-Muttaqī quotes Sūrah al-Zumar: 9 which highlights the stability and honor in single-hearted devotion.

> A heart sincerely connected to God differs greatly from one attached to others and subjected to humiliation. "*Allah puts forth a similitude a man belonging to many partners disputing with one another, and a man belonging entirely to one master*".[37]

Guarding Against Disgrace and Torment (*Salāmah min al-'Aib*)

Maintaining one's surroundings and heart free from disgrace and mysterious stings is crucial for spiritual well-being. The imagery of a field sound and brightly colored, untouched by disgrace in Sūrah al-Baqarah: 71 emphasizes the need for maintaining purity in one's environment. Moreover, Alī al-Muttaqī highlights that guarding the heart against torments that bring pain is illustrated by the verses 88 & 89 in Sūrah al-Shuʿarā, signifying the ultimate importance of a clean and sincere heart in the eyes of God.

> Keep your surroundings free from disgrace, akin to layered security. "*Neither trained to till the soil nor water the fields, sound, having no other color except bright yellow*".[38]

[36] Qur'ān, al-Mu'minūn 23: 21.
[37] Qur'ān, al-Zumar 39: 29.
[38] Qur'ān, al-Baqarah 2: 71.

> Guard your heart against mysterious stings, for it brings a painful torment. "*The day whereon neither wealth nor sons will avail, except he who comes to Allah with a clean heart*".[39]

Authority (*Sulṭān*) Through Sincerity

Sincere individuals possess a unique authority over negative forces, as highlighted in Sūrah al-Ḥijr: 42 indicating that those who are truly devoted and sincere are protected from the influence of devils.

> Sincere individuals will have authority over devils. "*Certainly you shall have no authority over my slaves*".[40]

Part B: The Dangers of Hypocrisy and Deceit

Exposing Hypocrisy (*Riyā'*)

The ultimate exposure of hypocritical behavior is a recurring topic in *Kitāb al-Mawāhib*. The verse (Sūrah al-Zumar: 47), serves as a warning that all hidden engagements and hypocrisies will eventually be unveiled by God.

> The hypocritical people's engagements will be unveiled one day. "*And there will become apparent to them from Allah what they had not been reckoning*".[41]

The Paradox of Hypocrisy (*Nifāq*)

Hypocrisy is described as a state of inner conflict and darkness (*ḍulumāt*), as depicted in the metaphors (*mathal*) in the verses 39-40 Sūrah al-Nūr, illustrating the emptiness and confusion that accompanies insincere behavior.

---

[39] Qur'ān, al-Shuʿarā' 26: 88-89.
[40] Qur'ān, al-Ḥijr 15: 42.
[41] Qur'ān, al-Zumar 39: 47.

> The hypocritical person finds themselves in a dilemma and paradox, "…*like a darkness in vast deep sea*" or "*like a mirage in desert*".[42]

Intention Over Action (*Niyyah al-'Amal*)

The power of intentions over actions is a key moral teaching. The Ḥadīth compiled in Bukhārī and Muslim stress that the true value of an action lies in the sincerity of its intent rather than its outward appearance.

> Evidence has demonstrated that the heart holds power over the body. "*Actions are but by intentions*".[43]

> Be sincere in your work, and you will reap its benefits. "*Verily you will have what you have done*".[44]

> The reward of an action is finite, unlike intention; hence, no one will deny the power of the heart unless they are ignorant. "*Believer's intention is better than his action*".[45]

Multiple Rewards for Multiple Intentions (*Ta'addud al-Niyyāt*)

The concept that multiple sincere intentions lead to multiple rewards is highlighted by a Ḥadīth in Muslim, emphasizing that God recognizes and rewards the multiplicity (*ta'ddud*) of good intentions behind actions.

> Multiple intentions lead to multiple rewards, both significant and small. "*Allah has given all that to you*".[46]

---

[42] Qur'ān, al-Nūr 24: 39-40.
[43] Narrated by ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, compiled by Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, Page/No. 1, Grade: *Ṣaḥīḥ*.
[44] Narrated by Ubay ibn Kaʿb, compiled by Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Page/No. 663, Grade: *Ṣaḥīḥ*.
[45] Narrated by Sahl ibn Saʿd al-Sāʿidī, compiled by al-Haythamī, *Majmaʿ al-Zawā'id*, Page/No. 66/1, Grade: *Ḥasan* except Ḥātim ibn ʿubād.
[46] Narrated by Ubay ibn Kaʿb, compiled by Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Page/No. 663, Grade: *Ṣaḥīḥ*.

Condemnation of Hypocrisy (*al-Murā'ī*)

Hypocritical behavior is strongly condemned. The Ḥadīth quoted by Alī al-Muttaqī, denounces those who fail to practice what they preach. Similarly, imitating the virtuous work of others without true sincerity is cursed, indicating that insincere mimicry of noble actions is despised.

> Hypocrites fail to practice what they preach. "*Allah fights those who are portraying what they are not creating*".[47]
>
> Relate every action to God, for the hypocrite has no reference. "*Verily the person who shows off has no rewards*".[48]
>
> Imitating or counterfeiting the work of noble people is cursed, even if the imitator performs well. "*Allah curses mannish women*".[49]

Claims of False Ownership (*Iddi'ā'*)

The severe consequences of claiming what does not rightfully belong to one are highlighted in the Ḥadīth compiled in *Kitāb al-Mawāhib*, emphasizing the importance of honesty and integrity in one's claims and possessions.

> Claiming what does not rightfully belong to you is the epitome of hypocrisy and the worst behavior. Do not assert possession of what you do not truly own. Whoever claims the reward of what they did not achieve subjects themselves to deserving punishment. "*Whoever*

[47] Narrated by Usāmah ibn Zayd, compiled by al-Albānī, *Silsilah al-Ṣaḥīḥaḥ*, Page/No. 695/2, Grade: *Ḥasan*

[48] Narrated by al-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad and Abū Dhar al-Ghifārī, compiled by al-Albānī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmiʿ*, Page/No. 7164, Grade: *Ḥasan.*

[49] Narrated by ʿĀ'ishah, Compiled by al-Albānī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmiʿ*, Page/No. 5096, Grade: *Ṣaḥīḥ.*

> *claimed something which is not for him, Allah will degrade him like a leaf*".[50]

Hypocrisy in Public Display (*al-Murā'ī*)

The comparison of a hypocritical disciple (*murīd*) to an immodest woman flaunting her allure in a Ḥadīth compiled by Alī al-Muttaqī, illustrates the superficiality and moral degradation of public displays of piety without genuine substance.

> "A disciple who carries themselves hypocritically, cloaked in serenity and dignity, is akin to an immodest woman who flaunts her allure. "*Any woman who puts on perfume then passes by people so that they can smell her fragrance then she is an adulteress*".[51]

Household Expenditures (*Bāb al-Iqtiṣād wa al-Rifq fī al-Māʿīshah*

The last selected excerpts from *Kitāb al-Mawāhib* on household expenditures provide practical and moral guidelines for managing (*tadbīr*) finances and resources. These teachings emphasize moderation, strategic planning, and balance in financial matters (*iqtiṣād*), linking economic prudence to spiritual well-being. The analysis is divided into two parts: the principles of moderation and strategic financial planning.

Part A: Principles of Moderation

Exercising Moderation (*al-Iqtiṣād*)

The principle of moderation is paramount in managing household expenditures. The excerpts from *Kitāb al-Mawāhib* advise against excess in both religious practice and daily actions. This emphasizes the importance of temperance (*i'tidāl*) and the avoidance of extremes (*ifrāṭ*) in all aspects of life. Maintaining balance is further emphasized through the guidance in Sūrah al-Isrā': 29. This

[50] Narrated by Saʿd ibn Abū Waqqāṣ, compiled by al-Albānī, *Ḍaʿīf al-Jāmiʿ*, Page/No. 5407, Grade: *Ḍaʿīf.*

[51] Narrated by Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī ʿAbdullah ibn Qays, compiled by al-Albānī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmiʿ,* Page/No. 323, Grade: *Ṣaḥīḥ*.

metaphor advises against being overly frugal or excessively generous (*ifrāṭ* or *tafrīṭ*), advocating for a balanced approach (*waṣaṭ*) in financial matters.

> Exercise moderation in your actions and temper your religious practice, for "*But transgress not the limits. Truly, Allah likes not the transgressors*".[52]
>
> Avoid extremes and maintain balance, as per the guidance: "*And let not your hand be tied to your neck, nor stretch it forth to its utmost reach*".[53]

Balanced Religious Practice (*al-'Amal*)

Moderation extends to religious practices as well. Verse (Sūrah al-Isrā': 110) suggests that even in acts of worship, balance should be maintained, ensuring that practices are neither ostentatious nor neglectful.

> Strive for moderation and avoid excess in managing your affairs, following the path between extremes, as advised: "*And offer your prayer neither aloud nor in a low voice, but follow a way between*".[54]

Moderation in Spending (*al-Nafaqah*)

The excerpts from *Kitāb al-Mawāhib* stress the importance of moderation in spending. This principle advises maintaining a balanced approach to financial management, avoiding both extravagance (*isrāf*) and stinginess (*bukhl*).

> Craft a strategic approach to your livelihood to ensure comfort over time, adhering to the principle: "*And those who, when they spend, are neither extravagant nor niggardly, but hold a medium between those*".[55]

[52] Qur'ān, al-Baqarah 2: 189.
[53] Qur'ān, al-Isrā'17: 29.
[54] Qur'ān, al-Isrā' 17: 110
[55] Qur'ān, al-Furqān 25: 67

Simplicity and Foresight (*al-Rifq wa al-Līn*)

The text also highlights the virtues of simplicity, gentleness, and humility, which lead to spiritual rewards. Furthermore, it points out that religion provides ample space and solace (*ajr*) without imposing undue hardship as quoted in the following:

> Those possessing foresight, gentleness, and humility will find themselves rewarded in paradise, where they will reside eternally, for "*Wherein they abide eternally. Excellent is the reward of the [righteous] workers*".[56]
>
> Religion is straightforward, providing ample space and solace, "*And has not laid upon you in religion any hardship*".[57]

Part B: Strategic Financial Planning

Prudent Management (*Tadbīr*)

Effective management of household expenses is key to reducing burdens (*thaql*) and anxieties (*kamad*) as indicated in a Ḥadīth compiled in *al-Muʿjam al-Wasīṭ*. This advice emphasizes the importance of strategic planning and foresight in financial matters. It is further supported by the following sayings.

> Prudent management of household expenses reduces burdens and anxieties, for "*Whoever considers farsightedness will never be poor*".[58]
>
> Generosity does not always suffice to feed a few, while frugality can sustain an army, as the saying goes: "*Planning is half of life*".[59]

---

[56] Qur'ān, al-ʿAnkabūt 29: 58
[57] Qur'ān, al-Ḥajj 22: 78.
[58] Narrated by ʿAbdullah ibn Masʿūd, compiled by Ṭabarānī, *al-Muʿjam al-Wasīṭ*, Page/No. 206/5, Grade: *Ḍaʿīf*.
[59] Narrated by ʿAlī ibn Abū Ṭālib, compiled by al-Sifārīnī al-Ḥanbalī, *Sharḥ Kitāb al-Shihāb*, Page/No. 45, Grade: *Ḥasan*.

Value and Condition (*Thaman*)

The value of one's property should reflect its condition, stressing the importance of prudence in maintaining assets as indicated in the following excerpts of *Kitāb al-Mawāhib*.

> Maintaining a gentle disposition and planning in matters of livelihood are virtues beyond dispute, as exemplified by the request: "*O! father of Haitham, Do not slaughter one with milk, slaughter for us a small female or male goat*".[60]

> The value of your house should align with its condition; otherwise, you are not a prudent planner, as reflected in the wisdom: "*No person should have an old sale property unless Allah puts damage on it*".[61]

Avoiding Excessive Spending (*Isrāf*)

Excessive spending is seen as a compromise of prudence (*tadbīr*) as quoted in a Ḥadīth compiled by al-Bayhaqi. This teaches that financial prudence involves not only managing resources wisely but also avoiding unnecessary expenses.

> Excessive spending on household expenses compromises your prudence; "*Mildness in livelihood is your judiciary*".[62]

Reducing Dependents (*Taqlil*)

Alī al-Muttaqī also suggests that in times of financial difficulty (*iftiqār*), reducing the number of dependents can ease the burden as quoted in the following Ḥadīth.

---

[60] Narrated by ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, compiled by al-ʿAqīlī, *al-Ḍuʿafā' al-Kabīr*, Page/No. 286/2, Grade: *Ṣaḥīḥ*.
[61] Narrated by ʿImrān ibn al-Ḥaṣīn, compiled by al-Haythamī, *Majmaʿ al-Zawā'id*, Page/No.113/4, Grade: *Ḍaʿīf*.
[62] Narrated by Yūnus ibn ʿubaid, compiled by al-Bayhaqī, *al-Madkhal ilā al-Sunan al-kubrā'*, Page/No. 268/1, Grade: *Ḍaʿīf*.

> When faced with poverty, reduce the number of dependents to lighten your burdens, for "*Reducing the number of dependents is the way to ease the burden*".[63]

Expertise in Management (*Ahl al-Tadbīr*)

Certain tasks, such as drawing excessive milk from cattle (*dā'i al-laban*), should be left to experts to avoid hazards. This emphasizes the importance of expertise and specialized knowledge in managing resources effectively.

> Drawing excessive milk from cattle poses hazards and should be left to experts in the field, adhering to the advice: "*Leave the needless milk*".[64]

Balancing Acts and Responsibilities (*Ṭāqat*)

Overburdening any resource (*ta'ab*), be it a ship or one's finances, can jeopardize (*inqiṭā'*) one's journey or goals. The metaphor in a Ḥadīth compiled by Alī al-Muttaqī highlights the need for balance in utilizing resources and time efficiently. Furthermore, there is also some advice to follow a middle course.

> Overburdening a ship beyond its capacity jeopardizes your journey to reach your destination. "Night and day times are extensive, so you should take them as transport for the afterlife".[65] "Whoever makes the religion a rigor, it will overpower him".[66] "So, follow a middle course".[67]

---

[63] Narrated by ʿAlī ibn Abū Ṭālib and ʿAbdullah ibn ʿAmru ibn al-Hilāl al-Muznī, compiled by al-Sakhāwī, *al-Maqāṣid al-Ḥasanah*, Page/No. 365, Grade: *Ḍaʿīf*.

[64] Narrated by Ḍirār ibn al-Azwar, compiled by Ibn Ḥibbān, *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Ḥibbān*, Page/No. 5283, Grade: *Ṣaḥīḥ*.

[65] Narrated by ʿAbdullah ibn ʿAbbās, compiled by Ibn al-Qaysarānī, *Dhakhīrah al-Ḥuffāẓ*, Page/No. 2048/4, Grade: *Ḍaʿīf*.

[66] Narrated by Buraidah ibn al-Ḥaṣīb al-Aslamī, compiled by al-Haythamī, *Majmaʿ al-Zawā'id*, Page/No. 67/1, Grade: *Ṣaḥīḥ*.

[67] Narrated by Jābir ibn ʿAbdullah, compiled by Nawawī, *al-Khulāṣah*, Page/No.: 598/1, Grade: *Ḍaʿīf*.

Economic Success and Knowledge (*'Ilm al-Iqtiṣād*)

Economic success is linked to the pursuit of knowledge and practical action as indicated by Alī al-Muttaqī, quoting a Ḥadīth from his magnum opus *Kanz al-Ummāl*. This emphasizes that true economic prosperity (*manba' al-khayr*) stems from a combination of knowledge and practical, prudent actions.

> Economic success stems from knowledge and serves as the wellspring of all goodness. "*no one will increase understanding of his religion unless he became reasonably developed in his action*".[68]

Conclusion

The analysis of above selected excerpts from *Kitāb al-Mawāhib* reveals reflective insights into the moral and practical aspects of knowledge, behavior, and household expenditures, grounded in Islamic wisdom. 'Alī al-Muttaqī's work emphasizes the dignity and responsibility that come with knowledge, advocating for humility, sincerity, and integrity. Behavior is framed through the lens of sincerity, cautioning against hypocrisy and highlighting the importance of pure intentions. In managing household expenditures, the manuscript emphasizes the virtues of moderation and strategic planning, linking economic prudence to spiritual well-being. Knowledge is portrayed not merely as an accumulation of information but as a dignifying force that requires humility and moral conduct. True wisdom lies in discerning the essence of matters and acting with clarity and responsibility. Behavior is centered around maintaining purity and sincerity, with a strong condemnation of hypocrisy and deceit. Actions are valued based on their intentions, and sincerity is seen as a protective and guiding force. Household Expenditures are advised to be managed with moderation and strategic foresight, avoiding both extravagance and stinginess. The teachings link financial prudence with spiritual tranquility, advocating for a balanced approach in all aspects of life.

[68] Narrated by Ibn ʿUmair, compiled by Abū Nuʿaim al-Daylamī, *Kanz al-Ummāl Faṣl al-Thānī*, Page/No. 45/3 19735, Grade: *Ḍaʿīf*.

Future research and application of the teachings in *Kitāb al-Mawāhib* can explore several areas. Developing curricula that incorporate the moral dimensions of knowledge and behavior as outlined in *Kitāb al-Mawāhib* could enhance moral and ethical education in both religious and secular institutions. Conducting empirical studies on how the principles of sincerity, humility, and anti-hypocrisy from *Kitāb al-Mawāhib* can be applied to modern psychological and sociological frameworks. Exploring the application of moderation and strategic financial planning in contemporary economic practices, particularly in personal finance and household management can be practiced and evaluated by relevant sectors. Combining insights from Islamic teachings with modern disciplines such as psychology, economics, and education to create holistic approaches to knowledge, behavior, and financial management could enhance future academic research.

Book Reviews

Kieko Obuse. *Buddhism and Islam: Mutual Engagements in Southeast Asia and Japan.* Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2025. 303 pp. ISBN: 9789004704541.

Reviewer: Mohamed Ashath. PhD in Usul al-Din and Comparative Religion, International Islamic University Malaysia. Email: msmaasath@gmail.com

The academic study of diverse religious traditions, along with their comparison and evaluation, was significantly influenced by nineteenth-century Christian missionaries who sought to understand the beliefs of the people they aimed to reach. This pursuit led to challenges and defenses of various exclusivist claims within Christianity.[1] So, the typology of religious diversity—Exclusivism, Inclusivism, and Pluralism—was introduced by Alan Race, primarily within the context of Christian engagement with other faiths.[2] Consequently, theories of religious diversity have often emerged from debates surrounding such claims, with discussions continuing within Christian theological discourse.[3] So, these three categories are identified as limited and problematic when applied to the broader comparative study of Buddhism and Islam. Their Christian-centric origins fail to account for the unique theological and historical dimensions of these traditions. Therefore, new approaches and methodologies are necessary to foster a more refined and contextually appropriate understanding of Buddhist-Muslim relations.

Kieko Obuse's *Buddhism and Islam: Mutual Engagements in*

[1] See Harold Netland, *Encountering Religious Pluralism: The Challenge to Christian Faith and Mission* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2001).
[2] See Alan Race, *Christians and Religious Pluralism: Patterns in the Christian Theology of Religions* (London: SCM Press, 1983).
[3] See Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *An Introduction to the Theology of Religions: Biblical, Historical, and Contemporary Perspectives* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2003).

Southeast Asia and Japan explores Buddhist-Muslim engagements across historical, doctrinal, and socio-political dimensions. Obuse challenges traditional narratives of incompatibility between Buddhism and Islam by demonstrating that their interactions have been dynamic, and context-driven and introducing parallelism as a unique approach to tackle Buddhist-Muslim Understanding. To elaborate on this argument, the author organizes the work into six key sections that cover theoretical frameworks, historical interactions, doctrinal similarities, and contemporary implications.

Initially, the book discusses key existing theoretical foundations in examining Buddhist-Muslim engagements (pp. 3-9). Obuse critiques it as they are rooted in Euro-Christo-centric methodologies prevalent in comparative religious studies. She argues that these approaches often obscure native or own frameworks of interfaith interaction, ultimately leading to a misrepresentation of the dynamics at play. Building on these critical notes, Obuse introduces the methodological concept of *parallelism*, an approach that emphasizes structural similarities rather than theological syncretism (pp. 9-15, 32-48). Drawing from the leading works of the famous authorities in the field such as Alexander Berzin, Shah-Kazemi and Imtiyaz Yusuf, she argues that Buddhism and Islam share overlapping conceptual frameworks, despite their doctrinal differences. To substantiate her argument, she discusses some teachings focusing on similarities, like between the Bodhisattva doctrine of Buddhism and the Islamic concept of prophethood (pp. 35-41) and doctrines of emptiness (*śūnyatā*) in Buddhism and divine unity (*Tawḥīd*) (The Oneness of God) in Islam. Here, she points out that these concepts function as analogous metaphysical constructs and serve as a prime example of how each tradition interprets spiritual authority and soteriology. However, Obuse mentions that Buddhists are generally skeptical of the concept of an omnipotent, creator, and judging God, as well as the Islamic principles of *Tawḥīd* and divine revelation. This skepticism arises from the Buddhist worldview, which is based on dependent origination, karma, and rebirth, leaving no need or space for such a deity (p. 53).

The work next moves to explore the historical encounters between Buddhism and Islam in detail (pp. 58-90). It focuses on early encounters (632–1256) and explains how Muslim travelers and scholars to Southeast Asia documented Buddhist practices, often interpreting them through an Islamic lens (pp. 58-67). It also notes that during the post-classical period (1256–1585), the Mongol Empire played a crucial role in facilitating intellectual exchanges, leading to new doctrinal reinterpretations in engaging with Buddhist tradition (pp. 71-77). In the modern era (1585–1947), colonialism significantly reshaped Buddhist-Muslim dynamics, simultaneously intensifying conflicts and fostering dialogue (pp. 78-90). The book effectively illustrates how these interactions have influenced mutual perceptions, shaping interfaith engagement over time.

In chapter three, the author explores the dynamic interplay between Buddhist-Muslim relations in Thailand and Malaysia, emphasizing both conflict and cooperation dynamics (pp. 93-116). Although Buddhist-Muslim relations have reached a positive peak, there may still be a possibility that negative narratives are used by some extreme elements (p. 99-100). Similarly, in Malaysia, the growing influence of Islamic ideas on Buddhist scholarship signals a shift in religious discourse, highlighting the adaptability and interconnectedness of these traditions (pp. 100-104). Beyond Southeast Asia, Obuse extends the analysis to Japan (pp. 166-232), where the historical reception of Islam transitioned from exoticism to a more profound interfaith intellectualism, challenging rigid monotheism- polytheism binaries.

The book's main arguments are constructed In Chapter Four, where Obues explains Buddhadasa's contribution significantly to Buddhist-Muslim understanding by proposing that all religions share the same "Absolute Truth," citing the Qur'anic verse, "For every nation there is an apostle (10:47)," as a unifying principle. He interprets "apostle" as a universal truth-preacher found in all traditions, including Buddhism, while acknowledging a hierarchy in conceptions of God, from personified to abstract (p. 119-120). However, his approach leans toward religious pluralism, which can

be problematic as it risks oversimplifying doctrinal differences and undermining the distinctiveness of each tradition. Similarly, Obuse explains the position of K. Sri Dhammananda, who advocated mutual respect and unity among religious groups, emphasizing cultural understanding and rejecting excessive proselytism as barriers to harmony. Additionally, a more direct comparative treatment of Buddhism and Islam has recently been contributed by See Hoon Peow from the Buddhist side, who emphasizes more similarities than differences. However, Islam's social nature fosters active engagement in societal improvement, contrasting with Buddhism's generally non-engaged approach (pp. 125–127).

With this background, Obuse introduces parallelism as a methodology that highlights the analogical compatibility between Buddhist and Islamic concepts, such as *dukkha* (suffering) and *kabad* (hardship), which are alleviated through *mettā-karuṇā* (loving-kindness) and *raḥmah* (mercy). She argues that Imtiyaz Yusuf's Buddha-Prophet parallelism, rooted in their transformative experiences—*nirvāṇa* for the Buddha and *wahy* (Revelation) for Muhammad—draws from Sufi traditions and Mahāyāna Buddhism. The Sufi ideal of *al-insān al-kāmil* (the perfect human) as a morally enlightened guide aligns with the Buddhist bodhisattva, who, despite attaining enlightenment, remains in *saṃsāra* to aid others through selfless compassion (p. 134-140). Although Obuse states that Alexander Berzin is a pioneer of parallelism and Kazemi is a metaphysical parallelist, she attempts to highlight Imtiyaz Yusuf as a champion scholar in utilizing parallelism. However, she acknowledges that the methodology remains unexplained, yet she credits Imtiyaz Yusuf's contribution with advancing the framework of Buddhist-Muslim parallelism, which underscores the potential for mutual understanding and dialogue between these traditions (pp. 133-141).

As an overall note, it can be argued that Obuse's work demonstrates several key strengths that contribute to the study of Buddhist-Muslim relations. One of its notable contributions is its comprehensive comparative analysis, which explores the internal

diversity within Buddhism and its interactions with Islamic teachings. This approach aligns with Johan Elverskog's observation that historical Buddhist-Muslim encounters were often marked by mutual exchanges rather than inherent hostility, challenging the dominant narratives of conflict. Furthermore, the book serves as a valuable resource for inter-religious dialogue, focusing on shared values rather than theological divergences, introducing parallelism as a new methodological approach, a stance crucial in countering right-wing extremists and religious exclusivism of both sides. Additionally, the book's theological flexibility in interpreting the category of ultimate reality (*dammah*) and "People of the Book" (*ahl al-kitāb*) align with efforts to broaden religious inclusivity, which is vital in Buddhist-majority and Muslim-Majority contexts. Given the historical reservoir of anti-Muslim sentiments in Buddhist societies, particularly those stemming from colonial narratives and post-independence Ethno-religious nationalism, the book's emphasis on historical engagement provides a counterbalance to monolithic interpretations of Buddhist-Muslim relations.

Despite its contributions, the book has notable limitations that may weaken its impact. A significant shortcoming is its lack of socio-political context, as it does not sufficiently engage with contemporary socio-political issues that influence Buddhist-Muslim relations. Frydenlund (2018) emphasizes that anti-Muslim sentiments in Buddhist societies are often shaped by national security discourses and economic competition, as seen in Sri Lanka's *ḥalāl* controversy and Myanmar's concerns over Rakhine as a frontier state.[4] Nirmal Ranjit and Benjamin Scontal argue that Buddhist aspirations to bring the Buddhist state are the major concern of Buddhist-Muslim conflicts in Sri Lanka.[5] Additionally, with its foundations in *wahy* and *'aql*, Islamic epistemology supports interfaith engagement that

[4] See Iselin Frydenlund, "Buddhist Islamophobia: Actors, Tropes, Contexts," in *Handbook of Conspiracy Theory and Contemporary Religion*, ed. Asbjørn Dyrendal, David G. Robertson, and Egil Asprem, 2018, 279–302, https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004382022.

[5] See Benjamin Schonthal, "The Impossibility of a Buddhist State," *Asian Journal of Law and Society* 3, no. 1 (2016): 29–48, https://doi.org/10.1017/als.2016.4.

honors both truth and shared values. The book, however, presents an inconsistent theological lens, alternating between parallelism and pluralism, which risks obscuring the nature of the Buddhist-Islamic dialogue. More importantly, the proposed parallelism approach remains unexplained and lacks a consistent framework from both Buddhist and Islamic perspectives. Its scope, content, implications and limitations should be reassessed in future research. Both religious traditions may critically receive Obuse's parallelism proposal if it goes to the religious compromission as Buddhists do not recognize the Buddha as a prophet, nor do Muslims consider Muhammad an enlightened being. Therefore, this approach should be reevaluated and redefined within the framework of Buddhist-Muslim studies.

In conclusion, Obuse's work is a valuable resource for scholars of comparative religion and interfaith studies, offering a unique approach to addressing the longstanding methodological challenges in the comparative study of Buddhism and Islam. By highlighting historical depth and doctrinal intricacies, this book expands the understanding of Buddhist-Muslim relations beyond the conventional focus on conflict.

Jasser Auda, *Re-envisioning Islamic Scholarship: Maqasid Methodology as a New Approach*. London: Claritas Books in association with Maqasid Institute, 2021. 282 pp. ISBN: 978-1-80011-977-2.

Reviewer: Akma Mariani binti Ton Mohamed, PhD Candidate, International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC-IIUM), Kuala Lumpur. Email: akmaton07@gmail.com

Over the past three decades, Maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah has emerged as a vibrant and evolving field of inquiry. It has expanded beyond its classical legal applications to engage with diverse epistemological, ethical, and sociopolitical dimensions. Jasser Auda's *Re-envisioning*

Islamic Scholarship contributes significantly to this intellectual development by offering a "New Maqāṣid Methodology" that seeks to reconfigure Islamic scholarship around purpose-based inquiry. In doing so, Auda joins a broader wave of scholars—including Aḥmad al-Raysūnī, Ṭaha al-ʿAlwānī, and Ibn ʿĀshūr—who have attempted to renew the tradition of maqāṣid-based reasoning for contemporary contexts.

The book is structured into six chapters, prefaced with a reflective introduction and concluded with a "Way Forward." The opening chapters contextualize Auda's methodology within both classical Islamic thought and modern intellectual crises. He critiques existing approaches for their limitations, including their compartmentalized structure and overreliance on inherited categorizations. What follows is a detailed exposition of a new composite framework rooted in Revelation, structured by maqāṣid (objectives), and intended to respond to contemporary societal needs.

Auda's redefinition of key concepts is foundational to his methodology. He argues that *fiqh* (deep understanding) is not restricted to Islamic law but should extend to all disciplines when approached through an Islamic epistemological lens. Similarly, he broadens the scope of *ijtihād* to include all sincere efforts at knowledge production guided by Revelation. In this light, scholars from various fields—such as medicine, engineering, or economics—may be regarded as *fuqahāʾ* if their inquiry is purpose-driven and aligned with divine guidance.[1]

The methodology itself is organized around seven interrelated elements: *mafāhīm* (concepts), *maqāṣid* (objectives), *qiyam* (values), *awāmir* (commands), *sunan* (universal laws), *fiʾāt* (social groups), and *ḥujaj* (proofs).[2] These categories are not isolated but function in a dynamic interplay that guides both the identification of problems and the formulation of responses. Crucially, Auda insists that research should not begin with a problem to be solved but with a purpose to be

[1] Jasser Auda, *Re-envisioning Islamic Scholarship: Maqasid Methodology as a New Approach* (London: Claritas Books, 2021), 36–39.
[2] Ibid., 52–75.

fulfilled. Inverting this conventional order of inquiry, he argues, leads to more holistic and revelation-based knowledge production.

The author also critiques prevalent ideological labels within Islamic discourse—such as "moderate," "fundamentalist," or "modernist"—as products of political discourse rather than methodological clarity. He identifies five key methodological crises—*taqlīd* (blind imitation), *tajzīʾ* (fragmentation), *tabrīr* (apologism), *tanāquḍ* (contradiction), and *tafkīk* (deconstructionism)—that afflict contemporary Islamic scholarship.[3] His new Maqāṣid methodology seeks to overcome these by reestablishing Revelation as the foundation and logic of knowledge.

A major contribution of this work lies in its challenge to the inherited classification of academic disciplines. Auda proposes four new categories: *Uṣūlī Studies*, which cover foundational religious knowledge; *Disciplinary Studies*, which represent conventional academic fields; *Phenomena Studies*, which are oriented toward real-world issues and challenges; and *Strategic Studies*, which are focused on envisioning future scenarios for ummatic and global well-being.[4] In doing so, Auda critiques the secular division between "Islamic" and "non-Islamic" disciplines as artificial and epistemologically incoherent from an Islamic worldview.

Auda's approach resonates with broader efforts to revive Islamic epistemology as an integrative force in knowledge production. This includes parallels with Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas's concept of "ta'dīb" as the ultimate aim of education and with Ismail Raji al-Faruqi's call for Islamisation of knowledge.[5] Unlike these earlier paradigms, however, Auda seeks to operationalize maqāṣid as a dynamic and transdisciplinary method rather than a static doctrine. While the book offers limited engagement with

[3] Ibid., 110–113.

[4] Ibid., 162–212.

[5] See Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, *Islam and Secularism* (Kuala Lumpur: ISTAC, 1993); Ismail Raji al-Faruqi, *Islamization of Knowledge: General Principles and Work Plan* (Herndon, VA: IIIT, 1982).

critiques of the Islamisation of Knowledge project—such as concerns regarding superficiality or bifurcation—it simultaneously opens new avenues for its evolution. For instance, Auda's framework may be seen as a natural progression toward deeper integration between Islamic ethical frameworks and contemporary academic disciplines. His emphasis on practical application, systemic reclassification, and forward-looking scholarship expands the horizon of Islamisation beyond traditional limitations.[6]

Significantly, the book presents case examples demonstrating how the framework may be applied in areas such as urban development, economic justice, environmental ethics, and global peacebuilding. For instance, Auda argues that Islamic ethics in city planning must go beyond regulatory compliance to prioritize the maqṣad of *'umrān*—harmonious civilization—which encompasses beauty, sustainability, and social justice. Similarly, economic reform must prioritize *karāmah insāniyyah* (human dignity) over mere profitability. These applied reflections showcase the potential of maqāṣid methodology to inform practical decision-making in governance, policy, and public ethics.[7] Auda also outlines how maqāṣid-driven frameworks can guide responses to pandemics, educational reform, and issues of civilizational conflict, drawing on contemporary challenges such as COVID-19 and the moral crises of modernity.[8]

The book also emphasizes the dialogical nature of Islamic knowledge. Auda calls for collaborative efforts among scholars of various backgrounds—including scientists, theologians, economists, and educators—to co-produce knowledge that serves the ummatic mission. This aligns with the Prophetic tradition of *shūrā* (consultation) and positions the Maqāṣid Methodology as a framework capable of reconciling revelation with reason, theory with practice, and tradition with reform.

While the framework is visionary, the reviewer notes several

[6] Ibid..
[7] Auda, *Re-envisioning Islamic Scholarship*, 174–188
[8] Ibid., 188–212.

challenges. First, while the methodology's emphasis on individual reflection upon Revelation is grounded in a deep uṣūlī tradition—of which Auda is a notable representative—it still poses interpretive risks when detached from structured pedagogical frameworks. For readers or practitioners without rigorous training in *uṣūl al-tafsīr* or classical Arabic, there is a risk of misapplying nuanced concepts. The distinction between *ḥikmah* (wisdom), *ʿillah* (effective cause), and *maqāṣid* (purpose) is critical yet easily conflated by those lacking foundational training.[9] Thus, while Auda himself models this integration competently, the democratization of maqāṣid reasoning across disciplines may necessitate clearer guidelines, scaffolding, or institutional safeguards to prevent reductive interpretations.

Second, the abstract nature of the framework—while theoretically compelling and intellectually rigorous—stands out as a major strength of the book, as it encourages scholars to move beyond reductionist and legalistic readings of Islamic knowledge. Auda's seven-element structure offers a flexible yet principled model that resonates with interdisciplinary thinking. However, it still requires further empirical studies to demonstrate its practical implementation across disciplines. For example, while the author outlines a purpose-based approach to scientific inquiry and economics, concrete case studies of implementation remain sparse or underdeveloped. In the section on economic justice[10], Auda proposes the maqṣad of *karāmah insāniyyah* (human dignity) as a central guiding value for rethinking social and economic structures. This paradigm opens important avenues for re-envisioning fiscal policy, taxation, and financial ethics in Muslim contexts. However, these applications remain open-ended, inviting future researchers to explore how this principle might translate into concrete reforms in banking systems, tax justice, or public welfare policies. Similarly, his articulation of 'urban ethics' grounded in the maqṣid of *ʿumrān* (civilizational flourishing) is both innovative and spiritually resonant. Yet, the exploration of its operationalization—through zoning laws, architectural principles, or

[9] Ibid., 188–212.
[10] Ibid., 178–180.

municipal governance—is still in its nascent stages. In this sense, Auda's framework serves as a powerful normative foundation that now calls for empirical elaboration and methodological expansion.

Third, the reception of Auda's methodology among traditional religious institutions—while potentially transformative—faces significant hurdles in terms of institutional acceptance and curricular integration. To his credit, Auda demonstrates a strong command of *uṣūl al-fiqh* and articulates his framework with deference to classical jurisprudential reasoning. For example, in Chapter 3, he revisits the debates surrounding *maqāṣid* and *ʿillah*, grounding his arguments in works by al-Ghazālī, al-Shāṭibī, and Ibn ʿĀshūr.[11] This shows a serious and commendable effort to align reform with tradition rather than opposing it.

However, the challenge lies in the uptake of his methodology by institutions that are historically cautious of paradigm shifts. Institutions of traditional learning—such as *madāris* and faculties of Shariah in many Muslim-majority countries—tend to adhere to inherited juristic paradigms with deeply embedded curricular structures. As Auda himself notes, there is widespread *taqlīd* (imitation) in the Islamic intellectual world, which can impede methodological renewal.[12] Despite his call for *uṣūlī studies* to evolve and embrace a purpose-based logic, the practical adoption of this shift remains elusive in educational institutions where change is often perceived as a threat to orthodoxy or institutional continuity.

Moreover, the integration of *maqāṣid* in the curricula of many traditional seminaries remains limited or minimal**.** As Auda observes, *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah* is frequently taught as an elective or minor subject rather than being infused throughout the structure of legal, ethical, and theological education.[13] This institutional inertia is a critical barrier to the broader implementation of his vision**.** It reflects not a rejection of *maqāṣid* per se, but a hesitation to reorganize long-standing methodologies around new epistemic foundations.

[11] Ibid., 76–82.
[12] Ibid., 110–113.
[13] Ibid., 95.

Fourth, one of the most innovative aspects of Auda's contribution lies in his proposal of 'Phenomena Studies' to foreground contemporary social challenges within the epistemological structure of Islamic scholarship. This reconceptualization deserves recognition for transcending rigid disciplinary boundaries and urging scholars to address issues like climate change, AI, and social injustice from within an Islamic worldview. As Auda explains, "Phenomena Studies allow the researcher to begin with real-world issues rather than abstract disciplinary categories, and to reformulate them through the maqāṣidic lens".[14]

However, while the author convincingly outlines the *what* and *why* of Phenomena Studies, the *how* remains less developed. The mechanisms for translating these studies into concrete curriculum design, pedagogical methods, or institutional policy frameworks are not comprehensively theorized. For example, while he argues that gender justice should be approached through the lens of *karāmah insāniyyah* (human dignity) and *ʿadālah* (justice),[15] he offers limited guidance on how this reorientation might shape actual teaching content, learning outcomes, or governance practices.

Of course, it may be unrealistic to expect a single volume to furnish ready-made modules or toolkits. Still, the onus now falls on researchers, educators, and institutional actors to further explore how the maqāṣid framework can be operationalized. Without such continued development, the transformative potential of 'Phenomena Studies' risks remaining an aspirational concept rather than a fully enacted methodology.

Fifth, the notion of 'Strategic Studies' introduced in Auda's framework represents an ambitious and visionary expansion of Islamic scholarship. It calls upon scholars to project alternative futures for the ummah and humanity at large by applying maqāṣid-based foresight to emerging global challenges. This forward-thinking orientation reflects a significant strength of the book, as it encourages Muslims to reclaim leadership in thought, values, and global

[14] Ibid., 174.
[15] Ibid., 182.

solutions. By proposing that Islamic scholarship contribute to scenario building and long-term planning, Auda positions maqāṣid not merely as a legal tool but as a civilizational compass.

However, the operationalization of 'Strategic Studies'—which would ideally involve futures thinking, systems design, and scenario analysis—is only briefly mentioned in this volume.[16] This is understandable given the book's broad scope and conceptual focus. As such, it falls to future researchers and interdisciplinary teams to build the necessary infrastructures—methodological, institutional, and pedagogical—to fully realize this vision. The strength of Auda's proposal lies in its capacity to inspire a new generation of Muslim scholars to move beyond reactive paradigms and instead think proactively about the direction of human civilization from an Islamic vantage point.

Auda's methodological vision also resonates with the foundational ideas of scholars such as Ismail Raji al-Faruqi, Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, and Taha Jabir al-ʿAlwānī, who each contributed uniquely to the Islamisation of Knowledge discourse.[17] Like al-Faruqi, Auda calls for the integration of Revelation into all domains of knowledge and emphasizes the epistemological crisis caused by the secular bifurcation of disciplines. However, Auda moves beyond al-Faruqi's structural framework by offering a purpose-based methodology grounded in maqāṣid that redefines not only content but also the intent and process of knowledge production. While al-Attas focused on the concept of *ta'dīb* (disciplining the soul through knowledge) as the goal of education, Auda prioritizes *karāmah insāniyyah* (human dignity) and *ʿadālah* (justice) as the teleological anchors of inquiry. Similarly, whereas al-ʿAlwānī emphasized the integration of the Qur'an's worldview into

[16] Ibid., 174–182.

[17] See Ismail Raji al-Faruqi, *Islamization of Knowledge: General Principles and Work Plan* (Herndon, VA: IIIT, 1982); Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, *The Concept of Education in Islam* (Kuala Lumpur: ISTAC, 1991); Taha Jabir al-ʿAlwānī, *The Qur'anic Worldview: A Springboard for Cultural Reform* (Herndon, VA: IIIT, 2011).

contemporary knowledge, Auda provides a more systematic operational framework that categorizes disciplines and links them directly to social realities and future scenarios.[18] Together, these thinkers represent complementary but distinct paths toward reviving the Islamic intellectual tradition—Auda's unique contribution lies in his attempt to make maqāṣid methodology a practical tool for transformation across fields.

Nevertheless, the book's contribution to the Islamisation of knowledge discourse is substantial. It marks an intellectual transition from legalistic applications of maqāṣid to their integration within an epistemological system that can guide all fields of knowledge. Auda's approach is transdisciplinary, rooted in Revelation, and directed toward renewing not only Islamic scholarship but the very architecture of knowledge in the modern world.

Moreover, Auda's work holds implications for curriculum reform, policy development, and interdisciplinary research within Muslim societies. It challenges educational institutions to transcend disciplinary silos and rethink their goals in light of the higher purposes (*maqāṣid*) of education. Such a shift, if implemented with academic rigor and institutional support, could enable Muslim scholars to offer not only critiques of modernity but viable alternatives rooted in their own intellectual heritage.

In conclusion, *Re-envisioning Islamic Scholarship* is a timely and thought-provoking work that offers both critique and constructive alternatives. It challenges scholars to rethink their assumptions, restructure their methodologies, and reengage with Revelation as a living source of guidance for all domains of human inquiry. This book is essential reading for those involved in Maqāṣid studies, Islamic epistemology, and the broader project of reviving Islamic intellectual tradition in the 21st century. Its insights are especially valuable to institutions such as IIUM—and ISTAC in particular—which are currently advancing a Tawḥīdic Epistemology framework that resonates with Auda's vision a commitment to integrating Revelation, ethics, and purpose into contemporary

[18] Auda, *Re-envisioning Islamic Scholarship*, 162–212.

knowledge production.[19] By offering a purpose-based, maqāṣid-oriented methodology, Auda's work provides a robust theoretical foundation upon which such institutions can build meaningful, future-oriented research and curriculum reform.

Acknowledgment: The reviewer wishes to thank Asst. Prof. Dr. Nurul Ain Norman (ISTAC-IIUM) for her insightful feedback and academic guidance throughout the preparation of this review.

[19] Osman Bakar, *Classification of Knowledge in Islam: A Study in Islamic Philosophies of Science* (Cambridge, UK: Islamic Texts Society, 1998). See especially his discussion on the integrative role of Tawḥīd in knowledge classification and the revival of Islamic intellectual traditions in modern institutions.

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	ʾ	ʾ	ʾ	ʾ	ز	z	z	z	z	گ	–	g	g	g
ب	b	b	b	b	ڑ	–	–	–	ṛ	ل	l	l	l	l
پ	–	p	p	p	ژ	–	zh	j	zh	م	m	m	m	m
ت	t	t	t	t	س	s	s	s	s	ن	n	n	n	n
ٹ	–	–	–	ṭ	ش	sh	sh	ş	sh	ہ	h	h	h[1]	h[1]
ث	th	th	th	th	ص	ṣ	ṣ	ṣ	ṣ	و	w	v/u	v	v/u
ج	j	j	c	j	ض	ḍ	ẓ	ż	ż	ی	y	y	y	y
چ	–	ch	çh	ch	ط	ṭ	ṭ	ṭ	ṭ	ۃ	-ah			-a[2]
ح	ḥ	ḥ	ḥ	ḥ	ظ	ẓ	ẓ	ẓ	ẓ	ال	al[3]			
خ	kh	kh	kh	kh	ع	ʿ	ʿ	ʿ	ʿ					
د	d	d	d	d	غ	gh	gh	ğ	gh					
ڈ	–	–	–	d	ف	f	f	f	f					
ذ	dh	dh	dh	dh	ق	q	q	k	q					
ر	r	r	r	r	ك	k	k/g	k/ñ	k					

[1] – when not final
[2] – at in construct state
[3] – (article) al - or 1-

VOWELS

		Arabic and Persian	Urdu	Ottoman Turkish
Long	ا	ā	ā	ā
	آ	Ā	Ā	–
	و	ū	ū	ū
	ي	ī	ī	ī
Doubled	ي	iyy (final form ī)	iy (final form ī)	iyy (final form ī)
	و	uww (final form ū) uvv (for Persian)	uv	uvv
Diphthongs	و	au or aw	au	ev
	ى	ai or ay	ay	ey
Short	ـَ	a	a	a or e
	ـُ	u	u	u or ü o or ö
	ـِ	i	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.

AL-SHAJARAH
Vol. 30, No. 1, 2025

Contents

WoS-Indexed under *Arts & Humanities Citation Index, Current Contents/Arts and Humanities* and **Scopus**

ISSN 1394-6870