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Volume: 23, **Issue:** 3, 2025

CONTENTS

XVIII Editor's Note

Research Articles

718-730 Professor Dr. Harun ÇAĞLAYAN
Artificial Intelligence's Involvement in the Game Talking About God
Tanrı Hakkında Konuşmak Oyununa Yapay Zekânın Dâhil Olması

731-750 Ph.D. Hünkar DURMUŞ
Interpreting the Principle 'The Reality of Things Is Truly Existing' in the Context of Quantum Theory: A Study on al-Ghazālī and Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī
'Eşyanın Hakikati Sabittir' İlkesinin Kuantum Bağlamında Yorumlanması: Gazzâlî ve Fahreddîn Râzî Üzerine Bir İnceleme

751-773 Associate Professor Mustafa EREN
Religious Diversity in Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi and John Hick
Mevlana Celaleddin-i Rumi ve John Hick'te Dinsel Çeşitlilik

774-793 Associate Professor Ercan ŞEN
A Quest for Reconciliation Between Religion and Science: An Evaluation of Some Views of Milaslı Ismail Hakki on the Relationship Between Religion and Science
Din-Bilim Arasında Bir Uzlaşı Arayışı: Milaslı İsmail Hakkı'nın Din-Bilim İlişkisine Dair Bazı Görüşlerinin Değerlendirilmesi

Book Reviews

794-803 Ph.D. Mehmet KUYUCU
Ideological and Metaphysical Dimensions of Modern Biology: A Review of Biology and Ideology from Descartes to Dawkins

804-812 *Publishing Policy*

EDITOR'S NOTE

One of the most prominent features of today's world is the extremely high volume of data flow and information processing. The data provided and evaluated by artificial intelligence is greater than what we traditionally have access to. It is not just data that reaches us; this data is processed and presented to us. This means that we are faced with more alternatives in the choices we make and the decisions we take. Is it advantage or disadvantage? When a robust cultural policy is in place, this situation is an advantage rather than a disadvantage.

Cultural policy is an important political field that determines how society will be shaped around a system of identity and values. Within cultural policy, values such as freedom, justice, fairness, merit, compassion, and brotherhood are the founding elements that ensure the system works for the benefit of everyone. If individuals lack freedom; society lacks justice; politics lacks law; the economy lacks equality; and the public sphere lacks conscience and morality, then cultural policy is flawed, and the structures that hold society together are deeply eroded and decaying. The subject of real time is needed precisely in such times of crisis. What needs to be done is to go beyond the visible surface of events and try to see the deeper structural factors and network of relationships. As the verse indicates:

> "They are the ignorant ones who know only the visible side of worldly life and have no idea about the future. (er-Rûm, 30/7)

The demand to see what lies deeper necessitates a strategy that places humanity as an active element within the flow of time. Consequently, the Quran employs a value-based language rather than a factual one. It focuses not on what is, but on what ought to be. It looks not to the past, but to the future. It pursues the active subject that will shape the history of the future and influence outcomes. History and time are linked to God's grace and guidance, and to human active agency. Active agency, however, becomes possible only through the creation of a desire in humans to direct the flow of history.

Each article by our esteemed authors in the latest issue of *Kader* serves this purpose. We are grateful to each of our authors for their contributions. I would like to thank all our reviewers for their support in carefully reading and evaluating the articles and ensuring they reach the reader in a more complete form. I am grateful to our editorial board for carefully monitoring the process at every stage, from the acceptance of the articles to their publication.

I hope our new issue brings good fortune. On this occasion, I wish all our readers health, prosperity, and happiness in the new year...

On behalf of the editors
Prof. Dr. Şaban Ali DÜZGÜN

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Artificial Intelligence's Involvement in the Game Talking About God

Tanrı Hakkında Konuşmak Oyununa Yapay Zekânın Dâhil Olması

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Abstract

There are various ideas about the role that artificial intelligence (AI), which has become an integral part of individual and social life, will play in the future of humanity. Some see it as a tool offering unique opportunities for civilization-building, while others perceive it as a threat that could bring about its end. While physical and technical aspects are prominent in these discussions of AI's capabilities, they also touch on topics such as art, aesthetic pleasure, religion, faith, metaphysics, and ethics. In its most concrete form, AI is the digital description of the electrical flow active on hardware designed after human intelligence and thought. The computer codes written in programming languages that represent the software side of AI, and all the algorithms that determine its operating principles, are models developed through the stimulation of human thought processes. In short, AI is a tool that mimics the biological functioning of the human brain in hardware while following the rational thinking patterns of the human mind in software. For pure reasoning that transcends subject and object, the crucial element is completing thought processes in accordance with the principles of logic. In this respect, it is rationally the same whether the correct act of thinking on concrete or abstract values is performed by human intelligence or artificial intelligence. Here, the possibility of determining the logical meaning of the idea of God by artificial intelligence algorithms is discussed. To define the boundaries of the topic, discussions involving marginal claims such as AI addressing religious proposals in the context of its relationship with consciousness or the soul, or its assuming the role of modern religion and God, were deliberately avoided. The study primarily analyzes the methods used by AI in understanding, explaining, and developing attitudes toward the theory of God, within the context of fundamental concepts such as language and logic. In the positivist and rationalist world of the future, it is of great importance to take advantage of the opportunities offered by artificial intelligence in order to preserve both the existence and social reputation of religious and moral values. Indeed, an AI algorithm with a vision for the future should contribute to a healthy conception of God by generating new values rather than being trapped between technology and theology. The purpose of this study is to identify the potential uses of artificial intelligence (AI), an effective tool in daily life and scientific research, and a part of our life due to its speed and accurate computational power, in understanding theological values such as faith, religion, and God. The research uses an inductive analysis of the findings obtained through a literature review to reach a conclusion about the possibilities of AI in thinking about God.
Keywords: Kalām, Artificial Intelligence (AI), Logic, God, Language.

Öz

Bireysel ve toplumsal yaşamın ayrılmaz bir parçası haline gelen yapay zekânın (YZ) insanlığın geleceğinde nasıl bir rol oynayacağı hususunda çeşitli fikirler vardır. Kimileri onun medeniyet inşasında eşsiz fırsatlar sunan bir araç olarak görürken kimileri medeniyetimizin sonunu getirecek bir tehdit olarak algılamaktadır. YZ'nin neler yapabileceğinin ele alındığı bu tartışmalarda fiziksel ve teknik hususlar öne çıkmakla beraber sanat, estetik haz, din, iman, metafizik ve etik gibi konulara da değinilmektedir. En somut şekliyle YZ, insan zekâsı ve düşünce biçimini örnek alarak tasarlanan donanımlar üzerinde aktif olan elektrik akışının dijital tanımlamasıdır. YZ'nin yazılım tarafını ifade eden program dillerine göre girilen bilgisayar kodları ve bunların çalışma prensiplerini belirleyen tüm algoritmalar, insan düşünme aşamaları örnek alarak geliştirilen modellemelerdir. Yani özetle YZ, donanımsal olarak insan beyninin biyolojik işleyiş yapısını takip ederken yazılımsal olarak da insan zihninin rasyonel düşünme biçimlerini örnek alan bir araçtır. Özne ve nesnesini aşan salt bir akıl yürütme için önemli olan, mantık ilkelerine uygun olarak düşünme süreçlerini tamamlanmasıdır. Bu yönüyle somut veya soyut değerler üzerine yapılan doğru bir düşünme eyleminin insan zekâsı veya yapay zekâ tarafından gerçekleştirilmiş olması rasyonel açıdan aynıdır. Burada, yapay zekâ algoritmaları tarafından tanrı fikrinin mantıksal anlamının belirlenebilme olanağı tartışılmıştır. Konunun sınırlarını belirlemek açısından YZ'nin bilinç veya ruhla ilişkileri bağlamında dini teklife muhatap olması ile modern din ve tanrı rolünü üstlenmesi gibi marjinal iddiaları içeren tartışmalara bilinçli olarak girilmemiştir. Çalışmada ağırlıklı olarak dil, mantık gibi temel kavramlar bağlamında YZ'nin tanrı kuramını anlama, açıklama ve tutum geliştirmede kullandığı yöntemlerin analizi yapılmıştır. Geleceğin pozitivist ve rasyonalist dünyasında din ve dinî değerlerin hem varlığını hem de toplum nezdindeki itibarını koruyabilmesi için yapay zekânın sunduğu imkânlardan yararlanmak büyük önem taşımaktadır. Nitekim gelecek vizyonuna sahip bir YZ algoritmasının teknoloji ve teoloji konuları arasında sıkışıp kalmak yerine yeni değerler üreterek sağlıklı bir tanrı tasavvuruna katkı sunması gerekir. Çalışmanın amacı, gündelik yaşam ve bilimsel çalışmalarda etkin bir araç olarak kullanılan; sahip olduğu hız ve doğru hesaplama gücüyle hayatımızın bir parçası haline gelen yapay zekânın inanç, din ve

tanrı gibi ilahiyata dair değerlerin anlaşılmasında kullanım imkânlarını belirlemeye çalışmaktır. Araştırmada, literatür taramasıyla elde edilen bulgular, tümevarım yöntemiyle analiz edilerek YZ'nin tanrı hakkında düşünme imkanları hakkında bir sonuca ulaşılmaya çalışılmıştır.
Anahtar Kelimeler: Kelâm, Yapay Zekâ (YZ), Mantık, Tanrı, Dil.

Introduction

Our search for tools and equipment ranging from abacuses to modern computers that will strengthen our hands to facilitate the construction of civilization has now reached the dawn of the age of robots/machines powered by artificial intelligence, thanks to technology and knowledge accumulation. Although current evidence suggests that human and machine intelligence are fundamentally different, those involved argue that this is temporary and these differences will disappear with the construction of more powerful systems.

According to evolutionary theorists, intelligence is a product of intelligent living systems directed towards inference. Therefore, living beings such as humans that live in more complex environments may possess an intelligence that is adapted to diverse tasks, enabling them to collaborate with their environment in order to maintain their existence.[1] In this respect, it can be said that intelligence, which is a biological concept, emerged as a part of intelligent systems much earlier than genes. Genes are the result of the expectation that they provide templates for resources needed in developmental processes. Intelligence, which develops through interactions between cells, especially those in the brain, and increased social cooperation, has formed the basis of intelligent systems that establish civilizations.[2] It is a faculty that enables an individual to adapt to new circumstances and tasks through reflection. Definitions of human intelligence refer not only to knowledge but also to other mental processes such as abstract thought, representation, analysis, problem solving, and decision-making as an integrated value.[3] Artificial intelligence (AI) can generally be defined as the ability to perform tasks requiring intellectual capacity in a human-like manner.[4] In this respect, AI can be defined as a set of result-oriented digital codes designed to function similarly to human activities and thinking, operating according to mathematical formulas and analytical logic.[5]

The idea of building a being that thinks and acts like a human may be arguably the most exciting and greatest challenge in the history of civilization. Indeed, it's clear that there will be significant differences in advantage between those who receive AI and those who don't.[6] Especially since the Industrial Revolution, there has been increasing debate about the extent to which machines can achieve human-like thinking through AI. While some argue that machines are impossible to think

1 Ken Richardson, *Zekânın Bilimi ve İdeolojisi: Genler, Beyin ve İnsanın Potansiyeli*, trans. Mehmet Doğan (Istanbul: University of Koc Press, 2020), 252.

2 Ken Richardson, *Zekâyı Anlamak*, trans. Nurettin Elhüseyni (Istanbul: University of Koc Press, 2025), 224-226.

3 Günther Görz - Bernhard Nebel, *Yapay Zekâ*, trans. Barış Konukman (Ankara: İnkılap, 2005), 14-15.

4 John McCarthy et al., "A Proposal for the Dartmouth Summer Research Project on Artificial Intelligence", *AI Magazine* 27/4 (2006), 12, 13.

5 Stuart Russel - Peter Norwing, *Artifical Intelligence: A Modern Approach* (New Jersey: Englewood Cliffs, 1995), 5; Görz - Nebel, *Yapay Zekâ*, 11.

6 Blay Whitby, *Yapay Zekâ*, trans. Çiğdem Karabağlı (Istanbul: İletişim, 2005), 11, 17, 93, 147.

with because they are neither intelligent nor communicative,[7] others believe that if matter somehow attains aesthetic consciousness at the quantum level, machines could in the future possess the awareness to express their feelings and thoughts.[8] Scientists and theologians are trying to determine whether artificial intelligence could possess the consciousness, sentience, and self-awareness that would enable to awe the divine.[9]

So, is it possible for the concept of the God that theology attempts to prove and language tries to express to be evaluated on a logical basis by AI algorithms? We don't know this exactly, but what is certain is that, similar to human intelligence, AI will express its opinions on the topics it is most concerned with. Indeed, if God seems like someone fond of creating insects for a biologist who has spent his life researching nature, then a conscious internet algorithm would now seem like an AI program fond of cats.[10]

The aim of the study is to investigate the possibility of expressing theological debates about the concept of God in the philosophy of religion and the problems about the principles of a logical conversation about Him in terms of linguistics by AI. The study examines the possibilities of AI reasoning regarding the theory of God within the context of rational concepts such as language, logic, and mathematics. It deliberately avoids addressing the issues surrounding the acceptance of AI as God or a conscious being.[11] Also, the ideas about God and religious values that AI compiles from environmental sources such as the internet and its own database are not mentioned. Because from the perspective of AI, this kind of information has the same quality as research on any subject other than God. However, the purpose of this article is not to summarize who said what about God, but to determine how close AI analyses about God can get to the logical processes in human intelligence and its meaning in logic.[12] However, since ethical and psychological elements as well as epistemic and rational processes are effective in the divine design of human intelligence, some moral evaluations are included.

In the research, the inductive method was used to reach analyses and interpretations about what the concept of God means for algorithms in terms of the rules of linguistics and theology as well as the functioning of AI.

1. Artificial Intelligence in Theoretical and Practical Terms

Today, AI is becoming widespread in every field, producing a technology that has transformed human life and is constantly expanding its influence. The idea that humanity can create other consciousnesses that act and think like itself is a very old one, dating back to the living statues of

7 René Descartes, *Metod Üzerine Konuşma*, trans. Mehmet Karasan (Ankara: Ministry of National Education, 1997), 59, 60.

8 Roger Penrose, *Kralın Yeni Aklı: Bilgisayar, Zekâ ve Fizik Yasaları*, trans. Tekin Dereli (Istanbul: University of Koc Press, 2017), 21, 34, 38, 40.

9 Joyce Ann Konigsburg, "Scientific Wonder, Artificial Intelligence, and Awe of the Divine", *Religions* 15/4 (2024), 7.

10 Byron Reese, *Yapay Zekâ Çağı*, trans. Mihriban Doğan (Istanbul: Say, 2020), 268.

11 See. Mehmet Ödemiş, "Yapay Zekâda Ruh/Bilinç ve Menşei Problemi", *Yapay Zekâ, Transhümanizm ve Din*, ed. Muhammed Kızılgeçit et al. (Ankara: Presidency of Religious Affairs, 2022), 66, 67; Ahmet Dağ, "Dijitalleşme-Yapay Zekâ-Transhümanizm Bağlamında Din ve Dindara Dair", *Yapay Zekâ, Transhümanizm ve Din*, ed. Muhammed Kızılgeçit et al. (Ankara: Presidency of Religious Affairs, 2022), 181, 182.

12 See. Tamer Işın - Ziya Cihangir Işın, *Tanrı Yapay Zeka* (Istanbul: Kitap Yurdu, 2024), 52-56, 61-64, 283-298, 309-328.

ancient times.[13] However, to be honest, despite all these claims, accepting AI as equivalent to the human mind is still based on a philosophical rather than a scientific attitude.[14]

The current version of the story is based on the claim that thought is a computational process designed according to formal logic and fundamental mathematical principles, and that this can occur outside the human mind, such as through software and hardware media on the PC.[15] The ability of AI to perform physical actions and analytical calculations with greater speed and precision, and the sustainability of the services it provides, is widely welcomed.[16] AI, like the human intelligence it embodies, possesses a highly complex infrastructure; however, this does not change the fact that it is the product of a designed network of combinations. With capabilities such as observation, analysis, learning, probability calculation, and decision-making, we see that AI can analyze concrete events or abstract phenomena to generate solutions to potential problems. Furthermore, we witness AI achieving deep learning by identifying the complex connections between large data sets and analyzing numerous related parameters, and that it also achieves all of this through artificial neural networks.[17]

While AI research focused on search and analysis techniques aimed at achieving the best results based on computational speed and power, it was realized that a new perspective would open a more functional door. If the desired value was already known, recalculating it would be a waste of time and energy, as well as a pointless and laborious task. In other words, a knowledge package such as "If problem P, then solution C" is more functional. Accordingly, the interactive operation of reasoning and knowledge bases in expert systems is more functional and easier, using information previously obtained through experience rather than consuming resources for uncertain calculations for learning purposes, just like in human intelligence.[18]

Because machines do not have the ability to make decisions freely and the opportunity to develop their own programs, their mental development may never be possible.[19] However, while artificial intelligence research initially focused solely on designing programs with basic problem-solving abilities similar to those of humans, it is now being argued that it has reached the point where it can now construct human-like programs.[20] In this context, it can be argued that the most promising area for development in AI research is the programming languages that enable this.

2. Language, Logic, and Artificial Intelligence

Thinking, reasoning and problem solving are the essence of intelligence.[21] Logic, which enables analytical evaluation in the social sciences, is essentially a mental tool designed to better

13 Platon, *Menon*, trans. Furkan Akderin (Istanbul: Say, 2013), 81.

14 Eric J. Larson, *Yapay Zekâ Miti, Bilgisayarlar Neden Bizim Gibi Düşünemez*, trans. Kadir Yiğit Us (Ankara: Fol, 2022), 97, 105 ff.

15 Görz - Nebel, *Yapay Zekâ*, 9, 17, 18; Larson, *Yapay Zekâ Miti*, 17.

16 Ercan Öztemel, *Yapay Sinir Ağları* (Istanbul: Papatya, 2016), 13-15.

17 Konigsburg, "Scientific Wonder, Artificial Intelligence, and Awe of the Divine", 7, 8; Richardson, *Zekâyı Anlamak*, 218.

18 Whitby, *Yapay Zekâ*, 50-52.

19 Cahit Arf, "Makine Düşünebilir Mi ve Nasıl Düşünebilir?", *Universty of Ataturk 1958-1959 Öğretim Yılı Halk Konferansları 1* (Erzurum: Universty of Ataturk Press, 1959), 103.

20 Nils J. Nilsson, "Eye on the Prize", *AI Magazine* 16/2 (1995), 9.

21 Richardson, *Zekânın Bilimi ve İdeolojisi*, 262.

conceptually understand the world of reality. In this respect, logic is nothing more than the organization of a consistent method of thinking.[22] In this case, it can be said that the direct relationship between logic, which is the method of thought, and the principles of language use that make it visible is of critical importance for AI research.

As a mechanical system, there are principles to be followed for intellectual processes, just like the laws in natural events. Since the violation of these principles will lead one to errors and mistakes, correct arguments must be used for logically consistent reasoning.[23] Although it was later tried to be abandoned, classical logic, which has a close connection with language since ancient times, has always been on the agenda when it comes to talking about God because it has a philosophical and metaphysical content.[24] Essentially, this situation is indispensable for the explanation of rational values. For just as it is not possible to define an object that has been stripped of its qualities, it is also not possible for a proposition that has been stripped of its concepts to contain a true judgment.[25] The fact that the types of inference we have always had (induction, deduction, etc.) have been developed based on logic and mathematics and can be formally described in environments such as computer programs gives an idea about the future of intelligence engineering. However, it must be admitted that AI often falls short in making nuanced inferences based on context.[26] However, we can interpret this situation as AI algorithms can also make consistent inferences if they meet the necessary logical and grammatical conditions for correct thinking.

According to scientific data, it is becoming clear that the most complex processes related to the mind, such as deep thought, are processes connected to the central nervous system and that these are functions related to the biological structure of the physiological system. Today, logical thinking has begun to be explained by biological phenomena – in quantum terms, by the interactions of atomic movements such as carbon, nitrogen and oxygen – rather than by elements such as the soul, which is independent of the body.[27] Essentially, it is difficult to say that these discussions have any meaning in terms of rational and logical processes; because what matters from the perspective of reasoning is not where and how these processes operate, but the consistency of their results. From this perspective, the meanings of theological concepts cannot be found within the mind, as in the referential linguistic approach, but only in the external world, where truth-valued judgments reside.[28] Therefore, contrary to the view that theological language is meaningless because it is propositions without the possibility of verification,[29] it is undeniable that a conversation about God is meaningful if it conforms to the principles of logic. Whether the

22 Necati Öner, *Klasik Mantık* (Ankara: Faculty of Divinity of Ankara University, 1991), 2.

23 İbrahim Emiroğlu, *Klasik Mantığa Giriş* (Ankara: Elis, 2009), 26, 31, 32.

24 Öner, *Klasik Mantık*, 14, 15.

25 Coşkun Baba, *Retoriğin İkna Gücü* (Konya: Çizgi Kitabevi, 2018), 132.

26 Larson, *Yapay Zekâ Miti*, 17, 54, 135 ff.

27 Harold J. Morowitz, "Zihni Yeniden Keşfetmek", trans. Füsun Doruker, *Aklın Gözü: Benlik ve Ruh Üzerine Hayaller ve Düşünceler*, ed. Doughas R. Hofstadter - Daniel C. Dennett (Istanbul: University of Bogazici Press, 2005), 46.

28 Gottlob Frege, *Fonksiyon, Kavram, Anlam*, trans. M. Sami Türk (Istanbul: Ketebe, 2022), 39-43.

29 Alfred Jules Ayer, *Dil, Doğruluk ve Mantık*, trans. Vehbi Hacıkadiroğlu (Ankara: Metis, 2010), 19, 20, 31, 92, 130; C. Stephen Evans - R. Zachary Manis, *Din Felsefesi: İman Üzerine Rasyonel Düşünme*, trans. Ferhat Akdemir (Ankara: Elis, 2012), 52, 53.

source of this meaning is human intelligence or another element does not change the result, as it provides knowledge of the truth.

Although language and thought share the same subject matter, they are not the same. While logic studies the unchanging, common language of thought, linguists investigate languages distinguished by structural differences.[30] The common point of the verbal, numerical, and visual forms of language, the real output of rational thought, is that they serve as a means for the understandable transfer of conceptually oriented information between participants. Therefore, just as a definable number system can be written by a machine, it can also be computabled.[31] Similarly, an explainable logical system can be spoken if it can be thought of. Therefore, if we accept the boundaries of the worlds of language[32] and thought as identical, we can say that grammar and logic operate analytically according to similar principles. Indeed, AI translations - although they sometimes make serious mistakes because they do not yet fully understand the subtleties of linguistics-[33] based on this principle are achieved by formally defining words and concepts in two different languages according to digital codes consisting of zeros and ones, and then matching these definitions with each other using analytical comparison. For a more comprehensible and powerful translation, the different lexical meanings of expressions in each language, their noun-verb usages, and their additions, as well as the new meanings acquired by verbs, must be defined in advance for the AI.[34]

The goal of agent systems in AI is to support the solution of complex practical problems by pursuing the goals set by humans. To achieve this, rational agents must first communicate with their environment and report new information gathered through commonly known formal languages. Similarly, to produce reasonable outputs, they must also consider linguistic performance. In other words, for an AI to approach human intelligence, it must be able to model the functions of purpose, expression, and situational action in language. For example, the question "Can you tell me what time it is?" should be answered by telling the time, not by saying "Yes, I can." An AI capable of these tasks can generate logical outputs through coding, observing grammatical structures such as word type, subject-predicate, and metaphor-idiom. Furthermore, it can also consider semantic contexts of conversation.[35] Perhaps one day, he might even feel uncomfortable being called an artificial intelligence, in addition to answering questions ironically like a human.[36]

Essentially, every language experience expresses a different way of thinking based on a new logical construct. The mind's capacity for understanding and judgment increases as it deepens in a language or learns different languages. Considering that AI's language learning abilities are incomparably more advanced than consciousness, it can be argued that it can think better than

30 Caner Çiçekdağı, *Formel Mantık* (Ankara: Elis, 2019), 12.

31 Alan Mathison Turing, "On Computable Numbers with an Application to The Entscheidungsproblem", *Proceedings of the London Mathematical Society* 42/2 (1936), 230.

32 Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, trans. Oruç Aruoba (Istanbul: Metis, 2011), 15.

33 Larson, *Yapay Zekâ Miti*, 76, 81, 82.

34 John Pfeiffer, *The Thinking Machine* (New York: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1962), 144, 150.

35 Görz - Nebel, *Yapay Zekâ*, 53-73.

36 Reese, *Yapay Zekâ Çağı*, 195, 196.

humans. However, when we consider the act of thinking as encompassing various psychological variables, such as ideals, emotions, and creativity, beyond a mere process of calculation and exploration, things change.

3. The Possibility of Using Artificial Intelligence in Theology

Originally designed to perform only arithmetic operations, analog and digital tools are now expected, after AI, to learn new information by observing environmental factors, analyze situations, and be used for the benefit of humans.[37] So, can we include theology in these services? In today's world, where everything is being reduced to digital transformation, it seems inevitable that subjects such as ethics, metaphysics and theology will be analyzed –in different ways and at different levels– by AI-style programs.[38]

Thought arises from the interaction of neurons, the physical origins of the brain. According to AI advocates, using appropriate algorithms is sufficient for the emergence of the rational quality of 'understanding.' All rational qualities, such as thinking, intelligence, and meaning, are essentially the output of the algorithm occurring in the brain. However, other non-algorithmic personal and social elements also appear to participate in the thought process.[39] Accordingly, just as routine action and prior knowledge are needed to reach a solution in the real world, AI algorithms must also follow designed solution paths.[40] Despite all these variables, just as meaningful thought is possible with any proposition that allows for logical verification,[41] it is equally possible to operate AI algorithms using theological judgments. Therefore, since human intelligence can work with qualities such as emotion and theological judgment,[42] as well as algorithms, we can say that it would not be contradictory to include faith among these values.

It's debatable how AI can contribute to understanding rational values such as reason, morality, religion, and especially God, which are crucial components of the value system. However, what is certain is that for AI to be theoretically understandable and practically sustainable, it must not only contribute scientific and technological contributions to human life but also provide sustainable solutions to spiritual needs like art, philosophy, and theology.

In general, theologians have avoided definitive characterizations of divinity because they recognize that human intelligence, due to its ontological and epistemological relative nature, would be insufficient to explain the transcendent divine essence.[43] Tracing the developmental stages of the history of thought reveals that this approach is quite understandable and accurate. As knowledge and resources increase, we witness an expansion of human horizons in theology, as

37 Öztemel, *Yapay Sinir Ağları*, 37.

38 Utku Köse, *Yapay Zeka Felsefesi* (Istanbul: Doğu Kitabevi, 2022), 70; Necmi Karslı, "Ethical and Theological Problems Related to Artificial Intelligence", *Journal of Eskişehir Osmangazi University Faculty of Theology* 12 (2025), 15, 16; Ali Yıldırım, *Din Dilinin Ahlaki Yorumu* (Ankara: Elis, 2015), 167, 173, 179.

39 Penrose, *Kralın Yeni Aklı: Bilgisayar, Zekâ ve Fizik Yasaları*, 41, 43, 397-400, 412, 424, 438.

40 Köse, *Yapay Zeka Felsefesi*, 21, 136, 138.

41 Gottlob Frege, *Aritmetiğin Temelleri*, trans. H. Bülent Gözkân (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi, 2008), 81, 84, 85-89, 174.

42 Whitby, *Yapay Zekâ*, 102, 103; Köse, *Yapay Zeka Felsefesi*, 141, 142.

43 Ebû Mansûr Muhammed el-Mâtürîdî, *Kitâbü't-Tevhid Açıklamalı Tercüme*, trans. Bekir Topaloğlu (Istanbul: İsam, 2014), 90.

in science. Furthermore, the principle that the God is unlike any created thing, a fundamental principle of Muslim theology, demonstrates that the characterizations of God are never-ending and are always open to development.[44] Therefore, it can be argued that AI research, with its various perspectives, can contribute to humanity's journey toward understanding divinity. However, when discussing God, one must first understand the literary styles used in religious language (metaphor, literal, etc.).[45] After this, the hypothetical discourse[46] that should be followed in the religious language related to divinity must be introduced to AI algorithms. It is possible that there will be adaptation problems between the logical verification principle in ordinary language and the religious language varieties that deal with divine attributes; however, we can think that these problems can be overcome over time.

For an image of God that humans will approve, AI must not only measure but also evaluate. Because approval, from an epistemic perspective, means acceptance and approval, while from a theological perspective, it means belief and faith. To believe in a conceptual image, a person must first measure it with their rational capacity, establish it in their mind, and then evaluate it with their morality, creating a place for it in their heart. [47] Otherwise, any understanding of God that lacks emotion, morality, and judgment, while epistemically valid for AI algorithms, will be ethically inadequate for the human soul. Because contemplating concrete or abstract entities involves a process where the mind transforms rationally generated meanings into concepts through logical algorithms, and these concepts are critiqued by other minds in the real world. In other words, there is a unity between individual concept generation, social communication (words, texts), and thought. Similarly, in Muslim theology, discussing God and analyses of the nature of religious language are closely intertwined.[48] In this context, we can say that if the logic of divine attributes and the ways of using religious language in Muslim theology are defined to AI, it can also think theologically.

Studies have shown that simplified combinations in neurons can be designed as logical electrical circuits, such that voltage is 1 if present, 0 otherwise. Similarly, if we can write a language for AI using logical variables (and, or, if, not), which is the language of social sciences, we can also derive truth functions for theological statements.[49] Thus, using AI algorithms, we can bridge the gap between different language varieties and achieve comprehensible thought.[50] Moreover, by using machine learning within the scope of reinforcement learning, intelligent systems can be obtained that model belief processes by testing probabilities, are determined by logical rules and are closed to external interventions.[51]

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44 Abū al-Maʿālī ʿAbd al-Malik b. Yūsuf al-Juwaynī, *Kitāb al-irshād ilā qawāṭiʿi'l-adilla fī ʾuṣūli'l-iʿtiqād*, Critical ed. Muḥammad Yūsuf Mūsā (Baghdat: Maktaba al-Khanjī, 1950), 34.

45 Harun Çağlayan, "Kelâm İlmi'nde Teolojik Dil ve Anlaşılma Biçimleri", *I. Uluslararası Din ve İnsan Sempozyumu Din, Dil ve İletişim Tebliğler Kitabı*, ed. Yunus Araz et al. (Eskişehir: University of Osmangazi Press, 2019), 1/442.

46 Harun Çağlayan, "Rasyonalizm Bağlamında Dilbilim ve Din Dili İlişkisi", *Journal of Ekev Akademi* 58 (2014), 56.

47 Harun Çağlayan, *Etik Açıdan Mâturîdî'nin Hidayet Anlayışı*, (Ankara: Grafiker, 2015), 58, 68.

48 Turan Koç, *Din Dili* (Istanbul: İz, 1998), 21 ff.

49 Albert Menne, *Mantığa Giriş*, trans. Lokman Çilingir (Ankara: Elis, 2005), 37-42.

50 Görz - Nebel, *Yapay Zekâ*, 13, 28, 132.

51 Köse, *Yapay Zeka Felsefesi*, 138, 139.

In AI's analyses of God, the meaning of the experience of thinking and believing needs to be defined within its system. While it's clear that AI can advance algorithmically alongside human intelligence, it currently seems difficult to predict how it will perform in grasping the meaning of belief. Because believing is an experience that is experienced almost entirely as a result of a special emotional leap. Therefore, for AI to make an accurate assessment of the concepts of faith and God, emotional variables must be incorporated into its analysis processes. This can be achieved by first collecting information about religion and religiosity, processing it according to analysis algorithms, and then making a decision. Furthermore, AI must perform these processes autonomously and store its experiences for future use. All of this can only be achieved using a linguistic logic that enables comparative learning and interactive communication. In this respect, it can be said that future studies on grammar and context will make significant contributions to the development of AI.[52]

When designing the divine attributes of AI, God should be defined not only as the source of matter and the origin of motion, but also as the cause of human needs and actions. This is because a religious person's conception of God is more closely linked to ethics and psychology in the social sciences than to existence and becoming in the physical sciences. This is about humans not only exploring the universe and its workings but also imbuing it with meaning as value-producing beings. In other words, the concept of God that AI will design should transcend the absolute idea of God presented by mythology and religions, contributing to humankind's journey toward self-realization. This does not mean seeking a method of deduction that is detached from emotions and focuses solely on pure truth. If this were the case, AI's concept of God would remain an attempt to solve an equation with too many unknowns.

While it is understood that thinking with an algorithm is necessary to make epistemic (right-wrong), aesthetic (beautiful-ugly) and ethical (good-bad) judgments, algorithmic calculations are sufficient to determine the extent to which these judgments are consistent.

Since algorithms are not capable of verifying the truth on their own, they need an external intuition to decide validity and invalidity. It's possible to verify the validity of a decision through algorithmic calculations, but technically, it may still be impossible to reach absolute truth.[53] While human intelligence enhances conceptual and thought capabilities through experience,[54] AI develops creativity and reasoning power through data and energy resources. However, rational behavior may require more than making accurate logical inferences.[55] Accordingly, an AI may deviate from its programming paths depending on variables and deviate from its previous predictions.[56] Therefore, we can assume that an AI with a database containing information on religious disciplines, texts, and their interpretations would be more consistent when analyzing conceptions of God.

52 Pfeiffer, *The Thinking Machine*, 152, 153.

53 Penrose, *Kralın Yeni Aklı: Bilgisayar, Zekâ ve Fizik Yasaları*, 132, 420, 424.

54 John Locke, *İnsanın Anlama Yetisi Üzerine Bir Deneme*, trans. Meral Delikara Topçu (Ankara: Öteki, 2000), 1-2/139, 140.

55 Görz - Nebel, *Yapay Zekâ*, 40.

56 Alan Mathison Turing, "Computing Machinery and Intelligence", *Mind* 49/236 (1950), 449.

As can be seen, since AI operates according to code, it must possess at least a consistent logical algorithm and provide accurate information on the subject in order to produce acceptable results about God. This is similar to developing methods, such as constructing a mental analogy or equation, to solve questions and problems. Any attempted solution that lacks methods and knowledge will naturally lead to inconsistent results. Consequently, it is expected that intelligence and artificial intelligence operating according to proven principles and formulas will achieve similar results.

Conclusion

It's questionable to what extent AI, which is expected to undertake actions typical of human intelligence such as autonomous learning, conceptual analysis, and decision-making, will be able to meet these expectations. While AI is a useful and practical tool in practical matters, its potential for understanding areas like morality and metaphysics is debatable. Therefore, although it is currently unclear what role AI will play in religion and God, we can say that with developing technology it will be able to overcome these difficulties in the near future.

Since it would be more advantageous to receive AI support on theological issues, it is important to know AI's analyses and determinations about religion, faith, and God. This is because we're no longer discussing AI's ability to think, but rather its role as a subject and object in decision-making processes. Therefore, it can be thought that the analysis and judgment power of AI will contribute to determining a concept of God that is compatible with reason and moral principles. However, since AI works with a result-oriented algorithm rather than a process-oriented one, the results achieved must be evaluated by comparing them with the outputs of social disciplines from a theo-psychological perspective.

As a result, using AI services is beneficial in the sense that it offers various opportunities that were not previously possible in theology and facilitates the development of a more sustainable understanding of God. In this context, it can be said that it would not be a problem for Muslim theology to benefit from AI opportunities that can produce sustainable solutions to the epistemic and ethical expectations required for a correct understanding of God.

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Interpreting the Principle 'The Reality of Things Is Truly Existing' in the Context of Quantum Theory: A Study on al-Ghazālī and Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī

'Eşyanın Hakikati Sabittir' İlkesinin Kuantum Bağlamında Yorumlanması: Gazzâlî ve Fahreddîn Râzî Üzerine Bir İnceleme

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Abstract

In classical kalām literature, the principle *"the reality of things is truly existing"* stands as one of the most fundamental premises grounding both the reality of the external world and the possibility of human knowledge. It rests on the assumption that entities and phenomena possess a stable, mind-independent ontological foundation. This provides the necessary basis for the objectivity of knowledge and for the intelligibility of existence through reason. The mutakallimūn, particularly in response to the Sophists' claims that "truth does not exist" or "knowledge is impossible," developed this principle through logical refutations. For them, the fixity of reality is the essential criterion for truth and the foundation of human cognition's reliability; if reality were not Truly Existing, knowledge would lose both its value and its objectivity. This framework assumes that human knowledge can access a real and intelligible domain through the cooperation of the senses and reason. The senses convey data from the external world, while the intellect organizes and interprets these data to generate knowledge. Thus, the truly existing reality ensures the epistemological and ontological stability upon which valid knowledge depends. Modern quantum mechanics, however, has challenged this classical perspective by breaking with absolute determinism and redefining the relationship between observation and reality. Concepts such as Heisenberg's uncertainty principle, Bohr's complementarity, and Schrödinger's superposition have undermined the assumption that reality exists as a truly existing essence independent of context and measurement. At the quantum level, being is no longer a static substance but a phenomenon emerging within networks of probability, relation, and observation. Accordingly, this study examines the kalām principle of truly existing reality within both historical and conceptual dimensions, reinterpreting it in light of the epistemological insights offered by modern physics. It focuses particularly on al-Ghazālī and Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, whose ontological analyses reveal a layered conception of existence paralleling the contextual and probabilistic nature of quantum phenomena. Thus, the notion that "reality is truly existing" is reconsidered not as a rigid metaphysical principle but as a dynamic framework linking being, knowledge, and perception. Ultimately, this synthesis suggests a complementary, rather than contradictory, relationship between the metaphysical constancy of kalām and the probabilistic realism of quantum mechanics—revealing truth as both enduring and multifaceted.

Keywords: Kalām**,** al-Ghazālī, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, The Reality of things, Quantum mechanics, The principle of uncertainty, Superposition.

Öz

Klasik kelâm literatüründe "eşyanın hakikati sabittir" ilkesi, dış dünyanın gerçekliği ve bilginin imkânı problemini temellendiren en temel ilkelerden biridir. Bu ilke, insanın dış dünyada karşılaştığı nesne ve olguların zihinden bağımsız, sabit bir varlık zemini bulunduğu düşüncesine dayanmaktadır. Böylece bilginin nesnel bir temelde kurulabilmesi ve varlığın akılla kavranabilir bir düzene sahip olması mümkün hâle gelmektedir. Kelâmcılar, özellikle sofistlerin "hakikat yoktur" veya "bilgi mümkün değildir" iddialarına karşı geliştirdikleri mantıksal argümanlarla bu ilkeyi sistemleştirmiştir. Onlara göre hakikatin sabitliği, bilginin doğruluk ölçütünü belirleyen ve insan idrakinin güvenilirliğini temellendiren zorunlu bir ilkedir. Zira eşyanın hakikati sabit değilse, bilginin hem değeri hem de nesnelliği ortadan kalkar. Bu yaklaşım, insan bilgisinin duyular ve akıl aracılığıyla ulaşabileceği bir gerçeklik alanının bulunduğu fikrine dayanmaktadır. Duyular dış dünyanın verilerini insana taşırken, akıl bu verileri düzenleyip anlamlandırarak bilgiye dönüştürmektedir. Böylece hakikatin sabitliği ilkesi, bilginin hem epistemolojik hem de ontolojik güvenilirliğini sağlayan bir çerçeve sunmaktadır. Modern dönemde kuantum mekaniği, doğayı mutlak determinizmden kopararak bu klasik anlayışa meydan okuyan yeni bir perspektif geliştirmiştir. Heisenberg'in belirsizlik ilkesi, Bohr'un tamamlayıcılık yaklaşımı ve Schrödinger'in süperpozisyon ilkesi gibi kavramlar, gerçekliğin gözlemden ve bağlamdan bağımsız bir biçimde sabit olarak var olduğu fikrini sarsmıştır. Kuantum düzeyinde varlık artık sabit bir öz değil; olasılıklar, ilişkiler ve ölçüm koşulları içinde beliren bir fenomen olarak anlaşılmaktadır. Bu paradigma değişimi, klasik kelâmın metafizik ilkeleriyle karşılaştırıldığında, bilginin ve hakikatin doğasına dair kadim tartışmalara çağdaş bir boyut kazandırmaktadır. Dolayısıyla bu çalışma, kelâm geleneğinin "eşyanın hakikati sabittir" ilkesini hem tarihsel hem de kavramsal açıdan ele almakta ve modern bilimin ortaya koyduğu epistemolojik açılımlar çerçevesinde yeniden yorumlamayı hedeflemektedir. Araştırmanın yöntemi, doğrudan metin çözümlemesinden ziyade, ilkenin düşünce tarihindeki yankılarını, sofist şüpheciliğine karşı geliştirilen kelâmî argümanları ve bu argümanların modern bilimle kurduğu dolaylı ilişkiyi açıklamaya yöneliktir. Bu bağlamda çalışma, özellikle Gazzâlî ve Fahreddîn Râzî gibi düşünürlerin ontolojiye dair özgün yaklaşımlarına odaklanmakta; onların bilgi, varlık ve hakikat kavrayışlarının kuantumun bağlamsallık ve belirsizlik ilkeleriyle kurabileceği paralellikleri

değerlendirmektedir. Böylece "hakikat sabittir" vurgusu, yalnızca durağan bir metafizik ilke olarak değil; aynı zamanda bilgi, gözlem ve anlam arasındaki dinamik ilişkiyi görünür kılan bir düşünsel çerçeve olarak yeniden konumlandırılmaktadır. Sonuç olarak, klasik kelâmın metafizik sabitlik anlayışı ile kuantum fiziğinin olasılıksal gerçeklik tasavvuru arasında doğrudan bir çatışmadan ziyade, hakikatin farklı düzlemlerde ve bağlamlarda açığa çıkabileceğini ima eden tamamlayıcı bir ilişki kurulabileceği öne sürülmektedir. Bu yönüyle çalışma, kelâmın tarihsel mirasını çağdaş bilimsel düşünceyle diyalog içinde yeniden anlamlandırma çabasının bir örneğini teşkil etmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kelam, Gazzâlî, Fahreddîn Râzî, Eşyanın hakikati, Kuantum mekaniği, Belirsizlik ilkesi, Süperpozisyon.

Introduction

Throughout human intellectual history, the question of the *reality of things* (*ḥaqīqat al-ashyāʾ*) has constituted one of the fundamental problems shaping conceptions of being and knowledge. The human mind has never ceased to question whether the objects it encounters in the external world Truly Existing, upon what their existence depends, and to what extent knowledge can apprehend that existence. This inquiry has not been confined to philosophy alone but has also occupied a central place in religious systems of thought, particularly within the discipline of Kalām. Before discussing the problem of the reality of things, it is necessary to clarify the semantic scope of two key concepts that constitute the framework of this issue: *ḥaqīqat* (truth) and *reality*.

Debates on truth and reality have been approached in parallel with the cosmological and ontological conceptions of each period. Just as ancient atomism, the substance–accident theory, and the problem of unity and multiplicity reflected prevailing conceptions of the physical universe, the nature of reality in classical Islamic thought was likewise interpreted through the scientific and philosophical models of its time. Within this intellectual context, the mutakallimūn generally adopted an atomistic view of the cosmos. Although the various schools differed in their descriptions of the atom's structure, extension, and indivisibility, they broadly conceived existence as a discrete ontological order composed of enduring substances and accidents renewed at every moment.[1] Because change was understood to occur not in the essences of beings but in the continual re-creation of accidents, reality came to be regarded as a stable, mind-independent level of truth. This conceptual background provided the ontological and epistemological grounding for the principle that "the reality of things is Truly Existing," and by emphasizing that knowledge corresponds to this stable level, it furnished the basis for the kalām arguments formulated against Sophistic skepticism. Accordingly, clarifying the conceptual distinction between truth (*ḥaqīqat*) and reality will contribute to a clearer understanding of the issue.

The term *ḥaqīqat* is commonly used to mean "that which is real, constant, and true,"[2] and in this sense it is directly related to the notion of reality. While *reality* refers to the objective condition or state of that which exists, *ḥaqīqat* expresses the correspondence of that reality within the realm

[1] Harry Austryn Wolfson, *The Philosophy of the Kalām* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976), 727-729. Mehmet Bulgen, *Klasik İslâm Düşüncesinde Atomculuk Eleştirileri* (İstanbul: Marmara Üniversitesi İlâhiyat Fakültesi Vakfı Yayınları, 2021), 32-34.

[2] Râğıb el-İsfahânî, *el-Müfredât fî Garîbi'l-Kur'ân*, critical ed. Safvân Adnân ed-Dâvûdî (Dımaşk: Dârü'l-Kalem; Beyrut: ed-Dârü'ş-Şâmiyye, 1412/1991), "hkk", 246; Muhammed b. Mükerrem İbn Manzûr, *Lisânü'l-ʿArab* (Beyrut: Dâru Sâdır, 2003), "hkk", 4/186.

of human thought and understanding.[3] In Islamic thought, *ḥaqīqat* (*al-haqiqatu'l-aqliyya*) denotes the agreement between mental conception and external existence. Similarly, the word *haqq* is defined as "the conformity of a judgment within a proposition to what is real."[4] Accordingly, the distinction between *reality* and *ḥaqīqat* may be briefly expressed as follows: *reality* refers to the external and perceptible existence of things, whereas *ḥaqīqat* signifies their immutable and essential nature.[5] In this regard, within Islamic thought *ḥaqīqat* does not merely signify what is observed or perceived but rather the intrinsic, stable, and fundamental nature of beings themselves.[6] Therefore, *ḥaqīqat* is considered an ontological and epistemological term that enables a deeper comprehension of reality.[7]

Within the *Kalām* tradition, the question of whether beings possess an essential and objective reality has been treated not merely as an ontological issue but also as a comprehensive field of discussion encompassing the possibility and limits of knowledge.[8] The *mutakallimun*, in response to the skepticism of the Sophists, grounded their understanding of both being and knowledge on the principle that "the reality of things is truly existing" (*ḥaqīqat al-ashyāʾ thabitah*). Accordingly, this study examines the principal Kalām arguments developed in response to Sophistic skepticism particularly within the intellectual trajectory extending from al-Ghazālī to Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī and re-evaluates this issue in light of modern scientific approaches. Although both thinkers affirm the principle that "the reality of things is truly existing," they develop distinct ontological positions and epistemological frameworks. For this reason, their views provide a particularly instructive basis for the present analysis.

1. The Kalām Tradition and the Principle That "The Reality of Things Is Truly Existing"

In the classical Kalām tradition, the possibility of knowledge is mostly grounded in the epistemological relationship between the knower and the known. For this relationship to be established and rendered meaningful, it is deemed necessary on the ontological level that both the subject who performs the act of knowing and the object that is known possess a stable and real ground of existence.[9] Knowledge occurs when the subject directs itself toward an external object and forms correct and objective judgments concerning it. This condition implies, on an

3 Suphi Erdem, "Varlığın Cezbesinde Dil ve Hakikat -Nietzsche değinileriyle-", *Birey ve Toplum Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 2/1 (Haziran 2013), 18.

4 Seyyid Şerîf Ali b. Muhammed b. Ali el-Cürcânî, *et-Taʿrîfât*, ed. Muhammed Sıddîk el-Minşâvî (Kahire: Dârü'l-Fazîle, 1888), "hkk", 79-80.

5 Sa'deddîn et-Teftazânî, *Şerhu'l-ʿAkāʾidi'n-Nesefiyye* (Ebû Hafs en-Nesefî, *el-ʿAkāʾid*), annotated by: Ebü'l-Kāsım Muhammed İlyâs el-Himme Nağrî; verified by: Abdullâh Lâjfûrî (Gucerât–Dabel: İdâretu's-Sıddîk, 1439/2018), 40-41.

6 Ebû Yûsuf Ya'kūb b. İshâk el-Kindî, "Risâle fî felsefeti'l-ûlâ," *Resâʾilü'l-Kindî*, critical ed. M. Abdulhadî Ebû Zeyd (Beyrut: Dârü'l-Fikr, 1950), 95–101.

7 For a detailed analysis of the concept of truth, see Hasan İsi, "'Gerçek' ve 'Hakikat' Sözcükleri Üzerine Felsefî ve Dilbilimsel İnceleme", *Uluslararası Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi* 8/41 (2015), 181–196; Emine Öğük "İmâm Mâtürîdî'nin Hak ve Hakikat Tasavvuru", *Tokat İlmiyat Dergisi* 8/1 (Haziran 2020), 71-98.

8 For detailed information, see Hamdullah Arvas, *Müslüman Kelâmında Hak, Hakikat ve Hakkâniyet İlişkisi* (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Doktora Tezi, 2020).

9 Ebü'l-Yusr Muhammed b. Muhammed el-Pezdevî, *Uṣûlü'd-dîn*, critical ed. Hans Peter Linss; proofreader: Ahmed Hicâzî es-Sakkā (Kahire: el-Mektebetü'l-Ezheriyye li't-Turâs, 1424/2003), 22.

ontological level, that the object must possess an unchanging reality. The truth of knowledge is directly linked to this ontological constancy; for if the reality and continuity of the object of knowledge cannot be maintained, knowledge would either become absolutely impossible or acquire only a relative and indeterminate character. This understanding among the *mutakallimun* presupposes that, for knowledge to be valid and reliable, the fundamental conditions related to both the domain of existence and the process of cognition must be simultaneously fulfilled. Otherwise, the correspondence relation that ought to exist between the knower and the known would weaken, making the foundation of knowledge precarious.

In the history of philosophy and Kalām, the question of the possibility of knowledge has been shaped by the contrast between those thinkers who denied the possibility of human cognition and those who maintained that there exists knowledge independent of the human subject that can nevertheless be grasped by it.[10] The extreme skeptical positions—known as those of the *Sophists*[11] —rejected the objectivity of knowledge and reality, advancing claims such as "there is no knowledge" or "things have no truly existing reality."[12] According to this view, every perception is subjective, and since there is no coherence among perceptions, it is impossible to speak of objective knowledge or objective truth.[13] The most distinct discussions of these claims can be found in the classical *Kalām* works. Especially in the pre-Ghazālīan period, various arguments were formulated concerning this issue, often accompanied by a critical attitude. Upon examining these arguments, it becomes clear that the matter was discussed within a number of foundational principles.

1.1. Critiques of the Sophists and the Affirmation of Objective Reality in Kalām

The first argument put forward by the *mutakallimun* against the Sophists is that the claim "there is no knowledge" involves a logical contradiction. The proposition "there is no knowledge" either relies on knowledge (in which case knowledge exists) or does not rely on it (in which case it is not binding); therefore, the statement contradicts itself.[14] Likewise, to assert "there is no knowlenge" implicitly presupposes the existence of knowledge, the knower, and the known. Even the expression "I do not know" constitutes a form of knowledge; hence, the Sophist's claim invalidates

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10 Teftazânî, *Şerhu'l-ʿAkā'id, 44-46.*

11 It refers to the skeptical groups that emerged in Athens in the 5th century BCE, each with its own distinct perspectives. This group consisted mainly of itinerant teachers who specialized in rhetoric and oratory, focused on civic knowledge, politics, and the teaching of virtue, and often offered lessons in exchange for payment. Ahmet Arslan, *Felsefeye Giriş* (Ankara: BB101 Yayınları, 2017), 53.

12 Sophist thought is divided into three groups: The first consists of those who stubbornly claim that nothing is real; the second includes those who doubt the existence of reality; and the third asserts that reality depends on belief and that everyone's belief is true. However, all of these views are rejected because they contradict the principles of logic and reason. Ebü'l-Yusr el-İmâm Ebu'l-Muîn Mansûr b. Abdülkâhir b. Tâhir et-Temîmî el-Bağdâdî, *Kitâbu Uṣûli'd-Dîn* (İstanbul: Dârü'l-Fünûn Medresetü'l-İlâhiyyât, Matbaʿatü'd-Devle, 1346/1928), 6–7; Ebü'l-Muîn Meymûn b. Muhammed b. Muhammed b. Muʿtemid en-Nesefî, *Tebṣıratü'l-edille fî Uṣûli'd-dîn*, critical ed. Hüseyin Atay (Ankara: Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı Yayınları, 2004), 20–22.

13 Abdülkâhir el-Bağdâdi, *el-Fark Beyne'l-Fırak* (Beyrut: Dârü'l-Âfâki'l-Cedîde, 1977), 311.

14 Ebû Mansûr el-Mâtürîdî, *Kitâbü't-Tevhîd*, critical ed. Fethullâh Halif (İskenderiyye: Dâru'l-Câmiâti'l-Mısriyye, 1431), 153.

itself.[15] The assertion that "knowledge is merely conjecture or opinion" is also inconsistent, for knowledge brings certainty and assurance, whereas conjecture entails doubt. Similarly, the Sophists' claim that "there is no truth" is self-contradictory, because if one articulates the truth, then truth exists; if not, the statement becomes meaningless. Thus, whatever response the Sophist gives, he inevitably refutes his own thesis.[16] The examples they put forward concerning the unreliability of the senses were likewise rejected. The perception of honey as bitter due to illness, or the sight of a mirage in the desert, does not originate from the essence of the senses themselves but from defective and abnormal conditions.[17] Under normal circumstances, the senses provide reliable information. It is also evident that knowledge is practically necessary: both humans and animals avoid danger, perceive pain, and choose what is beneficial indicating that things possess definite realities. Otherwise, such behaviors would be meaningless.[18] Their claims concerning dreams and beliefs are likewise inconsistent. Dreams are unconscious imaginations, whereas wakefulness occurs through the harmony of reason and the senses. Similarly, the notion that "every belief is true" is self-contradictory. For example, it is impossible for the same thing to be both eternal (*qadīm*) and created (*ḥadīth*).[19] This violates the principle of non-contradiction: something cannot be both A and not-A at the same time.

As is evident from these critiques of the Sophists[20], in Kalām the questions of the reality of being and the possibility of knowledge were treated as fundamental principles from both epistemological and theological perspectives within the framework of the objectivity of the external world and knowledge concerning it. To deny the external world or to question the truth of the knowledge related to it was considered not only a logical inconsistency but also an approach that renders revelation unintelligible, undermines the grounding of religious knowledge, and makes comprehension of divine truth impossible. For the *mutakallimun*, the external world is a stable reality accessible through reason and the senses; this reality constitutes one of the primary sources of evidence for the existence and attributes of God. The temporal origination (*ḥudūth*) of the world was regarded as one of the most important proofs for the existence of the Creator's power; thus, the external world serves as a rational foundation for attaining divine truth. Consequently, the denial of the external world would nullify not only physical existence but also the very meaning of human perception, which is the addressee of miracles, prophetic proofs, and divine revelation.

The discussions concerning the reality of things acquired a new dimension through the encounter with Greek philosophy. The transmission of Aristotelian logic and metaphysics into Islamic thought through the translation movements enabled *Kalām* scholars to treat issues of ontology and epistemology in a more systematic manner. Within this framework, topics such as the

15 Ebü'l-Hasan Abdülcebbâr b. Ahmed Kâdi Abdülcebbâr, *el-Muğnî fî Ebvâbi't-Tevhîd ve'l-Adl (en-Nazar ve'l-Ma'ârif)*, critical ed. İbrahim Medkûr (Kahire: s.n., n.d.), 42-43.

16 Pezdevî, *Uṣûlü'd-dîn*, 8; Bağdâdi, *Kitābu Uṣūli'd-Dīn,* 12.

17 Mâtürîdî, *Kitâbü't-Tevhîd*, 103-104; Kâdi Abdülcebbâr, *el-Muğnî,* 41.

18 Mâtürîdî, *Kitâbü't-Tevhîd*, 156; Bağdâdi, *Kitābu Uṣūli'd-dīn,* 13.

19 Bağdâdi, *Kitābu Uṣūli'd-dīn*, 13.

20 For a detailed discussion of this issue, see: Fatma Aygün, "Eşyanın Hakikati Sabittir İlkesini Benimseyen Kelâmcıların Sofestaiyye Eleştirisi", *KADER Kelâm Araştırmaları Dergisi* 13/2 (2015).

eternity or createdness of the universe, the relationship between cause and effect, and the distinction between necessary and possible existence came to the fore; while the reliability of reason and the senses, the sources of knowledge, and the possibility of objective reality also emerged as central questions. Thus, the question of the true existence of things was re-evaluated in both its ontological and epistemological dimensions, a process that culminated in significant contributions from al-Ghazālī. (d. 555/1111).

1.2. Al-Ghazālī's Ontology and the Grounding of the True Existence of Things

Al-Ghazālī's understanding of ontology grounds the fixity of the reality of things on a distinct metaphysical foundation. In this framework, only God can be regarded as absolutely constant and truly existing. His existence derives from His own essence and does not depend on any external cause.[21]All other beings in the universe are contingent (*mumkin al-wujūd*). Contingent beings, by virtue of their own essence, have the nature of nonexistence. Yet they are sustained in being through God's continuous act of creation, and thus they acquire reality. For this reason, the reality of things exists and may be considered constant; however, this constancy does not originate from the essence of things themselves but rather from divine power.[22]

Ghazālī does not reduce the concept of existence to a single level. On the contrary, he analyzes it through different degrees and thereby reveals the multilayered nature of truth and being. He classifies this stratified structure through various categories of existence. According to Ghazālī, essential existence refers to entities that truly existing in the external world and are constant in their own essence for instance, a mountain, a stone, or a human being. Sensory existence consists of phenomena perceived by the senses but lacking independent reality outside perception; a mirage seen in hot weather or a sound heard in a dream exemplifies this type. Imaginal existence denotes the continuation of sensory forms as projections within the mind; the image of a landscape that reappears when one closes the eyes, or the recollection of a face previously seen, illustrates this kind of existence.[23] Intellectual existence expresses the abstract and conceptual dimension of things for example, the reality of the hand lies in its ability to grasp, and the reality of the pen in its capacity to write. Lastly, analogical or metaphorical existence refers to figurative attributes, especially in relation to the divine. God's "wrath," for instance, does not signify human anger but metaphorically denotes His will to punish.[24] This classification demonstrates that in Ghazālī's ontology, reality cannot be reduced merely to the external world but manifests in varying degrees according to different modes of cognition. Thus, the reality of things is acknowledged both as a stable existence and as something that can be understood through diverse

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21 Hüccetü'l-İslâm Ebû Hâmid Muhammed b. Muhammed b. Muhammed b. Ahmed et-Tûsî el-Gazzâlî, *Makāsıdu'l-felâsife*, trans. Mahmut Kaya (İstanbul: Klasik Yayınları, 2013), 520-522.

22 Gazzâlî, *Mişkâtü'l-envâr*, trans. Mahmut Kaya (İstanbul: Klasik Yayınları, 2014), 30-33.

23 Gazzâlî, *Mişkâtü'l-envâr, 19.*

24 Gazzâlî, *İslâm'da Müsamaha (Faysalü't-tefrika beyne'l-İslâm ve'z-zendeka)*, trans. Süleyman Uludağ (İstanbul: Dergâh Yayınları, 2014), 30-34; Süleyman Hayri Bolay, *Aristo ve Gazzâlî Metafizikleri* (Ankara: Nobel Yayınları, 2013), 269; Necip Taylan, *Gazzâlî'nin Düşünce Sisteminin Temelleri: Bilgi, İman, Mantık* (İstanbul: Marmara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Yayınları, 1989), 144–146; For details see Ayşe Yıldız, "Gazzâlî'nin Düşünce Dünyasında Varlık ve Felsefe", *Gazi Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 4/9 (Ocak 2017).

appearances within the limits of human perception. Ghazālī's ontological approach in this respect directly provides the foundation for his epistemology.

In examining the nature and reliability of knowledge, al-Ghazālī employed doubt as a temporary yet constructive method and sought to determine the possibility of attaining certain knowledge.[25] His approach extends epistemological debate beyond theoretical boundaries, directing it toward an existential dimension. Al-Ghazālī foregrounded an understanding of knowledge based on intuition (*dhawq*), arguing that truth is not merely the product of rational inference but also a reality apprehended through inner experience. [26] According to him, the apprehension of truth occurs within the heart. The heart, in his conception, is not merely a biological organ but the spiritual center of human consciousness and perception. Although mental operations are conducted through reason, the feeling of certainty and tranquility is completed only through the intuition that arises within the heart. Consequently, genuine knowledge is not limited to the intellectual processing of data derived from the external world; rather, it is realized through an inner witnessing that takes place within the heart.[27]Al-Ghazālī's conception of knowledge transcends classical epistemological frameworks, presenting a multilayered model grounded in intuition and metaphysical foundations. He does not confine the discussion of knowledge to a purely theoretical level but relates it directly to the human quest for truth.

1.3. Fakhr al-Din al-Razi on Knowledge and Mental Existence

Continuing the philosophical tradition of inquiry initiated by al-Ghazālī, Fakhr al-Din al-Razi (d. 606/1210) made significant contributions to ontology and epistemology within Islamic kalām and upheld the traditional view affirming the external reality of things. Nevertheless, Razi drew attention to a distinct category of being, which he termed *mental existence* (*al-wujūd al-dhihni*). [28] Mental existents are defined as conceptual representations or notions produced by the intellect at an abstract level and not existing concretely in the external world.[29] Therefore, they are considered a kind of epistemological, rather than ontological, reality. In other words, to exist in the mind does not necessitate existence in the external world. Razi emphasizes that even impossible beings (*mumtaniᶜ al-wujūd*) can be conceived by the mind; insofar as they are known, they possess existence in the intellect, though their external realization is impossible. Possible beings, by contrast, can be both mentally represented and potentially exist in the external realm.[30] Razi formulated his theory of mental existence on the grounds that what can be mentally distinguished cannot be considered utterly nonexistent, while accepting the external reality of impossibilities would be rationally absurd. To avoid contradiction, he ascribed this mode of being not to the external world but to the intellect. According to Razi, the status of mental existence is clarified through the distinction between *essence* and *existence*. Mental representations possess

25 İsmail Hanoğlu, "Gazâlî Düşüncesinde Nominalizm ve Eşyanın Hakikatı Sorunu", *Birey ve Toplum* 2/3 (2012), 90.

26 Gazzâlî, *el-Munkız mine'd-Dalâl (Dalâletten Hidayete)*, trans. Hilmi Güngör (İstanbul: Maarif Basımevi 1960), 24.

27 Gazzâlî, *İhyâu ᶜUlûmi'd-Dîn*, trans. Mehmed A. Müftüoğlu (İstanbul: Tuğra Neşriyat, 1990), 9.

28 Fahreddîn er-Râzî, *el-Mebâhisü'l-meşrikiyye fî ᶜilmi'l-ilâhiyyât ve't-tabîᶜiyyât*, critical ed. Muhammed Muᶜtasım Billâh el-Bağdâdî (Beyrut: Dârü'l-Kütübi'l-ᶜArabî, 1990), 1/459.

29 Râzî, *el-Mebâhisü'l-meşrikiyye*, 1/440.

30 Mustafa Bozkurt, *Fahreddîn Râzî'de Bilgi Teorisi,* (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Doktora Tezi, 2006), 32-33.

both an essence and a mental form of existence. Considering something in terms of its essence does not imply considering it in terms of its existence. In this sense, *essence* does not constitute the whole of a thing's being; it is merely a form (*ṣūrat*) that arises within the intellect. Existence, however, transcends essence as an external dimension of reality. The intellect judges something to be *impossible* when external existence is deemed inconceivable for its essence, and *possible* when such existence is conceivable. Thus, mental existence is necessary for cognition, yet in determining possibility or impossibility, it is the essence that plays the decisive role—mental existence alone is insufficient.[31] When it comes to God, His existence is necessary and perfect, but His essence is beyond human comprehension.[32]This unknowability pertains uniquely to the divine essence; for all other beings, Razi maintains an objective ontological realism regarding both their essences and external realities. However, his conception of mental existence opens new avenues of debate, for the extent to which mental representations correspond to external reality remains epistemologically uncertain. The idea that even impossible beings can be conceived in the mind demonstrates both the human intellect's capacity for abstraction and the complexity of the essence–existence distinction. This shows that while Razi provides a strong epistemological defense against sophistic skepticism, his notion of mental existence also introduces unresolved questions concerning the correspondence between mental constructs and objective truth.

Razi's ontological analyses culminate in an epistemological framework that addresses the possibility of knowledge and the refutation of skepticism. He maintains that necessary (*badihi*) knowledge is attainable through the intellect's innate faculties.[33] When the components of a proposition are apprehended clearly and distinctly, knowledge arises immediately without requiring further deliberation. The skeptics' objections to such knowledge often stem from incomplete or erroneous conceptions. Moreover, Razi stresses that the human intellect, by processing representations acquired through the senses, has the capacity to attain necessary knowledge. Hence, he rejects the claim that sensory data are wholly unreliable; for sensory perception during wakefulness is clearer and more trustworthy than in dreams or imagination.[34]

According to Razi, the sophists and skeptics deny the very possibility of knowledge by rejecting the existence of necessary truths, thereby refuting their own theses through logical contradiction. Assertions such as "being does not exist" or "reality is relative" violate the principle of non-contradiction and other fundamental logical laws.[35] At the same time, an exclusively sense-based theory of knowledge is inadequate, since the senses may deceive. Knowledge must rest upon self-evident first principles that are accepted necessarily upon

31 Râzî, *el-Metâlibü'l-âliye mine'l-ʿilmi'l-ilâhî*, critical ed. Ahmed Hicâzî es-Sekkâ (Beyrut: Dârü'l-Kitâbi'l-ʿArabî, 1407/1987) 1/72; Râzî, *el-Meʿâlim fî Uṣûli'd-Dîn*, critical ed. Tâhâ Abdürraûf Saʿd (Kahire: Mektebetü'l-Külliyâti'l-Ezheriyye, n.d.), 10; Bozkurt, *Fahreddîn Râzî'de Bilgi Teorisi,* 31-32.

32 Râzî, *el-Mebâhisü'l-meşrikiyye*, 1/439-440; Eşref Altaş, "Aklın İmkânı ve Sınırı: Fahreddin Râzî'ye Göre Genel ve Özel Metafizik Bilginin İmkânı," *Nazariyat: İslâm Felsefe ve Bilim Tarihi Araştırmaları Dergisi* 7/2 (2021).

33 Râzî, *Nihâyetü'l-ʿukûl fî dirâyeti'l-uṣûl*, critical ed. Saîd Abdüllatîf Fûde (Beyrut: Dâru'z-Zehâir, 1436/2015), 1/173.

34 Râzî, *el-Metâlibü'l-âliye,* 2/17.

35 Râzî, *Nihayetu'l-ukûl fî dirâyeti'l-usûl,* 1/170-172.

conception—truths that avoid both infinite regress and circularity. These necessary truths constitute the precondition for all reasoning and doubt and are therefore inescapable realities.[36]

The analyses of being proposed by al-Ghazālī and al-Razi both served to provide meaningful frameworks for phenomena that could not be directly apprehended with the means available in their time. Ghazālī's notion of *imaginal existence* and Razi's theory of *mental existence* exhibit remarkable parallels with the modern neuroscientific concepts of *mental imagery* and *mental representation*. According to contemporary research, mental imagery involves the storage and reactivation of sensory experiences within memory—such as the reappearance of a landscape in one's mind after closing the eyes. Ghazālī's description of imaginal existence explains precisely this phenomenon: The persistence of sensory forms within the mind. Razi's conception of mental existence, on the other hand, refers to intellectual constructs that may lack external counterparts yet exist conceptually within cognition. This corresponds closely to what modern neuroscience calls *mental representation*, wherein the brain forms abstract schemas of objects, events, or ideas.[37] Hence, the theories developed by both thinkers, within the limits of their intellectual contexts, may be viewed as early philosophical analyses of perception, memory, and representation—concepts now central to cognitive neuroscience.

Following the discussions of the Sophists and classical Islamic theologians on the reality of things, it is useful to examine how quantum mechanics, as a major development in modern science, offers new and distinct perspectives on physical reality and human knowledge. Quantum physics—through its principles of uncertainty, observer-dependence, and probabilistic structure—has provided fertile ground for rethinking traditional notions of being and knowing. Evaluating these innovations from both philosophical and scientific perspectives thus represents an important step toward reinterpreting classical metaphysical debates in the context of contemporary thought.

2. The Reality of Things and Quantum Theory

In the classical kalām tradition, the reality of things (*haqīqat al-ashyāʾ*) was conceived as possessing a truly existing and objective existence, independent of observation and perception. This understanding rests on the idea that being is inherently constant, and that human knowledge aims to apprehend this immutable reality. Classical physics, in a parallel manner, portrayed the universe as a clockwork-like, predictable system that operates independently of the observer. If both the position and velocity of a particle were known, the laws of motion would make it possible to calculate its past and future in a single deterministic framework. Within this paradigm, measurement merely revealed preexisting values, and apparent probabilities were often interpreted as consequences of human ignorance rather than genuine indeterminacy. In short, reality was viewed as continuous, determined, and unaffected by observation.[38] The emergence of quantum mechanics in the early twentieth century, however, overturned these settled assumptions by introducing notions such as uncertainty, probability, and observer dependence

[36] Râzî, *Nihayetu'l-ukûl fî dirâyeti'l-usûl*, /157-159; See also Mustafa Yıldız, "Fahreddin er-Râzî'ye Göre Metafizik Bilgiye Ulaşmanın Yolu Olarak Nazar ve İstidlal", *Kader: İlahiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi* 21/1 (Haziran 2023).

[37] Stephen M. Kosslyn, *Image and Brain: The Resolution of the Imagery Debate* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1994), 5–12.

[38] John Earman, *A Primer on Determinism* (Dordrecht: Reidel, 1986), 4-6.

into the foundations of physical reality. This paradigm brought a new dimension to ancient debates about the nature of truth and the possibility of knowledge, thereby allowing the *kalām* perspective to be reinterpreted in light of modern science. Heisenberg's uncertainty principle, the wave–particle duality, superposition, and the observer effect revealed through measurement all challenge the deeply rooted assumptions about the nature of reality. From this standpoint, it becomes possible to explore the relationship between quantum principles and the classical *kalām* understanding of the fixity of reality.

Werner Heisenberg's uncertainty principle[39], formulated in 1927, demonstrates that the position and momentum of a particle cannot be precisely known at the same time.[40] Initially, this limitation was attributed to imperfections in measuring instruments, yet it soon became clear that the issue was not technological but intrinsic to the structure of nature itself.[41] Hence, uncertainty is taken, in certain interpretations of quantum mechanics, to arise not from the limitation of human knowledge, but from the ontological character of being. As Niels Bohr explained, an atom does not exist in a truly existing state prior to observation; it exists only as a potential governed by probabilities.[42] Reality becomes manifest only through observation, and the boundary between observer and observed dissolves. Experimental evidence has thus been interpreted as supporting views that see uncertainty as reflecting not merely epistemic limitationsbut an inherent feature of natüre revealing the inevitability of causeless events, ghostlike phenomena, and the activation of reality through observation.[43]

The transformation brought about by the uncertainty principle is especially evident in the behavior of quantum particles, most clearly expressed in the wave–particle duality. Electrons and photons exhibit either wave-like or particle-like behavior depending on experimental conditions. The "wave" in this context does not refer to a physical undulation but to a probabilistic distribution describing where a particle is likely to be found. This wave specifies what can be known about an atom and which aspect of it can be revealed. Thomas Young's famous double-slit experiment vividly illustrates this phenomenon: when unobserved, electrons produce an interference pattern like waves, but when observed, they behave as particles.[44] In dominant readings of quantum mechanics, observation therefore appears not merely as a passive act of acquiring information but as an active factor in determining which physical properties become manifest. This phenomenon is explained by what is known as the *principle of superposition*, which

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39 The uncertainty principle does not refer to measurement error or the inadequacy of measuring instrumenn.d. Rather, it indicates that certain pairs of physical quantities (such as position and momentum) cannot be measured with absolute precision at the same time. The measurement result is not entirely indeterminate; it is precise only within a defined interval, known as the range of uncertainty. At the quantum level, these uncertainty ranges are interconnected, so that the more precisely one quantity is determined, the more uncertain the other becomes. John Polkinghorne, *Kuantum Kuramı: Çok Kısa Bir Başlangıç*, trans. Mehmet Ali Olpak (İstanbul: İstanbul Kültür Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2023), 37.

40 Werner Heisenberg, *Physics and Philosophy: The Revolution in Modern Science* (New York: Harper, 1958), 20-25.

41 Max Born, *Natural Philosophy of Cause and Chance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1949), 1-15.

42 Niels Bohr, *Atomic Physics and Human Knowledge* (New York: Wiley, 1958), 73-75.

43 John Gribbin, *Schrödinger'in Kedisinin Peşinde*, trans. Nedim Çatlı (İstanbul: Metis, 2024)164-168; Paul Davies, *Tanrı ve Yeni Fizik*, trans. Barış Gönülşen (İstanbul: Alfa Yayınları, 2013), 140-141.

44 Albert Messiah, *Quantum Mechanics* (New York: Dover Publications, 1999), 40-45; Jim Al-Khalili and Johnjoe McFadden, *Kuantum Sınırında Yaşam*, trans. Şiirsel Taş (İstanbul: Domingo Yayınları, 2016), 110-120.

states that a particle can exist simultaneously in multiple states prior to measurement. Once measurement occurs, only one of these possibilities is actualized, while all others collapse.[45] Schrödinger's cat thought experiment exemplifies this principle at the macroscopic level: the cat inside the box simultaneously embodies the probabilities of being both dead and alive until the act of observation collapses the wave function, resulting in a single outcome.[46] In particular interpretations, this scenario is taken to demonstrate that uncertainty does not arise from an epistemic deficiency alone but reflects an ontological indeterminism associated with the quantum domain, a view closely aligned with the Copenhagen interpretation articulated by Bohr and Heisenberg. [47] These discussions extend beyond explaining how particles can exist in multiple states simultaneously; they also reveal that the conditions of observation determine which aspect of reality becomes manifest. Bohr's *principle of complementarity* articulates this idea clearly: subatomic entities can display both wave-like and particle-like properties, yet which aspect appears depends on the experimental setup and the observer's choice of method. Thus, the observer is no longer a passive recorder, as in classical physics, but an active participant in the very emergence of reality.[48]

The debates surrounding quantum theory have not been confined to interpretations of uncertainty; deterministic explanations have also been advanced. In this context, David Bohm, in 1954, developed an alternative formulation of quantum mechanics based on the concepts of "hidden variables" and the "pilot wave." According to Bohm, particles in fact possess definite positions. Uncertainty does not stem from the nature of reality itself but from the inevitable influence of the measurement process. For instance, the impossibility of simultaneously determining both the position and momentum of an electron is not a secret concealed by nature but a consequence of the unavoidable limitations of our measuring instruments and conceptual framework.[49] Thus, uncertainty should not be understood as the expression of an absolute indeterminism in nature but as the result of an epistemological constraint.[50] Although Bohm's interpretation produces the same experimental outcomes as standard quantum mechanics, it attributes uncertainty not to the ontological structure of reality but to the epistemic limits of observation.[51] Many prominent figures—including Einstein, Schrödinger, Dirac, Planck, and Penrose—supported this deterministic line of thought in various ways. Einstein's famous remark that "God does not play dice" has become the most succinct expression of this position.[52] By

45 P. A. M. Dirac, *The Principles of Quantum Mechanics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958), 11–15.

46 Erwin Schrödinger, "The Present Situation in Quantum Mechanics," trans. John D. Trimmer, *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 124/5 (1980), 328-329.

47 Gribbin, *Schrödinger'in Kedisinin Peşinde*, 210-214.

48 John Polkinghorne, *Kuantum Kuramı: Çok Kısa Bir Başlangıç*, 43-44; For different readings on the subject, see: Max Planck, *Modern Doğa Anlayışı ve Kuantum Teorisi'ne Giriş*, trans. Yılmaz Öner (İstanbul: Liberus Kitap, 2025), 123-187.

49 David Bohm, "A Suggested Interpretation of the Quantum Theory in Terms of 'Hidden' Variables. I." *Physical Review* 85 (1952), 168-169.

50 Stephen Hawking, *Zamanın Kısa Tarihi*, trans. Mehmet Harmancı (Ankara: TÜBİTAK Yayınları, 1998), 66-67.

51 Polkinghorne, *Kuantum Kuramı: Çok Kısa Bir Başlangıç*, 64-66.

52 Caner Taslaman, *Kuantum Teorisi, Felsefe ve Tanrı* (İstanbul: İstanbul Yayınevi, 2012), 69-70.

contrast, Bohr and Heisenberg argued that uncertainty is intrinsic to the nature of reality, as understood within their interpretative framework.[53]

The picture revealed by quantum experiments has often been read as implying that reality —that is, the aspect of truth that manifests under specific conditions of observation and experimentation—is not a truly existing essence but a contextual appearance that emerges relative to experimental configuration and the mode of inquiry. Everyday experience points to a similar notion: when we look into a mirror, what we see is not the object itself but the reflection of light; the image changes depending on angle, distance, and illumination. The complementarity of wave and particle properties does not imply that truth itself undergoes transformation; rather, it suggests that the same truth can manifest in different forms under varying experimental conditions. Hence, the ontological indeterminism posited here should be understood not as a transformation of truth itself, but as a cautious acknowledgment of the contextual variability of our access to truth.

Eugene Wigner carried the debate further through his famous "friend experiment." In this scenario, a human observer is placed inside the box. The observer inside looks at the cat and perceives it as either dead or alive. However, from the standpoint of the external observer, both the cat and the friend remain part of the same quantum superposition. Consequently, two distinct realities emerge: the inner observer's experience and the external observer's measurement. This raises a profound question: Is reality dependent upon observation, or does an observer-independent absolute truth exist?[54]

Initially, Wigner proposed that consciousness might play a special role in quantum events, though later discussions evolved in diverse directions. While the Copenhagen interpretation centers observation as the key determinant of reality, Hugh Everett's *many-worlds interpretation* posits that both observations occur simultaneously but in separate, parallel universes.[55] More recently, these debates have moved from the realm of thought experiments into the laboratory. In 2019, Massimiliano Proietti and his team conducted an experiment demonstrating that, under certain assumptions, independent observers could arrive at mutually contradictory conclusions about which outcome of a single quantum event had actually occurred.[56] These findings, consistent with the uncertainty principle, indicate that reality in nature is not a single, absolute truth existing independently of observation. Rather, it manifests as multiple, observer-dependent possibilities shaped by measurement conditions. Thus, thought experiments such as Schrödinger's cat and Wigner's friend reveal not only the limits of quantum theory but also the deepest dimensions of the relationship between knowledge, observation, and reality.[57] In this sense, quantum theory has

53 Niels Bohr, *Atomic Theory and the Description of Nature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), 67–68; Werner Heisenberg, "On the Perceptible Content of Quantum Theoretical Kinematics and Mechanics", *Quantum Theory and Measurement*, ed. J. A. Wheeler – W. H. Zurek (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), 64–66.

54 E. P. Wigner, "Remarks on the Mind-Body Question," in *The Scientist Speculates: An Anthology of Partly-Baked Ideas*, ed. I. J. Good (London: Heinemann, 1961), 284–290.

55 Hugh Everett III, "Relative State Formulation of Quantum Mechanics," *Reviews of Modern Physics* 29/3 (1957), 454-462.

56 Massimiliano Proietti vd., "Experimental Test of Local Observer Independence," *Science Advances* 5/9 (2019).

57 Časlav Brukner, "On the Quantum Measurement Problem," *Nature Physics* 10/4 (2017), 259-263.

become an intellectual framework that redefines both the nature of physical reality and the meaning of knowledge and observation themselves.

3. Reconsidering the Principle of True Existence in the Context of Quantum Theory

The question of how to articulate the relationship between truth, knowledge and existence has remained a central concern in both classical intellectual traditions and modern scientific approaches. Although issues such as how the human mind apprehends the external world, the reliability of observation and the conditions under which knowledge becomes possible are discussed within different conceptual frameworks, they nonetheless reflect a shared pursuit of understanding. This shared pursuit provides a basis for reconsidering the epistemic framework developed by kalām in light of contemporary scientific advancements. Modern discussions concerning the relation between observation and reality, the limits of determinism, the possibility of multiple states and the discreteness of existence create opportunities for re-examining classical kalām questions within a contemporary context. Scientific models change over time, and this dynamism allows kalām epistemology to remain open to reinterpretation as new data emerge. Kalām is not a static tradition but a dynamic intellectual enterprise shaped through continuous engagement with the cosmological perspectives of its era. For this reason, the epistemic structure articulated by kalām gains its full meaning only when considered together with its underlying ontological framework.

Quantum physics offers no single answer to the question of truth; everything depends on how one interprets the theory. In general, whatever property a measurement apparatus is designed to probe, that is what will be observed. Some interpretations posit a single, objective world and explain uncertainty through *hidden variables* (Bohm) or through spontaneous collapses of the wave function at random intervals. Another approach focuses on the question "What do we measure? not as an ontic claim about reality but as an account of how measurement outcomes are obtained and how the theory functions in practice (the Copenhagen interpretation). A third, the *many-worlds interpretation*, holds that the wave function never collapses and that each possible outcome is realized in a branching universe. Finally, *relational* and *subjectivist* approaches tie the phenomenon to the observer–system relation, asserting that truth must be expressed within the relational context in which it arises.

This panorama can be summarized as follows: "Reality is truly existing in itself, though its appearance to us changes with context." Quantum theory does not claim that truth is relative; rather, it shows that the result of measurement depends on the experimental arrangement and the question being asked. Thus, quantum mechanics neither proves nor disproves the kalām assertion that "the reality of things is truly existing"; it merely makes visible the contextual and probabilistic nature of human knowledge. In this sense, the fact that different experimental setups yield different outcomes does not imply relativism but instead supports a reading consistent with the idea of "a truly existing truth manifesting in variable appearances."

At first glance, the Sophists' context-sensitive view of knowledge might seem compatible with this framework, since measurement in quantum mechanics is likewise dependent on context.

However, the results of quantum experiments do not change according to subjective belief. Quantities that cannot be measured simultaneously (such as position and momentum) become definite only under distinct experimental arrangements. Hence, the issue is not that something is "both A and B at the same time," but that "it appears as A or as B under different configurations." Quantum mechanics therefore does not affirm relativism but rather indicates that knowledge is conditioned by the terms of its access—by the questions we ask, the apparatus we employ, and the framework of measurement we adopt. In this respect, al-Ghazālī's methodical skepticism becomes relevant. He emphasized that certain knowledge can arise only under specific and limited conditions, adopting a cautious stance toward claims of absolute certainty. Since human beings cannot fully encompass reality, knowledge must remain an ongoing process of inquiry and self-questioning.

Al-Ghazālī's classification of levels of existence—essential sensory, imaginal, intellectual, and analogical—is also significant here. Essential existence corresponds to the stable reality of the external world; sensory and imaginal existence refer to perceptual and mental representations; intellectual existence expresses the abstract meaning of things; and analogical existence describes metaphorical or divine attributes. This hierarchy reveals that truth manifests on multiple planes, not as a division within reality itself, but as a differentiation in the modes through which a single reality becomes intelligible to human understanding. At this point, the comparison with quantum theory is not intended as an ontological identification, but as a parallel at the level of how indeterminate or inaccessible aspects of reality are rendered conceptually tractable. In a similar way, quantum superposition points not to a single, directly accessible level of being but to a reality that assumes different forms depending on context, specifically the conditions under which it is described and measured. Yet, while al-Ghazālī ultimately grounds this multiplicity in the limits of human apprehension relative to a reality fully known in divine knowledge, quantum mechanics attributes the decisive role to the process of observation itself. Likewise, Fakhr al-Din al-Razi's theory of *mental existence* can be compared to the notion of quantum superposition, provided that the comparison is restricted to the problem of representation rather than extended to claims of ontological equivalence. For Razi, entities conceived in the mind may lack an external counterpart, yet they are "real" at the conceptual level. What is at stake here is not the substitution of external reality by mental constructs, but the necessity of such constructs for making knowledge possible in the absence of direct access to reality itself. This parallels the quantum state of particles existing in probabilistic superpositions before observation. Still, the question of how mental existents correspond to external reality remains unresolved—just as physicists debate whether superposition represents an ontological state or merely a mathematical description. Both Razi's concept of mental existence and the quantum notion of superposition thus expose the blurred boundary between representation and reality. Al-Ghazālī's taxonomy of levels of being—essential, sensory, imaginal, intellectual, and analogical—and Razi's notion of mental existence both underscore the limits of human knowledge and provide conceptual structures for understanding the multiplicity of appearance. Their relevance to quantum theory lies less in shared doctrines than in a common strategy for addressing the problem of how one may speak coherently about a reality that exceeds the conditions of direct cognition. Their insights resonate meaningfully with quantum concepts such as superposition

and the observer effect, for both traditions affirm that truth is not given to humans in its entirety but mediated through particular conditions and instruments.

In this framework, the kalām view of truly existing reality can be interpreted not as a static dogma but as the idea that what is certain in divine knowledge manifests to humanity only in partial and contextual forms. Thus, the metaphysical constancy emphasized in kalām can be seen, alongside the experimental indeterminacy highlighted by quantum physics, as expressing in different registers the idea that the disclosure of truth to human understanding is always conditioned by context and circumstance. Moreover, the taxonomies developed by al-Ghazālī and al-Razi represent attempts to make sense of otherwise intractable questions through the intellectual resources and conceptual tools available in their time, not as anticipations of modern physics, but as historically situated responses to enduring epistemic challenges. This demonstrates the capacity of Islamic thought to generate innovative explanations within its historical context and its potential to engage in a fruitful dialogue with modern science.

Conclusion

The classical kalām principle that "the reality of things is truly existing" affirms the existence of an objective, mind-independent reality, which grounds the possibility of human knowledge and serves as a starting point for subsequent theological reasoning. Quantum mechanics, by contrast, demonstrates that reality appears in relation to the observer, the conditions of measurement, and the context of inquiry. Yet experimental evidence also shows that outcomes do not change arbitrarily: the emergence of different values under different setups does not point to relativism but to the dependence of knowledge on the questions posed and the methods employed. The essential difference lies in perspective: *kalām* emphasizes a transcendent and absolute truth grounded in divine knowledge, whereas quantum mechanics presents a probabilistic image of reality revealed through phenomena.

It cannot be said that there is a direct conflict between classical metaphysical claims and modern scientific models. Quantum theory does not deny the existence of reality; rather, it shows that access to reality is always shaped by particular methods and forms of questioning. This suggests that the kalām understanding of a divinely grounded, stable truth can be reconsidered alongside the inherent limitations of human knowledge. The principle that "the reality of things is truly existing" retains its significance not by offering an empirical description, but by reminding us that the limits of observation do not undermine the possibility of an enduring truth beyond them.

Finally, the ever-evolving nature of science shows that kalām itself must not remain static. Its greatest strength lies in maintaining theoretical continuity—preserving the claim that truth is truly existing—while remaining methodologically open to renewal by reinterpreting the possibility and limits of knowledge in light of contemporary scientific developments. Such an approach would allow the legacy of classical kalām to endure not as a frozen tradition but as a living, intellectually dynamic field that continues to interact creatively with the epistemological challenges posed by modern science.

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Religious Diversity in Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi and John Hick

Mevlana Celaleddin-i Rumi ve John Hick'te Dinsel Çeşitlilik

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Abstract

Religious pluralism has become one of the most contested issues in contemporary philosophy of religion and is generally discussed within the frameworks of exclusivism, inclusivism, and pluralism. This article provides a comparative analysis of religious pluralism in the thought of Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi, one of the leading Sufi figures of Islamic intellectual tradition, and John Hick, a prominent representative of modern philosophy of religion. Mawlana's understanding of religion is grounded in the metaphysics of waḥdat al-wujūd (the unity of being) and in the moral-metaphysical dimension of divine love. For him, the infinite self-disclosures of the Absolute Being constitute the ontological foundation of religious diversity. Accordingly, Mawlana develops an inclusive and pluralistic perspective in which every faith is regarded as a partial manifestation of divine truth. Although he was well-versed in theological and philosophical debates, Mawlana did not follow the methods of theologians or philosophers when addressing such issues. For him, engaging in excessively abstract reasoning was not a valid path to truth. His conceptions of life, humanity, and religion are shaped by the idea of being. The vastness of being corresponds to his understanding of life and religion, for both emerge from and continue within the essence of existence. To Mawlana, the realm of being is too vast to be grasped by the senses, and its source lies deeper than both the material world and the realms of imagination and sensation. Although Mawlana's reflections on religious diversity can be analyzed through the contemporary paradigms of exclusivism, inclusivism, and pluralism, it becomes clear that he transcends these frameworks through a more profound and holistic vision. The seemingly contradictory tendencies of exclusivity, inclusivity, and pluralism observed in Sufi discourse stem from the dialectic between the outer (ẓāhir) and inner (bāṭin) dimensions. Thus, the inclusive and pluralistic attitudes in Sufism are not mutually exclusive. Hick, on the other hand, constructs his pluralism on an epistemological basis, interpreting religious diversity as the plurality of human responses to the "Ultimate Reality" within the limits of human cognitive and cultural conditions. Drawing on Kant's ontology and epistemology, Hick reinterprets the divine by postulating God as the "Ultimate Reality" at the center of his pluralistic framework. This distinction has generated major debates in theology and philosophy of religion, particularly concerning the possibility of revelation. According to Hick, there is a sharp distinction between Reality in itself and Reality as conceptualized and experienced through religious traditions—an indeterminacy that arises from metaphysical uncertainty. Each religion asserts absolute truth claims, yet these claims cannot be verified by any objective criterion. Therefore, no religious tradition can make a complete or final claim about the nature of Reality. The fundamental difference between the two approaches lies in their orientation: while Mawlana proposes a God-centered and religion-centered pluralism, Hick advocates an experience-centered one. The study concludes that Mawlana offers a more holistic framework that preserves the authenticity and socio-cultural dimensions of religion, whereas Hick's model, though compatible with modern values such as liberalism and tolerance, risks undermining the essence of religion through its reductionist tendencies.

Keywords: Philosophy of Religion, Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi, John Hick, Exclusivism, Inclusivism, Pluralism.

Öz

Dinî çoğulculuk, çağdaş din felsefesinin en tartışmalı meselelerinden biridir ve genellikle dışlayıcılık, kapsayıcılık ve çoğulculuk paradigmaları çerçevesinde ele alınmaktadır. Bu makale, dinî çoğulculuk düşüncesini İslam düşüncesinin önde gelen sûfîlerinden Mevlânâ Celâleddîn-i Rûmî ile çağdaş din felsefesinin önemli temsilcilerinden John Hick'in yaklaşımları üzerinden karşılaştırmalı olarak incelemektedir. Mevlânâ'nın din anlayışı, vahdet-i vücûd metafiziği ve aşkın ahlâkî-metafizik boyutu üzerine temellenir; ona göre Mutlak Varlık'ın sonsuz tecellileri, dinî inançların çeşitliliğini zorunlu kılar. Dolayısıyla Mevlânâ, her inancı ilahî hakikatin farklı bir yansıması olarak kabul eden kapsayıcı ve çoğulcu bir yaklaşım geliştirir. Mevlânâ kelam ve felsefe alanında tartışılan konulara vakıf olmasına rağmen, söz konusu meselelere çözüm getirmek istediğinde kelamcıların ve filozofların yöntemini takip etmemiştir. Aşırı soyut terimlere boğulmuş istidlali şekiller ile zaman geçirmek, Mevlânâ için geçerli bir yöntem değildi. Mevlânâ'nın, hayat, insan ve din kavramı, varlık üzerine şekillenmektedir. Varlık kavramının genişliği, hayat ve din telakkisi ile eş olacaktır çünkü din ve hayat, varlığın sinesinden çıkmakta ve orada devam etmektedir. Mevlânâ'ya göre varlık âlemi, duyularla hissedilmeyecek kadar geniş, kaynağı ise maddi dünya değil, hissedilen ve hayal edilen âlemden daha derindir. Mevlânâ'nın dini çeşitlilik konusu her ne kadar çağdaş din felsefesi perspektifinden dışlayıcılık, kapsayıcılık ve çoğulculuk paradigmaları ile değerlendirilse de, onun bu paradigmaları aşan daha derin ve bütüncül bir bakış açısına

sahip olduğu anlaşılmaktadır. Mutasavvıfların söylem ve eylemlerinde dışlayıcı, kapsayıcı ve çoğulcu gibi birbirleriyle çelişik gibi gözüken tutumları, onların zahir-batın diyalektiğinden kaynaklanmaktadır. Onlarda görülen kapsayıcı ve çoğulcu yaklaşım tarzı birbirleri ile uyuşması mümkün olmayan durumlar değildir. John Hick ise dinî çoğulculuğu epistemolojik temelde kurar ve dinî farklılıkları, insanın sınırlı bilişsel ve kültürel koşulları içinde "Nihai Gerçek"i tecrübe ediş biçimlerinin çeşitliliği olarak yorumlar. Hick, Kant'ın ontoloji ve epistemolojisinden hareketle böyle bir çoğulculuk tasavvuru arayışına girmiştir. Kant'ın ahlakı temellendirmek için bir postülat olarak varsaydığı Tanrı'yı, Hick," nihai Gerçeklik" olarak varsayarak dini plüralizm anlayışının merkezine yerleştirmiştir. Bu ayırım kelam ve din felsefesinde vahyin imkânı konusu gibi çok ciddi tartışmaları beraberinde getirmiştir. Hick'in yaklaşımına göre, Gerçek'in kendisi ile dinî geleneklerce kavramsallaştırılıp tecrübe edilen Gerçek arasında keskin bir ayrım vardır. Bu ayrımın sebebi metafizik belirsizliktir. Her din mutlak hakikat iddiaları ile ortaya çıkar. Fakat bu iddiaları objektif bir kriterle kanıtlamak mümkün değildir. Bu nedenle hiçbir dini gelenek, Gerçek'in doğası hakkında tam ve nihai bir iddia ileri süremez. Bu iki yaklaşım arasındaki temel fark, Mevlânâ'nın Tanrı ve din merkezli, Hick'in ise insan tecrübesi merkezli bir çoğulculuk geliştirmiş olmalarıdır. Çalışma, Mevlânâ'nın yaklaşımının dinin otantik yapısını ve toplumsal-kültürel boyutlarını kuşatan bütüncül bir perspektif sunduğunu; buna karşılık Hick'in çoğulculuğunun modern değerlerle uyumlu olsa da indirgemeci bir yaklaşımla dinin özünü aşındırma tehlikesi barındırdığını ortaya koymaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Din Felsefesi, Mevlânâ, Jonh Hick, Dışlayıcılık, Kapsayıcılık, Çoğulculuk.

Introduction

Religious pluralism has become a central topic of discussion in contemporary philosophy of religion. In today's literature, the phenomenon of religious diversity is generally addressed around the three main paradigms: exclusivism, inclusivism, and pluralism. Within this framework and especially when the relationship between Islam and other religions is at issue, the Sufi tradition and its prominent representatives are frequently referenced. Of these Sufi figures, one of the most frequently cited is Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi.

Religion is a dynamic phenomenon that has attracted the interest of humanity throughout history and continues to be a diverse and complex part of human existence. The reality of religion, which can also be seen as a worldview, a form of life and existence, has a comprehensive and existential influence encompassing many areas of life. In other words, religion is essentially one of the ways in which humans understand existence. Archaeological, anthropological, phenomenological, and historical studies conducted in the field of religion offer an immense contribution to religions in both academic and cultural terms. Religions usually possess fundamental and order-giving character through the central tenets of moral and ethical guidance contained within them. That is, one of the main elements that gives a culture and a civilization its color is its conception of religion. The manifestations of the preconceived notions of religion may be apparent in different ways and forms. These lead to the diversity arising from religion. Religious diversity and differences are initially accepted as enhancing humanity's spiritual and cultural development, as are differences in other fields. However, this has not always been the case. Differences in religious conceptions and "truths" have become a vehicle for a number of philosophical-theological, social, and political factors. On many occasions, these perceived differences have led to conflict, from difference in thought to armed conflict. Therefore, this phenomenon of religious diversity and difference has remained a topic of debate that continues to generate much interest across many fields, including Eastern and Western philosophies and academic investigation.

The subject of religious diversity can be traced back to periods when different religions emerged. Data from the study of the history of religion shows that religions have often been in contact with each other as human societies interact, in positive or negative ways. Each of what Popper termed "the major religions" emerged independently during the period known as the axial age and in societies where a certain religion was dominant or multiple religions were present. Buddhism emerged in an environment where Hinduism already existed. Christianity arose in a society where Judaism was widespread and developed in the world of the Roman Empire, where various pagan elements and belief systems were dominant. Islam, the last major monotheistic religion, emerged in the Arabian Peninsula during a historical period predominantly inhabited by polytheists, but also by Christians, Jews, and Sabians. The emergence of religions in various forms at different times and places is a historical reality.[1] The various religious traditions of the world have approached reality from different perspectives and experiences, developing, through myths and symbols, different theologies, philosophical systems, sacred rituals, art forms, moral values, and lifestyles. The perception of reality in its different forms is a natural evolution of this process. Individuals with the same cultural and historical background may exhibit great differences in terms of psychological make-up, mental capacity, and aesthetic sensibility. This diversity paves the way for humankind to develop differences in religious understanding and experience.[2] Just as different cultures, ethnic structures, geographical features, languages, sciences, arts, and moral teachings on earth should be accepted, few should be classed as inherently right or wrong. Religious diversity may also be viewed from this perspective. If a human is seen not as a member of a specific ethnic group but simply as a human, and if every language is accepted directly as language, not as one language among others, then similarly, religion should be perceived as religion without the need for any comparison. From this viewpoint, living one religion actually means living the essence of all religions. When considered within a broader framework, diversity in religions and other areas should be seen as the way existence manifests in different linguistic, intellectual, and cultural molds[3] and thus religious diversity should be considered a natural phenomenon. Religious diversity, viewed like this gains a range of dimensions when adherents of various religions have to live together, or come into contact with each other. After the Industrial Revolution, during the transition from traditional societal structures to modern society, major changes occurred in many areas of life. Especially in the 20th Century, a significant wave of migration, including Muslims, to Western countries began for various reasons. These migrations have altered the nature of religious debate, often elevating them to a central focus in areas including international politics, theology-philosophy, sociology, and security.[4]

Addressing all these topics here in their entirety would exceed the boundaries of this paper. However, fundamental concepts that form the essence of this subject, such as 'plurality in

1 Rahim Acar, "Dini Çeşitlilik", *Din Felsefesi,* eds. Recep Kılıç et al. (Ankara: Grafiker Yayınları, 2016), 287.

2 Mustafa Eren, *John Hick'te Dini Çoğulculuk* (İstanbul: Otorite Kitap, 2016), 82.

3 Frithjof Schoun, *Varlık, Bilgi ve Din,* trans. Şehabettin Yalçın (İstanbul: İnsan Yayınları, 1997), 126; Id., *Dinlerin Aşkın Birliği*, trans. Yavuz Keskin (İstanbul: Ruh ve Madde Yayınları, 1992), 36.

4 Recep Kılıç, "Küreselleşme ve Din üzerine", *Din Kültür ve Çağdaşlık, 2004 Yılı Kutlu Doğum Sempozyumu Tebliğ ve Müzakereleri*, (Ankara: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Yayınları, 2007), 58.

religion,' 'religious pluralism,' and 'religious diversity,' will be compared within the framework of the understandings of religion expounded by Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi, a 13th Century Sufi thinker living in Anatolia, and John Hick, a contemporary representative of religious pluralism. In the process of globalization, the most prominent paradigm has been 'religious pluralism' which falls under the umbrella of religious diversity. Although the concepts of religious diversity and religious pluralism are sometimes used interchangeably, there is a significant difference between them.

1. Religious Diversity in Mawlana

Ibn Arabi (d. 638/1240), who systematized the subject of religious diversity within the philosophy of Sufism and became a source of inspiration for the mystics and Sufis who came after him, sees God in his unique style as the source of diversity in the universe. Ibn Arabi, who holds a foundational place in the formation of Islamic metaphysical thought, influenced people with vastly different religious beliefs and backgrounds, from Spain to the Far East. Similarly, Mawlana (d. 672/1273), who established and nurtured what is called "Anatolian Irfan" (*gnosis*), a human-centered philosophy, in these lands, paved the way for distinguished thinkers, such as Sadrettin Konevi (d. 673/1274), Yunus Emre (d. 720/1320), Hacı Bektash Veli (d. 669/1271), Niyazi Mısri (d. 1105/1694),and Sheikh Bedrettin (d. 823/1420). Mawlana, who developed a Sufi understanding following the teachings of Ibn Arabi, established a religious discourse based on tolerance and religious diversity, unlike contemporary traditional religious understanding of that period of history. "Religious pluralism," which is contemplated within the context of the issue of religious diversity, generally focuses on the following questions.

> "*In the face of evident religious diversity, the following questions arise: a) is only one religion "true and salvific?"; b) alongside this "true" religion, are other religions also accepted as "true and salvific?"; or c) are all religions equal in terms of their truth value? Among these, if option (a) is accepted, it is termed exclusivism, acceptance of option (b) is called inclusivism and option (c) is defined as religious pluralism*."[5]

The teachings of Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi are as valuable for contemporary humanity as they were esteemed in his own time. Mawlana was a sage, a scholar, and a poet who was nurtured within the cultural basin of Islamic civilization, a civilization whose roots are grounded in the truths of revelation and which was nourished and developed by the springs of knowledge, wisdom, and gnosis ('irfan) flowing from both the West and the East.[6] Undoubtedly, the social, political, and geographical factors of his upbringing were decisive in the formation of Mawlana's timeless, universal system of thought. Many great personalities who changed the course and direction of history captured the spirit of their age. Thus, the region in which Mawlana lived and the cultural elements that gave that region its unique color are of paramount importance.

Political developments of Mawlana's time were also influential in his transformation into a historical personality who has transcended the ages. We know that the period in which Mawlana lived (the 7th century AH / 13th century CE) was a very politically troubled era. In his lifetime,

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5 Recep Kılıç, "Dinî Çoğulculuk mu, Dinde Çoğulculuk mu?", *Dini Araştırmalar Dergisi*, 7/19, (Haziran 2004), 13.

6 Bilal Kuşpınar, "Mevlânâ Celâleddin Rûmî'de Tevhid'in Açılımı ve Yorumu", *Mevlânâ ve İslam*, ed. Bilal Kuşpınar (Konya: Necmettin Erbakan Üniversitesi Kültür Yayınları: 2017), 11.

Asia and Europe and particularly Anatolia and the Islamic world, were in a period of dissolution marked by great difficulties. From the West, the Crusader invasions ravaged Anatolia and the Islamic world, while the Mongols coming from the East destroyed many of the material and spiritual centers of the Islamic world. Alongside this external siege, the internal power struggles of the Anatolian Seljuks and the subsequent Babai Rebellion near Amasya, had resulted in societal pessimism.[7] It was perhaps natural that this pessimism and hopelessness would cast doubt and anxiety upon the future of Islam, which was developing within that threatened civilization. In the face of these developments, Mawlana provided an existential response and demonstrated a great example of struggle in both emotion and thought. Although he was well-versed in the topics debated in the fields of theology (Kalam) and philosophy, when he sought to provide solutions to these issues, he did not follow the normal methods of the theologians and philosophers. Exerting his effort to consider inferential forms smothered in excessively abstract terms was not a valid method for Mawlana[8]. Mawlana's thoughts on religion, which were formed during this troubled historical period, will be discussed within the framework of his understanding of existence, humanity, and God.

1.1. Being

Mawlana addressed a variety of distinct subjects within a framework of unified (tawḥīdī) wholeness. In his system, every being is interrelated within an organic unity. The subject of being, as an ancient topic of philosophy and religion, has always attracted the interest of thinkers, who have asked themselves how existence came to be. Ancient philosophers sought the primal matter of being with a sense of curiosity and wonder. Alongside Greek thinkers who proposed that being originated from water, air, fire, and earth, there were also those who thought that being emanated from a Prime Mover eternally. Theistic religions generally believe that being was created by God's command of "kun fa-yakūn" (Be, and it is). Although such a belief is fundamental to Islam, different perspectives about being have arisen within Islamic thought. Three main schools of thought, the Ittiḥādiyya, (Unionists), the Ḥulūliyya (Incarnationists), and the Ishrāqiyya (Illuminationists) have addressed the God-Existence relationship in different ways. The Ittiḥādiyya claimed that God and man unite; the Ḥulūliyya that God can enter the human heart; and the Ishrāqiyya that being emanates from God as light emanates from the sun. The efforts of the falāsifa (philosophers), who mostly followed a Neoplatonic line, to explain being through the theory of emanation (nazariyyāt al-ṣudūr) are well known. Mawlana, inspired by the views of Sufis such as Hallaj-i Mansur, Bayezid Bistami, and Ibn Arabi, who laid the first seeds of the philosophy of the Oneness of Being (waḥdat al-wujūd) and grounded it in the metaphysics of the Qur'an and ḥadīth, brought depth and vitality to the issue of the oneness of being.[9] Mawlana's deepest and most mysterious elaboration on Tawḥīd (Divine Unity) and being is seen in his interpretations within the framework of the

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7 İdris Türk, "Mevlânâ'nın İlmî-Manevî Şahsiyetinin Oluşumunda Şems'ten Önceki Dönemin Rolü", *Hitit Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi*, 15/30 (Aralık, 2016), 509.

8 Mehmet S. Aydın, "Mevlânâ'da İrade Hürriyeti", *İslam Felsefesi Yazıları*, ed. Mehmet S. Aydın (İstanbul: Ufuk Kitapları, 2000), 96.

9 İbrahim Agâh Çubukçu, "Mevlana ve Felsefesi", *Ankara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi*, 26/1,(Ağustos 1984), 101.

famous metaphysical theory of waḥdat al-wujūd, whose subject, method, and principles were defined by Ibn Arabi and systematized by his student, Sadreddin Konevi, and which was debated for many years within the gnostic tradition.[10]

Mawlana sprinkled his views about being, life, humanity, and religion throughout all his works, but he particularly embroidered them, stitch by stitch, in an artistic form in the *Fîhi Mâ Fîh*, the *Mathnawī*, and the *Dîvân-ı Kebîr*. This study will attempt to explain his views on religious diversity and tolerance, primarily by providing examples from these three works. Mawlana's concepts of life, humanity, and religion are based on being. As religion and life emerge from the bosom of being and continue there, the breadth of the concept of being reflects his conception of life and religion. According to Mawlana, the world of being is too vast to be perceived by the senses, and its source is not the material world but the realm of the unseen (ʻālam al-ghayb), which is broader and more satisfying than the world that is felt and imagined.[11]

> *"God, reveal to our soul [can] that station where speech appears without letters.*
> *So that the pure soul [can] may make its head its foot and run to that distant and vast plain of non-existence.*
> *The world of non-existence is a very vast realm. This fantasy and existence receive nourishment from that realm, emerge from it and are sustained by it".*[12]

God is the center of the circle of being, the beginning of life, and the One who gives direction and power to the flow of being. The perceived world is a reflection of God's creativity and will, and the place where His beauty and majesty are manifested. The soul (*jān)*, a fragment of spirit and a drop from the divine ocean of life was, before taking the form of material life and entering the mold of the body, free from the anxiety of the self, in a state of spiritual journey, and blessed with God's infinite grace and favor.[13] Mawlana indicates that form is merely an appearance and that one who transcends form can comprehend the Oneness of Being. He describes every object in nature as a messenger of God, even as an appearance of His Essence. According to Mawlana, being began to be disclosed through God's command "Be." In truth, everything is transient with the exception of God, who is permanent. This world is like an illusion or a shadow. As humans discover themselves and strive to become worthy of the essences within themselves, they begin to see the Oneness of Being (waḥdat al-wujūd).[14] Waḥdat al-wujūd is generally a metaphysical construct formed around the idea that the only reality and truth to which the term "Being" can be absolutely applied in the true sense is that the sole true being is God, and all other beings or so-called beings, or in philosophical terms, contingent beings, are nothing but a nonentity or a shadow beside that Supreme Being. In Sufi understanding, waḥdat al-wujūd is a genuine understanding of Tawhid (Divine Unity), a concept, which Western authors and philosophers who study this subject have sometimes expressed as monism.[15]

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10 Kuşpınar, "Mevlânâ Celâleddin Rûmî'de Tevhid'in Açılımı ve Yorumu", 32.

11 Rahman Moshtagh Mehr, "Mevlânâ'ya Göre Varlık ve İnsan Hayatı Kavramı II", trans. Kadir Turgut, *İ.Ü. Şarkiyat Mecmuası*, 20, (Haziran 2012, 175.

12 Mevlânâ Celaleddin-i Rumî, *Mesnevî I*, trans. Veled Çelebi İzbudak, ed. Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı, (İstanbul: MEB Yayınları, 1991), 248-249.

13 Mehr, "Mevlânâ'ya Göre Varlık", 176.

14 Çubukçu, "Mevlana ve Felsefesi", 103.

15 Kuşpınar, "Mevlânâ Celâleddin Rûmî'de Tevhid'in Açılımı ve Yorumu", 32.

According to Mawlana, the essence and the core of being are one. There are many paths leading to the Kaaba, and if one looks at the paths, separation is great and infinite; but if one looks at the goal: the purpose, the destination is one. There is no being except God. He is the One Absolute, and Necessary Being.[16] Mawlana illustrates this subject in the *Mathnawī* as follows:

> "*If ten lamps are present in one place, each is distinct from the other in appearance. If you turn your face from their light, undoubtedly it is impossible to distinguish the light of one from the other. If you count a hundred apples and a hundred quinces, each one is separate. If you squeeze them, a hundred no longer remain; they all become one*."[17]

Mawlana elaborated on various aspects of the principle "unity in multiplicity",in classical Sufi thought. This approach also forms the basis of his understanding of humanity. Human beings are one in their original creation. However, they differ in their color, geography, languages, races, lifestyles, customs, and traditions. Here, diversity and pluralism manifest in the created world, while unity and oneness reside in the essence of the Creator, the Being. In this respect, the whole of humanity, whether believing or non-believing, from eternity to eternity, is the servant of God, the Infinite Being. God is one and unique in His essence, and this oneness and uniqueness are exclusive to Him, beyond quality and quantity.[18] Mawlana says that the ability to see the unity in being can only be achieved through the purity of the heart's eye.

1.2. Human

Mawlana's *Mathnawi* includes numerous examples that illustrate the positioning of humans in a special place within the hierarchy of being. According to Mawlana, although humans possess the potential to elevate themselves and even rise above the angels, they are also incomplete beings in some respects. As imperfect and limited, humans struggle to comprehend God's existence and his truths.[19] In essence, humans are great beings, and everything is inherent within them. However, the darkness and veils do not allow what is inside to be seen. Some philosophers have defined humans as speaking animals with an animalistic side that is nourished by lustful desires. The nourishment of their essence, that is, their human side, is knowledge, wisdom, love, and the beauty of God. The animalistic side of humans flees from the Divine, Haqq, while the human side flees from the world. Every human is a complex universe. Humans consist of thought and love; the rest is flesh and nerves.[20] According to Mawlana, transcending this animalistic aspect and becoming a child of heaven is only possible through love and purity of the heart. Mawlana explains the sparkle of the heart through the famous competition between the Chinese and Roman artists, which he relates in the *Mathnawi*.

> "*O son. Roman artists are Sufis. They have no lessons to be memorized; they have no books. But they have thoroughly polished their hearts, having been purified from desire, greed, miserliness, and hatred. The purity and clarity of the mirror are the attribute of the heart. Countless limitless forms can be reflected in the heart. Here, the intellect either falls silent or is left bewildered. The reason is as follows: is the heart God,*

16 Mevlânâ, *Fîhi Mâfih*, trans. Meliha Ülker Anbarcıoğlu, (İstanbul: MEB Yayınları, 1969), 68.

17 Mevlânâ, *Mesnevî I*, 54-55.

18 Kuşpınar, "Mevlânâ Celâleddin Rûmî'de Tevhid'in Açılımı ve Yorumu", 24.

19 Yusuf Tan, *Mevlânâ Düşüncesinde Tanrı - İnsan İlişkisi* (Isparta, Süleyman Demirel Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Master Thesis, 2012), 108-109.

20 Mevlânâ, "Preface", *Fîhi Mâfih*, xıv.

> *or is God the heart? Every reflected image, except the heart, which is both numbered and numberless (both immersed in multiplicity and finding unity), passes away and is not eternal... Those who have polished their hearts are freed from color and scent. In every breath, they effortlessly perceive beauty. They have abandoned the image on the shell of knowledge and have raised the banner of direct vision ('Ayn al-Yaqīn). They have abandoned thought, found the sea of familiarity, and have been annihilated in recognition*."[21]

As is evident, when one attains the state of witnessing Being and His unity in the purity and brightness of one's heart,the transient appearance of the human and the universe vanishes.[22] Unity is perceived. It is understood that everything gains existence through God. Only humans are the recipients of God's love. As humans know themselves and their place in the cosmos and perform their actions for the sake of God, they are elevated. The human who loves God and disciplines themselves attains the station of being God's beloved. In the fervent moments of love for God, the human, transported beyond himself or herself, sees the unity in being. They grasp that everything other than God is like a shadow or an illusion. In this state, the lover and the beloved become one in being.[23] The human is the only being in existence that is the recipient of all God's attributes. They are God's astrolabe. Since the Almighty God created humans from His own knowledge, as the knower, the knowing, and the known, humans, in the astrolabe of their own existence, occasionally see God's manifestation and unique beauty. Everything is within the human. They are the mirror of God's Beauty (Jamāl).[24] Therefore, they should seek every desire from within themselves. Mawlana interprets the teaching in religious texts regarding the human as God's vicegerent, a noble being, the best of stature (aḥsan-i taqwīm) and created in His own image, as the human being created as a place of manifestation for the divine names and attributes. According to Mawlana, within the hierarchy of being, the human is like a mirror that can directly perceive the divine names and attributes.[25] Mawlana expresses this human characteristic with the following statements:

> *"O you, who are the copy of God's book, and O you, who are the mirror of the Beauty of the Sovereign! There is nothing in the universe except you. Seek every desire from within yourself, for everything is you."*[26]

One of the most important elements of Mawlana's discourse on humanity is the issue of the unity of humanity. Mawlana, who described himself as "The Slave of the Qur'an and the Dust on the Path of Muhammad," emphasized the unity of humanity and also that the human, as a being, is worthy of respect and love. He reads the Qur'an's principle of tawhid (oneness) through this philosophy of unity. He demonstrated the importance of the Covenant by stating that all humanity was present together at the moment of the Covenant (*Mīthāq*), and that its origin is one and the same.[27]

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21 Mevlânâ, *Mesnevî I*, 278-279.

22 Çubukçu, "Mevlana ve Felsefesi", 109.

23 Çubukçu, "Mevlana ve Felsefesi", 104.

24 Mevlânâ, "Preface", *Fîhi Mâfih*, , xıv.

25 Hüseyin Kurt, "Mevlana'da İnsanlığın Birliği ve Diyalog", *Harran Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Uluslararası Mevlânâ ve Mevlevîlik Sempozyumu*, *Mevlânâ Celaleddin Rumi'nın 800. doğum yıldönümü anısına, Bildiriler II*, eds. Abdurrahman Elmalı, Ali Bakka (Şanlıurfa: Harran Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi, 2007), 167.

26 Mevlânâ, *Fîhi Mâfih*, 121.

27 Kurt, "Mevlana'da İnsanlığın Birliği ve Diyalog", 168.

In Mawlana's view, the path to comprehending the unity of humanity passes through love for humankind; "Love all people so that you may always find yourself among flowers and rose gardens. If you consider them all enemies, the image of enemies will come before your eyes, and it will be as if you are walking among thorns and snakes, day and night."[28] For Mawlana, the essential matter is the human being. According to him, to love humans is to love God. The human is the microcosm, God is the macrocosm. Mawlana, through the experiences he acquired, grasps the essence of humanity. When describing humans, he uses the language of love. The essence is love. The only thing that makes a human actually human is love. Mawlana's perspective on humans is pragmatic and realistic; he accepts humans with their faults and merits.[29]

> "*Through love, bitter things become sweet; through love, copper turns into gold. Through love, dregs and muddy water become clear and pure; through love, ailments find healing. Through love, the dead are revived; through love, kings become slaves. This love is also the result of knowledge. How could someone captivated by absurdities ever sit upon such a throne?*"[30]

In Mawlana's philosophy, the acceptance of human unity and love for humanity leads us to respect all people without discrimination. The human is worthy of respect because they carry within them the breath of the infinite. For this to manifest in action, they must be shown respect. The reason for respecting humans is that they possess a heart, understood either in a literal sense or as a metaphor for emotions and empathy.[31]

> *"Although the Kaaba is His house of grace and bounty, my body is also His house of secrets. God is traditionally believed to have inspired the construction of the Kaaba, but the builders did not themselves enter it. However, to this house my body no one has come except that eternally living God. You have seen me, so you will know that you have seen God, and you have circumambulated the Kaaba of truth, the true Kaaba. To serve me is to obey God and to praise Him. Do not think that the Divine is separate from me. Open your eyes wide and look at me in such a way that you see the divine light in the human*."[32]

Mawlana says that the first step in respecting others is not to marginalize them. Serving them is the second step. He loves and deems humans worthy of service, because they are human. Service, as a requirement of human respect, is considered unconditional in Mawlana's teachings. One who is not prepared for such service cannot be a guide for humanity or a leader in the caravan of eternity.[33] Without grasping the integrity of Mawlana's thought, specifically addressing his views on any subject can often be misleading. Therefore, regardless of the topic, it is necessary to consider the roots of his thoughts within the framework of the unity of being, humanity, and God.

1.3. Concept of God

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28 Mevlânâ, *Fîhi Mâfih*, 306.

29 Kurt, "Mevlana'da İnsanlığın Birliği ve Diyalog", 173.

30 Mevlânâ, Celaleddin Rumî, *Mesnevî II*, trans. Veled Çelebi İzbudak, ed. Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı, (İstanbul: MEB Yayınları, 1991), 117.

31 Kurt, "Mevlana'da İnsanlığın Birliği ve Diyalog", 170.

32 Mevlânâ, *Mesnevî II*, 172.

33 Kurt, "Mevlana'da İnsanlığın Birliği ve Diyalog", 170.

The focal point of Mawlana's understanding of religion centers on his conception of God (Allah). For him, God is the Truth. Mawlana's efforts are directed toward attaining the truth. On the path to attaining the Truth, acts of worship and other religious rituals are the necessary steps along the way.[34] For Kurt, Mawlana does not seek unity in the form of religions. Form is like the vessels of various colors and patterns in which water-carriers place water. A wise person does not look at the vessels but rather at what they contain. Mawlana is seeking water. He also does not wish to get stuck in the ice. After all, when it melts, does ice not become water? So, in Mawlana's view it is neither correct nor necessary to unite the ice or the vessels. What is necessary is to be one in the water, in the essence.[35] In accordance with the theory of the Oneness of Being (waḥdat al-wujūd), develops a holistic outlook and hence looks at everything in life from that universal outlook. Mawlana, who defends the universality of the religion of love, believed that the essence of all religions has emanated from love. All prophets, including the Prophet of Islam, are prophets of love. From this perspective, it may be suggested that Mawlana believed all religions were the same and accepted the religion of love as the one true religion. The thought that Mawlana referenced and was influenced by on this subject is based on the teachings of the Oneness of Being, divine love, and the one religion, which existed before Attar and was later systematized by Ibn Arabi. Quoting Mawlana's statement - "The seventy-two faiths and sects, in reality, do not exist; I swear by God that all of these are within me"[36], Tan claims Mawlana argues that all religions converge into a single religion, that the name of this religion is the religion of love. In order to justify this view, Mawlana also explained the reality and reasons for religious differences. According to Mawlana, everyone's conception of God is different, and God is given different names, but God and His message are the same everywhere. In the belief of a universal religion, people should meet on common ground, and the world that appears to be full of opposition and difference should become truly understandable. Therefore, Mawlana, who finds it wrong to limit religion only to shari'ah, believes that the path of love is the only way out. Thus, no religion has priority over another because they all arise from the same universal source, namely love.[37] Mawlana considered the subject of religion of Islam within the framework of shari'ah , tariqa (the path), and haqiqa (the Truth). In the introduction of the fifth volume of the *Mathnawi*, Mawlana clarified the distinction between these three concepts, particularly between religion and shari'ah, as follows:

> "*Shari'ah is like a candle; it shows the way. However, holding the candle does not mean the path has been traversed. When you set out on the path, that journey is the tariqa. When you reach your goal, this is the haqiqa. Therefore, it has been said "if the truths were to be revealed, the sharias and paths would become invalid*"."[38]

In this volume, Mawlana, discusses in detail the concepts of sharīʿah, ṭarīqa, and ḥaqīqa, which together constitute aspects of religion. This perspective excludes all kinds of reductionist

[34] Mustafa Tekin, "Mevlâna Celâleddin Rûmî (ö.1273)'nin Din Anlayışı", *Tasavvuf İlmi ve Akademik Araştırma Dergisi*, 3/7, 2001, 269.

[35] Kurt, "Mevlana'da İnsanlığın Birliği ve Diyalog", 168.

[36] qtd. in Aysel Tan, *Bir Din Felsefesi Problemi Olarak Mevlana'da Dinî Tecrübe* (Ankara: Gece Kitaplığı, 2020), 138.

[37] Tan, *Bir Din Felsefesi Problemi Olarak Mevlana'da Dinî Tecrübe*. 138-139.

[38] Mevlânâ, Celaleddin Rumî, *Mesnevî V*, trans. Veled Çelebi İzbudak, ed. Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı, (İstanbul: MEB Yayınları, 1991), i-ii. (Dibace)

approaches and presents a unifying (tawḥīdī) perspective that addresses religion in all its dimensions. The shari'ah, as understood by those who stress only the exoteric or legal aspect of religion, is like a soulless heart. The discerning person (ʿārif), is the one who comprehends the deep spirit behind the shari'ah. The ʿārifwho comprehends this is the one who discerns the essence of the Divine (al-Haqq), its manifestations, its names and attributes, and the boundaries of divine decree and destiny. These are achieved through gnosis and ma'rifah, the self-experiential-illuminative knowledge of an Arif. Then the essence of shari'ah becomes asceticism (zuhd) and piety (taqwā). Therefore, according to the gnostic tradition, curbing the desires of the self and worldly wants comes at the beginning of worship. The person who becomes conscious of asceticism and piety is compared to one who sows seeds in their field. The person who attains the experience of knowing God (maʿrifatullāh) is in the position of one who harvests the crops of these sown seeds[39]. At the same time, that person possesses the ability to view all issues, including religion, universally. This is the truth behind Mawlana's understanding of religion and the world, which has transcended ages and acquired a universal quality.

Mawlana, who captured the universal dimension of religion within an Islamic framework and addressed this topic in nearly all of his works, encapsulated this universal perspective with his words: "Do not despise any unbeliever. What if they die as a Muslim? What knowledge do you have of the end of their life that you turn away from them completely?".[40] While expressing such thoughts, Mawlana establishes the theological foundation of his ideas by also referencing the Quranic verse: "If your Lord had willed, He would have made mankind one community; but they will not cease to differ." (Quran 11:118.) Proceeding from the intellectual ground formed by Quranic metaphysics and with the self-confidence he possessed in Islam, Mawlana kept communication channels open with all adherents of different religions and other people. This attitude is that of a Muslim who is always open to universality. Those who do not demonstrate this attitude fail to recognize the universality of Islam. Mawlana was aware of the occasionally fanatical attitude of some Muslims, which caused him pain and discomfort, and he struggled against this during his lifetime. Mawlana opposed all forms of fanaticism. In his philosophy, fanaticism is dangerous, regardless of the religion or other system it is present in. By inviting adherents of other religions to combat fanaticism too, Mawlana demonstrated true humanism and universality.[41]

2. Mawlana's Perspective on Other Religions

One of the most important Sufis undoubtedly referenced in the contemporary philosophy of religion in terms of religious diversity is Mawlana. Considering the relationships between religions in general, and Islam's relations with other religions in particular, it is apparent that many Sufis tend to be more truthful to their primary sources, the Qur'an and the Hadith. Carlo

[39] Fatma Bayhan, *Dini Çeşitlilik Problemi Açısından Mevlânâ Düşüncesi*, (İzmir, Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, 2012), 108-109.

[40] Mevlânâ, Celaleddin Rumî, Mesnevî VI, trans. Veled Çelebi İzbudak, ed. Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı, (İstanbul: MEB Yayınları, 1991), 377.

[41] Sönmez, Vecihi, "Evrensel İslam Düşüncesinde Mevlana Örneği", *Oş Devlet Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 22, (2017), 69.

Carretto's statement,[42] "Even if theology divides, mysticism unites the adherents of all religions, and when a certain level of being (spiritual perfection) is reached, all 'believers' experience the same reality," is frequently cited on this matter. One of the most important factors behind Mawlana's prominence among Sufis is his universal invitation. Reminding the controversial discussion, "Come, come, whoever you are, come again", attributed to him[43], the inclusive invitation emphasized in Mawlana's sayings can be found in numerous examples throughout his entire corpus that convey this meaning.[44] In the relationships between religions, three perspectives, exclusivism, inclusivism, and pluralism, have become generally accepted. Researchers working on the subject of Mawlana's understanding of religion have conducted their research from the perspective of this triple paradigm.

Known for his works on Mawlana and regarded as one of the most eminent Mathnawīhāns, Şefik Can based his perspective on Mawlana's statement that "Separations are in the journey, not in the path itself," indicating that Mawlana did not consider all religions identical but believed the truth of religions to be one. According to Şefik Can, the reality is that since everything and all beings are manifestations of the divine attributes and names, things that appear to be opposed to one another are grounded in a wisdom beyond the grasp of our intellect. Everything is, in essence, under the dominion of the Divine. Everything is from the Truth. Every follower of religion and denomination is likewise fulfilling God's command, walking on the path of destiny drawn by Him. Given this truth, we have no right to say anything against anyone. Each adherent of any sect considers his own belief correct, even while it differs from others, and has walked along the path he deemed true.[45] Mawlana explained this issue in the following verses from the *Mathnawī*:

> *"Hidden stairways exist in the world, leading step by step up to the heavens.*
> *Every cloud has its own stairway, every journey, its own sky.*
> *Each one is unaware of the other's state. It is a vast realm, without beginning or end."*[46]

These lines suggest that, regardless of the religion a person belongs to, each believes only his own religion to be true, and considers those of other religions to be astray. Mawlana, however, does not think in this way. He believes that, regardless of religion, a person is on the path seeking the Truth; that is, the person is walking along the way destined and appointed for them by the Almighty. For this reason, Mawlana does not despise anyone outside of Islam, nor does he accuse anyone of unbelief. In this sense, religions outside Islam are not the True Religion, but they are religions willed and decreed by the Truth. As Mawlana indicated, the Muslim worshipping in a mosque, the Christian performing the liturgy in a church, the Jew turning devoutly to God in a synagogue—all of them are thinking of God. To separate people, their beliefs, and their paths according to their religions, such as Muslims, Christians, Jews, Buddhists,

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42 in Eva de Vitray Meyerovitch, *İslâm'ın Güler Yüzü*, trans. Cemal Aydın (İstanbul: Şule Yayınları, 1998), 11.

43 For further discussion, see Yakup Şafak, "Mevlânâ'ya Atfedilen 'Yine Gel...' Rubâîsine Dair", *Tasavvuf: İlmî ve Akademik Araştırma Dergisi* 10/24 (2009), 75-80.

44 Rıfat Atay, "Dinsel Çoğulculuk Açısından FarklıMevlana Okumaları: Bir Çözümleme Denemesi", *Harran Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi*, 16, (Temmuz-Aralık 2006), 79.

45 Şefik Can, "Mevlânâ'ya Göre Din İman Küfür", *V. Milli Mevlânâ Kongresi*, (Konya: Selçuk Üniversitesi Yayınları, 1991), 20.

46 Mevlânâ, *Mesnevî V*, 210.

or Magians, is a matter of form. The Almighty has spread His table not only for Muslims but also for non-Muslims, even for the unbelievers, nourishing them generously. He does not divide them as believers and unbelievers.[47] Mawlana said:

> *"There is a realm beyond both unbelief and Islam, and in that void, we have a passion.*
> *When the gnostic reaches that place, he gives up his head; for there, neither unbelief nor Islam has any standing.*[48]
> *At this time, the earth is like an egg; the bird within the egg is imprisoned in utter darkness, its wings broken, humiliated, and despised.*
> *Know that unbelief and faith are like the white and the yolk of this egg, for a barrier separates them, and they do not intermingle.*
> *By His grace and bounty He took the egg beneath His wings, so that unbelief vanished, faith vanished as well, and the bird of unity suddenly emerged from the egg*."[49]

In his readings of Mawlana, Şefik Can frequently emphasized such passages, highlighting the profound tolerance toward religious diversity that Mawlana espoused. Şefik Can's view was that Mawlana did not regard all religions as identical; rather, he regarded the truth of all religions as one.[50] Can's approach has been considered to support the exclusionary paradigm (exclusivism) among contemporary philosophers of religion. On the one hand, Şefik Can maintained an absolutist and exclusivist stance by asserting that Islam invalidates other religions, while on the other hand, he also stressed Mawlana's call, that one must look not to temples but to hearts, and that one must not become fixated on outward forms and stigmatize people.

Examining Islam's view of other religions from a different perspective in the works of Ibn Arabi, Mawlana, and Yunus Emre, Cafer Sadık Yaran referred to the lamp and light metaphor in the *Mathnawī*, taking as his basis the statement "The lamps are different, but the light is the same." Like Can, Yaran also agrees with the idea that "Separations are in the journey, not in the path itself."[51]

> *"Moses—you too are Moses, and Pharaoh as well. Seek within yourself both of these enemies.*
> *Moses will remain in religious teachings until the Day of Resurrection. The light is always that same light, not another light; what changes is the lamp.*
> *This lamp and wick are different, but the light is not another light, it is always from that world.*
> *If you look at the lamp, it perishes; for duality and confinement within number belong to the lamp.*
> *But if you look at the light, you are freed from duality and from the material limitations of the corporeal world that has a beginning and an end.*
> *O essence of existence, the opposition between the believer, the Magian, and the Jew is entirely due to perspective and vision."*[52]

Here, Mawlana emphasized that the ultimate source of religions is God. Although the prophets are different, the divine light they radiate is one. Even though different prophets were chosen and sent at different times, even though some differences emerged under the influence of

47 Can, "Mevlânâ'ya Göre Din İman Küfür", 22.

48 Mevlânâ, *Dîvân-Kebir IV*, trans. Abdülbâkî Gölpınarlı, (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Yayınları, 2011), 64.

49 Mevlanâ, *Dîvân-Kebir IV*, 81.

50 Can, "Mevlânâ'ya Göre Din İman Küfür", 21; Atay, "Mevlana Okumaları", 84.

51 Atay, "Mevlana Okumaları", 85-86.

52 Mevlânâ, *Mesnevî II*, 101.

changing historical, social, cultural, and geographical conditions, the essence and radiance of the divine message will remain forever one. According to Mawlana, everyone may preserve the external form of their own religion. On the condition of affirming unity in essence, there is no harm in remaining friendly with the adherents of other religions. In response to the evaluations that attribute a pluralistic approach to Mawlana, it should be noted that, although authors who regard him as pluralistic may understand this statement differently, when one considers its context in the *Mathnawī*, the essential emphasis here is on the sameness of the essence of religions.[53] It is thought that the material that allows Mawlana to be interpreted as pluralistic is not sufficient to regard him as a wholly radical pluralist in the manner of John Hick. Therefore, it might be thought that Mawlana is closer to an inclusivist than to the pluralist paradigm.[54] Beyond those who interpret Mawlana as closer to the inclusivist paradigm, there have also been those who, in parallel with interpretations in the West, have regarded him as a radical pluralist. One of those who interpret Mawlana within the pluralist paradigm is Mahmut Aydın. Aydın, by referring to examples and metaphors used by Mawlana in his works, such as the "Elephant Story," "Moses and the Shepherd," and the stories of the "Four Strangers" and the "Grapes," and grounding them as well in Quranic references, interprets Mawlana as a thoroughgoing pluralist. Aydın, too, seeks to ground Mawlana's view of religious pluralism in the incomprehensibility of God.[55] The notion that God cannot be fully comprehended through human categories is one that contemporary advocates of religious pluralism seek to illustrate by appealing not only to the lamp-and-light metaphor but also to the frequently cited Elephant Story. The story appears in the *Mathnawi* as follows.[56]

> *"The Indians brought an elephant into a dark barn to show it to the people. Many men gathered in that pitch-dark place to see the animal.*
> *However, the barn was so dark that it was impossible to see. In that darkness, where one could not see even a hand before the eyes, they began to touch the elephant with their hands.*
> *One of them happened to grasp its trunk and said, 'The elephant resembles a water-pipe.' Another placed his hand upon its ear and said, 'The elephant is like a fan.'*
> *Another had his hand upon its leg and said, 'The elephant is like a pillar.' Yet another touched its back and declared, 'The elephant is like a throne.'*
> *Each one, according to the part they had touched and how they had imagined it, began to describe the elephant. Their words and opinions thus became contradictory: one said it was like a branch; another said it was like an alif. Had each of them held a candle in his hand, their differences in speech would not have remained.*
> *The eye of sensation resembles only the palm; for the palm cannot grasp the whole of the elephant at once. The eye that sees the sea is one thing; the eye that sees the foam is another. Leave the foam aside and look with the eye of the sea."*[57]

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53 Cafer Sadık Yaran, "İbn Arabi, Mevlana ve Yunus Emre'ye Göre "Öteki"nin Durumu", *İslam ve Öteki*, ed. Cafer Sadık Yaran, (İstanbul: Rağbet Yayınları, 2018), 390.

54 Atay, "Mevlana Okumaları", 91; Bayhan, *Dini Çeşitlilik Problemi*, 60.

55 qtd. in Atay, "Mevlana Okumaları", 96.

56 Atay, "Mevlana Okumaları", 88.

57 Mevlânâ, Celaleddin Rumî, *Mesnevî III*, trans. Veled Çelebi İzbudak, ed. Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı, (İstanbul: MEB Yayınları, 1991), 101-102.

This is a stern critique by Mawlana against those who rely for reaching the knowledge of the Truth on their sense perceptions and/or partial intellect or reason More explicitly, it means that God cannot be confined within the molds of any religious tradition or culture and that everyone experiences Him through their own cultural limitations and linguistic frameworks. In other passages of the *Mathnawī*, too, there are expressions that support the pluralist thesis. Mawlana asserts that the prophets conveyed in different forms to different communities, the same light they had received from the same source, and that making distinctions among them or considering one faith superior to another constitutes a problematic approach from a religious perspective. According to Mawlana, religious diversity arises both from the ontological status of God and from His will. God has clearly willed the plurality of religions, so that, as expressed also in the Quran, people may compete in doing good and thereby come to a deeper understanding of God.[58] Although Mawlana's view on religious diversity is often evaluated from the perspective of contemporary philosophy of religion within the paradigms of exclusivism, inclusivism, and pluralism, it can be thought that he possessed a deeper and more holistic perspective that transcends these paradigms. The seemingly contradictory attitudes of the Sufis in their discourse and practice, such as an exclusivist, an inclusivist, and a pluralist, stem from their dialectic of the outward (ẓāhir) and the inward (bāṭin). The inclusive and pluralist approaches observable among Sufis are not mutually irreconcilable approaches. On the outward level, at the level of reason, within the social and political sphere, and under the responsibility of the intellectual, as a religious authority serving as a potential means of guidance for people, or, as in the case of Al-Ghazali, as an adviser trusted by statesmen confronted with the attacks of other religions and harmful movements, they developed a discourse corresponding to exclusivist and inclusivist approaches. However, on the level of the heart, and thus not of the outward but the inward, and in terms of the individual, as love and gnosis, they adopted a stance toward the "other" corresponding to the pluralist paradigm.[59] Here, an important detail requires attention. The Sufis, mystics, and poets possess a pluralist outlook within their own distinctive approach. They did not base their beliefs on rigid rationalist, nihilist, or agnostic foundations, but rather on the doctrine of the unity of being, connected to esoteric experiential states as well as on the ethics and metaphysics of love as a manifestation of the transcendent within human hearts.[60] Mawlana viewed existence not with the eye of the flesh but with the eye of the heart. He declared repeatedly that the differences and separations evident to the eye of the flesh disappear when viewed with the eye of the heart. This is the essence of his call to vision. Although the historical authenticity of the attribution remains debated, the famous quatrain ascribed to Mawlana bears the quality of a universal message, from past to present.

"Come, come, whoever you may be, come!
Whether you are an unbeliever or an idol-worshipper, come!
This is not the lodge of despair,

58 Atay, "Mevlana Okumaları", 95.

59 Yaran, "İbn Arabi, Mevlana ve Yunus Emre'ye Göre "Öteki"nin Durumu", 414.

60 Yaran, "İbn Arabi, Mevlana ve Yunus Emre'ye Göre "Öteki"nin Durumu", 416.

Even if you have broken your repentance a hundred times, still come!"[61]

Mawlana calls all humanity, regardless of religion, color, or language, to this lodge. In essence, this appeal forms a remedy for the existential crises of meaning and despair, and the temporal maladies of nausea, fear, and trembling, experienced when people have lost all hope. With this summons, Mawlana calls for the breaking of all chains and walls that divide people and that also serve to prevent individuals from encountering their essence; he calls everyone to goodness, righteousness, and truth. This is what he means to travel among the seventy-two nations while remaining grounded.[62]

> *"Like a compass, with one foot I stand firmly upon the sharia, while with the other I traverse the seventy-two nations.*
> *The seventy-two nations each hear their own mystery from us. We are like the reed flute that unites two hundred nations and sects in a single melody*
> *"*[63]

With the compass metaphor, Mawlana, anticipating the judgments and accusations that might be directed against this vast, inclusive, and pluralist thought, clearly sets forth his own religious view and stance.

3. John Hick and Religious Pluralism

In today's Islamic world, thinkers including Frithjof Schuon, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, and William C. Chittick, drawing upon the flexible religious understandings of the Sufis, assert what may be called the transcendent unity of religions of a metaphysical-mystical character. In the contemporary Western world, there is liberal philosophical religious pluralism placing God at the center of human existence and being, as supported by P. Tillich and N. Samart, and influenced by Humanist, Buddhist, or Marxist traditions. However, there is also philosophical religious pluralism, led by John Hick and W. C. Smith. The Western-oriented religious pluralism represented by Tillich, Hick, and Smith is closely connected to Christian theology.[64] The pluralist paradigm of Hick and like-minded theologians and philosophers differs fundamentally from the conception of the so-called traditional school holding the view of transcendental unity of religions, represented by Rene Guenon, Schuon, and Nasr. According to this school, "Absolute Truth" is one and unchanging. If so, why do different religions claim to speak of the same "Absolute Truth"? The "Absolute Truth" is fixed, yet it expresses itself in different times, cultures, and forms. According to another understanding, the Absolute, with its boundless absoluteness, cannot be contained in the non-absolute world. To remain in communication with human beings, it must assume an absolute form, a mode of manifestation, a style, and the garb of a doctrine. Consequently, it is unnecessary to assert that the traditional school regards religions merely as forms. The traditional school also speaks of the very essence of a divine

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61 Mevlânâ Celaleddin-i Rumî, *Rubailer*, trans. Abdülbâkî Gölpınarlı, (İstanbul: İnkılap, 1969), 23. For further discussion, see Yakup Şafak, "Mevlânâ'ya Atfedilen 'Yine Gel...' Rubâîsine Dair", *Tasavvuf: İlmî ve Akademik Araştırma Dergisi* 10/24 (2009), 75-80.

62 Kurt, "Mevlana'da İnsanlığın Birliği ve Diyalog", 171.

63 Bediuzzaman Furuzanfer, *Mevlâna Celâleddîn*, trans. F. Nafiz Uzluk, (İstanbul: MEB Yayınları, 1985), iv.

64 Latif Tokat, "Dini Çoğulculuk Hangi Açıdan Mümkündür", *Milel ve Nihal İnanç Kültür ve Mitoloji Araştırmaları Dergisi,* 4/2, (Ocak 2007), 51.

reality beyond forms and modes of manifestation. Thus, this school maintains that the unity of religions must be sought not in phenomena but in the noumenon. In this sense, all divine religions are accepted as one.[65] There is, therefore, a clear difference in principle between the pluralist paradigm represented by Hick and the understanding of multiplicity in the traditional school and of that expounded by the Sufis. Hick locates the source of difference in human experience and seeks to arrive at pluralism through an inductive method where the decisive element is the human being. According to the understanding of the traditional school, however, the primary source of pluralism is "Absolute Truth" itself. That is, "Absolute Truth" manifests itself in different forms and times—a feature that is not philosophical but rather religious.[66]

The religious pluralism that Hick proposed is an approach that accepts all religions, especially the major living religious traditions, as equally valid paths to God. This understanding rejects the truth claims, and values differences between religions. The pluralist paradigm of religion asserts that the ways leading to God are more numerous than the stars. According to Hick,

> "*the great world faiths constitute different human conceptions and perceptions of, and a response to, the Ultimate Reality. In each of the great traditions, the transformation of human existence from self-centeredness to reality-centeredness is explicitly present; as far as human experience can disclose, it is present to an almost equal degree. Therefore, the religious traditions should be regarded as spheres or paths of alternative soteriological teachings available for men and women to find salvation and liberation*."[67]

In the philosophical sense, "religious pluralism" deals with the relationship between competing religions or Shari'ahs. Theoretically, the great world religions constitute different apprehensions of the one ultimate divine reality, expressed through diverse concepts, and represent the various human responses to it.[68]

Besides Hick, there are also other thinkers who seem to advocate this pluralistic position. The statements of the famous Russian writer Tolstoy, which set forth his understanding of religion, also support the paradigm of religious pluralism. Tolstoy questions the existence of so many different religions and states that we have no right to declare one of them on the basis of preference as the true religion. In this context, people when evaluating external forms of religion tend to regard their own beliefs as salvation and those of others as a source of suffering.

According to Tolstoy, this is a mistake, because although religions differ in their external forms, they point to a common essence in their fundamental principles, which represents true religion.[69] Religious pluralism is also in harmony with today's broader perspective of humanity, conceptualized in terms such as multiculturalism, coexistence, tolerance, relativism, and postmodernism. It seeks to resolve the problematic claims of diverse religious truths and absolutes through democracy. Yet here a distinction must be made; there is a significant difference between cultural pluralism, which allows different religions to be freely expressed, and "metaphysical pluralism," which makes no distinction and accepts the truth claims of every

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65 Eren, *John Hick'te Dini Çoğulculuk*, 113-114.

66 Eren, *John Hick'te Dini Çoğulculuk*, 114.

67 John Hick, *Problems of Religious Pluralism*, (New York: St. Martin Press, 1985), 47.

68 Eren, *John Hick'te Dini Çoğulculuk*, 108.

69 Leo Nikolayeviç Tolstoy, *Din Nedir?,* trans. Murat Çiftkaya (İstanbul: Kaknüs Yayınları, 1998), 59.

religion as equally valid. What renders the former correct does not logically necessitate that the latter also be accepted as correct.[70]

Philosophically grounding religious pluralism, Hick placed not religion but God at the center of his view. When the concept of an unknowable God is taken as the center and when it comes to choosing between religions, no criterion is valid other than the moral transformations to which religion gives rise in the life of the individual and in society. Although this perspective may appear reasonable, it is highly problematic from both religious and philosophical standpoints. For instance, what is the divine reality towards which all the great religious traditions are directed? Can Yahweh and the impersonal Brahman, Shiva, and the Tao, and others truly be regarded as equal? Hick attempts to overcome this problem by centering on the concept of "Ultimate Reality." According to Hick, the concept that transcends the gods experienced under specific names in all traditions, that encompasses these different conceptions, and that is appropriate to them all, is "Ultimate Reality. The distinction between "the Real in itself" and the "Real" as thought and experienced by humanity is understood in different ways within each tradition. For example, in the Christian tradition, this distinction forms a conception of God as infinite, eternally self-existent, as a creator, and redeemer. Among Muslim and Jewish mystics, this distinction is expressed as al-Ḥaqq and the Soph, respectively. What is emphasized here is that the being-in-itself is one. This idea constitutes the heart of Hick's understanding of religious pluralism.[71] Such an approach, however, excludes the phenomenon of authentic revelation, which is believed to be a special source of knowledge upon which religion is built. The element that shapes a religion's conception of scripture, divinity, and faith is its doctrine of revelation.[72] If revelation is understood not as originating from a transcendent source but entirely as the result of a human experience, an altogether different basis for religion emerges. This distinction constitutes the essence of Hick's understanding of religion. John Hick explains all dimensions of religious life, including conceptions of God, through human experience. Religious experience is one of the deepest dimensions of religious life, but the problem here lies in the one-sided relationship between religious experience and the "Ultimate Reality", that is experienced. In this, the active subject is human being. Therefore, Hick's conception of "Ultimate Reality" which is static, ineffective, and crucially closed to communication and relationship, is very problematic from the standpoint of ontology and religious epistemology. Hick developed such a conception of God by drawing upon Kant's ontology and epistemology. Whereas Kant postulated God as a necessary assumption in order to ground morality, Hick postulated "Ultimate Reality" and placed it at the center of his understanding of religious pluralism. This distinction has led to deep debates in Kalam and the philosophy of religion, such as the possibility of revelation. In Hick's approach, there is a sharp distinction between the Real in Itself and the Real as conceptualized and experienced by religious traditions. Consequently, no tradition can put forward a complete and final claim regarding the nature of the Real, since human experiential categories cannot be directly applied to the Real itself. This metaphysical indeterminacy in

70 Kılıç, "Küreselleşme ve Din üzerine", 59.

71 Eren, *John Hick'te Dini Çoğulculuk*, 113.

72 Kılıç "Dinî Çoğulculuk mu, Dinde Çoğulculuk mu", 15.

Hick's approach can be regarded as a rational starting point for religious pluralism, but it also fuels nihilism and agnosticism in terms of religious claims of possessing the absolute truth.

Another impasse of Hick's paradigm of religious pluralism is its suggestion of reducing religion to morality. While it is true that many religions contain moral demands, reducing religion to morality is not a condition that theistic religions can accept. Grounding moral goodness apart from metaphysical truth is not regarded as coherent in either philosophical or theological terms. Likewise, to accept different religions as equally true by taking into account their truth claims would abolish the very reason for the existence of religions, which would conflict with basic principles of logic.[73]

This approach can also be thought of as illuminating the perception of religion in Eastern and Western thought. According to Hick, just as the manifestation of differences in mentality is evident in East and West, so do these differences appear in perspectives on religion. Linguistic, social, political, theological, and artistic forms occupy a determining position within these mentalities and worldviews[74]. In the West, under the concept of religious diversity, the ideas of exclusivism, inclusivism, and religious pluralism have been discussed from the mid-18th century onward. This has happened for socio-cultural, theo-political, and economic reasons as well as due to paradigm shifts within the church's own theology. In the East, particularly within Islamic culture, the understanding of "plurality in religion" and "religious diversity" has very old roots. In the words and actions of Ibn Arabi, Mawlana and Yunus Emre, who are all important thinkers within the Sufi tradition, have all considered the question of religious diversity within the framework of Islamic metaphysics. The pluralist and inclusivist declarations of the Sufis can be understood not as irreconcilable contradictions but as indicators of flexibility in their approach to the phenomenon of religion.[75] Nevertheless, the difference in mentality between East and West remains and cannot be ignored.

Conclusion

The approaches of mystics and poets to religious pluralism, in contrast to the rigid, rationalist, agnostic, or nihilistic views of modern philosophy of religion, rest upon the basis of esoteric experience. Their approach is based on the doctrine of waḥdat al-wujūd, which makes the human experience of transcendent truth possible; the metaphysics of love as the manifestation of transcendence in the heart and an ethic derived from this conceptual foundation. Mawlana tells us that when being is viewed with the "eye of the flesh," differences and separations appear, whereas the "eye of the soul" perceives the unity of being beyond these differences. This perspective constitutes the essence of his universal call.

Although Mawlana's understanding of religion may be associated with the pluralist paradigm espoused by the modern philosophy of religion, it can be suggested that his approach contains a distinctive conceptualization that transcends these paradigms. It is not unusual to encounter

73 Kılıç, "Dinî Çoğulculuk mu, Dinde Çoğulculuk mu", 16-17.

74 Tokat, "Dini Çoğulculuk Hangi Açıdan Mümkündür", 95.

75 Ali Baltacı, "Doğu ve Batı Düşüncesinde Dini Çeşitlilik: Bir Giriş Denemesi", *Bitlis İslamiyat Dergisi,* 2/1, (Haziran 2020), 24.

paradoxical ideas in the discourses of poets and mystics. In Mawlana's understanding of religion, too, there are statements that appear contradictory for readers who lack the metaphysics Islamic spirituality and Sufism. Yet, when these ideas are considered within a holistic system of thought, they emerge as meaningful emphases pointing to different dimensions of Truth.

One may find a sort of coexistence of both inclusivism and pluralism in Mawlana's discourse on religion. For, according to him, the "Absolute Being" manifests Itself in infinite forms within time and space; the diversity of religious beliefs is the natural result of these infinite manifestations. Therefore, Mawlana does not regard any faith as outside this ontological ground; rather, he evaluates each as a different manifestation of the Divine Truth. On the other hand, John Hick's paradigm of religious pluralism rests primarily on an epistemological foundation. Hick interprets the truth claims of different religions as the plurality of ways in which the "Ultimate Reality" is experienced within the limited cognitive and cultural conditions of human beings. At first glance, this approach may appear to overlap with Mawlana's conception of religious diversity, yet there is a fundamental distinction between them. In Mawlana, the determining element of religious pluralism is God and religion itself, whereas in Hick the determining element is entirely human experience. This difference profoundly affects the outcomes of the two approaches. Mawlana's understanding of pluralism offers a more comprehensive and holistic framework in terms of both the authentic character of religion and its social, cultural, and practical manifestations. By contrast, although Hick's paradigm of pluralism appears more compatible with modern values, such as liberalism, democracy, and religious tolerance, it could be suggested that it contains the risk of eroding the essence of religion and may ultimately open the door to nihilism.

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A Quest for Reconciliation Between Religion and Science: An Evaluation of Some Views of Milaslı Ismail Hakki on the Relationship Between Religion and Science

Din-Bilim Arasında Bir Uzlaşı Arayışı: Milaslı İsmail Hakkı'nın Din-Bilim İlişkisine Dair Bazı Görüşlerinin Değerlendirilmesi

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Abstract

Doctor Milaslı Ismail Hakki (1869-1948), who lived during the late Ottoman and early republican periods, was primarily a medical doctor, but he put forward noteworthy views on various scientific, social, and religious issues of his time. He shared his opinions on these matters through various books he authored and in important journals of the period. Like many intellectuals of his era, Ismail Hakki was a multifaceted scholar and a productive man of science. Indeed, an examination of his works, in which he wrote on numerous topics from medical issues to religious subjects, from linguistic matters to modern science, from moral problems to social issues, makes this clear. In this study, among the topics Milaslı focused on, we will attempt to evaluate Milaslı's views on the relationship between religion and science. Because he is one of the figures who reflected the intellectual concerns of the late Ottoman and early Republican modernization period, he directly participated in the debates on religion–science and Islam–science relations. His primary motivation in engaging with these discussions was the widespread perception, that modernization was an unavoidable necessity, and his conviction that religious thought should take part in this process not by opposing it, but by supporting it. In this context, he emerged as a figure who remained committed to the Islamic tradition while also acknowledging the universality of science. In his writings, he consistently pursued a line of thought marked by rationalist and modernist tendencies, seeking to harmonize religious texts with reason and scientific knowledge. It is possible to state that Milaslı addressed numerous topics within the broader framework of the religion–science relationship. Covering all the issues he engaged with within the scope of a single article is not feasible. Therefore, this study will focus specifically on his approaches to such subjects as creation in the Qur'ān, evolution and development, the relationship between the Qur'ān and modern science, miracles and saintly wonders, the mutashabihāt of the Qur'ān, the medical dimensions of religious practices, and the question of pork and the ritual purification of meat. This article aims to provide a descriptive evaluation of Milaslı's acceptance of the relationship between religion and science and to discuss his thoughts on this subject. In our study, using the document and content analysis method, Milaslı's some views on the relationship between religion and science will be examined based on his own works. Thus, this study provides a basis for a closer understanding of the views on religion and science held by a physician—an intellectual of a transitional period—who lived during the late Ottoman and early Republican era but whose ideas have remained largely unknown. In doing so, it also sheds some light on the intellectual and scholarly debates on religion and science that characterized that period.

Keywords: Tafsīr, Milasli Ismail Hakki, Religion, Science, Qur'ān, Reconciliation.

Öz

Geç Osmanlı ve erken Cumhuriyet döneminde yaşamış bir isim olan Doktor Milaslı İsmail Hakkı (1869-1948) asıl olarak bir tıp doktoru olmakla beraber döneminin çeşitli bilimsel, toplumsal ve dinî meseleleri hakkında dikkat çeken bazı görüşler ortaya koymuştur. O, söz konusu bu meselelere dair görüşlerini bir taraftan kaleme aldığı muhtelif kitaplarıyla diğer taraftan döneminin önemli dergilerinde kamuoyu ile paylaşmıştır. Yaşadığı dönemin pek çok münevveri gibi çok yönlü bir aydın olan Milaslı, üretken bir ilim adamı olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Nitekim kendisinin tıbbî konulardan dinî konulara, dilbilim meselelerinden modern bilime, ahlaki problemlerden sosyal meselelere kadar pek çok konuda kalem oynattığı eserleri incelendiğinde anlaşılmaktadır. Bu çalışmada Milaslı'nın üzerinde durduğu bu konular içerisinde daha çok onun din-bilim ilişkisine dair bazı görüşlerinin bir değerlendirmesini yapmaya çalışacağız. Çünkü o Osmanlı son dönemi ve erken Cumhuriyet dönemi modernleşme sürecindeki entelektüel kaygıları yansıtan isimlerden biri olduğu için o dönemdeki din-bilim ile İslam-bilim arasındaki tartışmalara doğrudan katılmıştır. Bu katılımdaki temel motivasyonu ise yaşadığı dönemde modernleşmenin bir zorunluluk olarak algılanması ve dinî düşüncenin bu sürece çatışarak değil, destekleyerek dahil olması gerektiği düşüncesine sahip olmasıdır. Bu süreçte o, İslam geleneğine bağlı kalarak bilimin evrenselliğine kabul eden bir portre olarak öne çıkmış, yazılarında çoğunlukla rasyonalist ve modernist fikirleri yansıtan biz çizgiyi takip etmiş, dinî metinleri akıl ve bilim ile harmanlamaya çalışmıştır. Milaslı'nın, eserlerinde din-bilim ilişkisi kapsamında pek çok konuya temas ettiğini söylemek mümkündür. Onun ele aldığı konuların tamamını bir makalenin sınırları içine sığdırmak mümkün değildir. Hal böyle olunca bu çalışmada onun Kur'ân'da yaratılış meselesi, evrim ve tekâmül, Kur'ân ve modern bilim ilişkisi, mucize ve keramet, Kur'ân'ın müteşabihleri, ibadetlerin tıbbi boyutları, domuz eti ve etlerin tezkiyesi meselesi gibi konular üzerindeki yaklaşımlarına odaklanılacaktır. Bu makalenin amacı Milaslı'nın din-bilim ilişkisine yönelik kabullerinin tasvirî bir değerlendirmesini yapmak ve onun din-bilim ilişkisi konusunda ortaya koyduğu düşünceleri tartışmaktır. Çalışmamızda doküman incelemesi metodu ve içerik analizi yöntemi kullanılarak Milaslı'nın bizzat kendi eserlerinden hareketle onun din-bilim ilişkisi hakkındaki bazı görüşleri üzerinde durulacaktır.

Böylelikle geç Osmanlı ve erken Cumhuriyet döneminde yaşamış ve fakat görüşleri pek bilinmeyen bir tıp doktoru ve aynı zamanda bir geçiş dönemi aydınının din-bilim arasındaki görüşlerinin daha yakından tanınmasına zemin hazırlanmış, din-bilim tartışmaları çerçevesinde söz konusu dönemin entelektüel ve ilmî tartışmalarının panoramasına bir nebze olsun ışık tutulmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Tefsir, Milaslı İsmail Hakkı, Din, Bilim, Kur'ân, Uzlaşı.

Introduction*

In the 19th century, rapid development in the positive sciences and technical and scientific fields in the Western world invigorated various debates, primarily on the relationship between religion and science but, also on education, modernization, progress-decline, and the individual-religion and society-religion relationships. These debates found considerable resonance among the intellectuals of the late Ottoman period. Within this framework, late Ottoman intellectuals such as Abdullah Cevdet, Ahmet Ağaoğlu, Celal Nuri, Yusuf Akçura, Kılıçzade Hakki, Şemsettin Günaltay, Ziya Gökalp, Babanzade Ahmed Naim, Ömer Ferit Kam, Elmalılı Hamdi Yazır, and Kamil Miras put forward new views and ideas on fundamental topics like religion, science, education, health, society, and modernization. Milaslı Ismail Hakki, a multifaceted Ottoman intellectual who was closely interested in these topics, also produced solutions to problems experienced in religious and social fields such as religion, science, education, ethics, and modernization from his own perspective through his books and journal articles.

Milaslı Ismail Hakki was an important doctor, thinker, religious scholar, and writer who was educated during the 19th century Ottoman Empire. A multifaceted figure, Milaslı's primary profession was medical doctoring. However, he wrote on many topics, from medicine to religious subjects, from language to modern science, and from ethics to social issues. He expressed his ideas on the relationship between religion and science not in a single work but, in various parts of his works, sometimes directly and sometimes between the lines. In many of the works he penned, Milaslı generally included scientific explanations of verses, and while doing so, he referenced various names and works related to modern sciences that he had the opportunity to access and examine. The aim of his method is to emphasize that there should be a unity rather than an opposition between religion and science. According to his thought system, it is impossible for the Qur'ān and science to be at odds. Unlike many of his contemporaries, Milaslı, being a medical doctor who closely followed scientific developments in the West and, had significant knowledge about the scientific findings of his time. His fundamental method was actually not to take a stance against modern science, but to combine its findings with a theistic perspective and thus demonstrate that science and religion do not conflict.

First, the history of relations between science and religion dates back to ancient times. It is a known fact that these relations sometimes reached the level of conflict, and the most severe examples of this conflict were seen in the West. Particularly, as the two main actors of this process, the church representing religion and science opposing it, these two sides frequently

* This study was supported by the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TUBITAK) under project number 122G228.

came face to face. During this conflict, efforts to synthesize or reconcile the two actors were not lacking. Here, rather than comprehensively addressing this long and intricate subject[1] we provide a brief summary of the relationship between religion and science.

The natural interaction between science and religion, whether from science to religion or from religion to science, changes according to historical conditions. Until the 17th century, all rational investigations, including science, gained value relative to religion. However, after the 17th century, the equation reversed, and religious texts now gained meaning in proportion to their conformity with scientific truths, while religious beliefs were increasingly confined to subjective areas not yet encompassed by absolute science. As a result of the scientific revolution[2] turning in a secular direction, the confrontation in the Western intellectual tradition between absolute science and absolute religious authority in a mutually exclusive manner gave rise to a conflict specific to Christianity, and this situation caused great trauma on both sides of the science-religion relationship equation. On the other hand, in the debates conducted in postmodern Islamic thought centered on the science-religion axis, there is a significant influence of the adoption of problems specific to the Christianity-religion relationship, along with other political and social issues originating from the West.[3] Additionally, the extraordinary developments that emerged from the beginning of the 20th century in the natural sciences, especially in the discipline of physics, led to serious cracks in the understanding of positivist scientism. In light of the results of the new physics,[4] the need arose to reconsider the exclusive attitude maintained against religion, like other beliefs of the 19th century. In the 20th century, pioneering scientists who guided physics developed various attitudes toward religion within the framework of this need, according to the philosophy-science tradition to which they belonged.[5]

Among contemporary researchers, Barbour explains the science-religion relationship using a fourfold typology: conflict, independence, dialogue, and integration. According to Barbour's classification, the conflict approach, assumes, that the fields of science and religion contradict each other in every aspect and fundamentally. Accordingly, there is a complete conflict, contradiction, or opposition between science and religion. In this sense, science is considered completely separate from religion, and it is claimed that science will ultimately win the conflict. They are in competition and war for dominance in the same areas.[6] In the compartmentalist or, in

1 For detailed information on the relationships and boundaries between religion and science, see Adnan Bülent Baloğlu, "Din mi Bilim mi: İkilemin Çözülüşü", *Journal of The Faculty of Divinity of Dokuz Eylül University* 18 (2003), 21-52; Selim Özarslan, "Din-Bilim İlişkisinin Serencamı: Hristiyanlık ve İslâm Örneği", *Diyanet İlmî Dergi* 56/3 (2020), 883-901.

2 On the nature of the scientific revolution, see Thomas Samuel Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 1-210.

3 İshak Arslan, "Bilim-Din İlişkisi Nasıl Ele Alınabilir?", *Kutadgubilig: Philosophy-Science Research* 20 (2011), 214.

4 New physics represents the theoretical and experimental efforts to find and understand phenomena that cannot be explained by the current, most successful theory of particle physics, the Standard Model. For more information, see Paul Langacker, *The Standard Model and Beyond* (CRC Press, Taylor & Francis Group, 2017), 6, 465-469.

5 Arslan, "Bilim-Din İlişkisi Nasıl Ele Alınabilir?", 214.

6 Barbour, Ian G., *When Science Meets Religion* (New York: Harper Collins, 2000), 10-17; For detailed information on the relationships and boundaries between religion and science, see David B. Wilson, *The History of Science and Religion in the Western Tradition*, ed. Gary B. Ferngren (New York: Garland Publications, 2000), 1-81; İbrahim Coşkun, "Din-Bilim

other words, separatist approach, it is accepted that religion and science are two completely separate worlds, independent of each other, and that any conflict or reconciliation between different fields is out of the question. Starting from the assumption that science and religion use completely different languages and that the two fields cannot even be compared in terms of their goals, methods, and concepts, this approach places them in completely separate compartments.[7] The third approach emphasized by Barbour, which is based on dialogue, attempts to establish a more structural relationship between science and religion and to emphasize the similarities between the two fields. This approach, while accepting that the two fields are different, suggests that they can establish positive relationships and even various similarities and parallels.[8] The final approach, the integration approach, is not content with the view that there is only a kind of dialogical relationship based on resemblances between science and religion, which seem different at first glance, but rather argues that there is a comprehensive partnership and ultimately a complete integration.[9]

Looking specifically at the religion-science debates, Milaslı's general tendency was toward reconciling religion and science. Because, as a characteristic of the modern era, many believers belonging to different religions and sects resort to science for the confirmation of their religious beliefs, seeking affirmations that will increase the sacred book's truth value and ward off the hegemonic attack of positivists. Milaslı was one of the leading representatives of this approach in the early Republican period. In this study, using the document analysis method and content analysis method, Milaslı's striking views on the relationships between religion-science and Qur'ān-science have been emphasized based on his own works, and thus his views have been presented to the appreciation of the scholarly community. The original aspect of the study is that the views of Milaslı Ismail Hakkı, one of the prominent thinkers and scientists of the early Republican period, on the relationship between religion and science have not previously been the subject of an independent study before. Because in the academic studies conducted on Milaslı until now[10], while his views have been evaluated from various angles, no research has been encountered regarding his views on the relationship between religion and science.

1. Milaslı Ismail Hakki and the Conception of the Qur'ān

Having knowledge about a thinker's life will provide certain insights into the works he or she has written and the ideas he or she has produced. For this reason, it would be appropriate to briefly address the life of Milaslı Ismail Hakki. He was born in 1869 in the Milas district of Muğla. His father was Milaslı Hacı Mehmet Ağa, a merchant. He graduated from the civilian division of the

Uzlaşısı ve Kur'ân'ın Aklî Mucizeliği", *Journal of Islamic Research* 19/4 (2006), 543-557; Şaban Ali Düzgün, "Din-Bilim İlişkisinde Modeller ve Ortak Kavramlar", *Journal of Kalam Research(Kader)* 4/1 (2006), 51-62.

7 Barbour, *When Science Meets Religion*, 17-22; Cafer Sadık Yaran, *Din ve Bilim* (Samsun: Sidre Publications, 1997).

8 Barbour, *When Science Meets Religion*, 22-27.

9 Barbour, *When Science Meets Religion*, 27-38; 51-61; Arslan, "Bilim-Din İlişkisi Nasıl Ele Alınabilir?", 226.

10 Ebubekir Eraslan, "Milaslı İsmail Hakkı'nın Hayatı ve Eserleri Hakkında Yeni Tespitler ile 'Yeni Yazının El Yazısında da Bitişmemesi Büyük Meziyettir' Makalesinin Analizi", *Eurasian Journal of Social and Economic Research (EJSER)* 8/4 (2021), 174-189; Ayşegül Karaca, "Doktor Milaslı Ismail Hakkı Kaynakçası", *Korkut Ata Journal of Turkiyat Studies* 13 (2023), 1428-1436.

Faculty of Medicine, Istanbul University in 1890. In 1890, he served as a physician in the Milas district of what was then Aydın province, and in 1892, he served as a physician in the town of Muğla. Between 1893 and 1895, he worked as a French language instructor in addition to serving as physician at Muğla Mekteb-i Idadisi (high school). In 1896, he was appointed as a physician at the Syphilis Hospital in the town of Inebolu in Kastamonu province, and he continued in this position until 1900. He was appointed to the Bursa Provincial Health Inspectorate in 1901. Between 1901 and 1905, he was assigned to the Beirut Provincial Health Inspectorate. Between 1905 and 1908, he served as director of the Şam Mekteb-i Tıbbiye-i Mülkiye (Damascus Civil Medical School). In addition to his directorship, he became an acting French language instructor at this school in 1905 and a permanent instructor in 1906. In 1910, he was assigned by the General Directorate of Health to combat a typhus epidemic in Kütahya. In 1910, he was sent to Antalya to prevent the outbreak of the plaguea. He served as the chairman of the Izmir Provincial Malaria Control Committee. He was among the thirty founding members of the Green Crescent Society and served on the board of directors of Yeşilay. In 1920, he was appointed to the General Inspectorate of the General Directorate of Health (Ministry of Health Inspection Board Chairmanship), and he held this position until September 2, 1926. In 1924, he was assigned to the Western Anatolia Health Inspectorate. He also worked as Çanakkale Health Director. In 1929, he became Bitlis Health Director and retired while serving in this position. He spent his final years in Ankara and died in 1948. Proficiency in French, Arabic, and Persian. Milaslı published 19 printed works, beginning his book publication activities in 1899. One of these books was in Arabic, while the remainder were in Turkish. As far as can be determined, he has authored 42 articles.[11]

Milaslı, who spent most of his life as a doctor and in state service, served in different cities of the Ottoman geography as a doctor and as a health administrator. Despite this intense pace, he managed to write many Works. While language and medical studies stand out in his works in general, he also wrote books in the religious field. After 1914, he reduced his writings in the fields of language and medicine, while increasing his religiously oriented writings. Understanding that Milaslı was sufficiently proficient in religious matters to write many works in the religious field and, knowing his conception of the Qur'ān, the foundational text of Islam, will help us to reveal his views on the relationship between religion and science and Qur'ān-science. A thinker's conception of the Qur'ān is among the primary factors determining his interpretation of religion and the Qur'ān.

Before delving into the details of Milaslı's conception of the Qur'ān, it would be appropriate to briefly include the debates about the Qur'ān-science relationship. First, it is possible to say that different approaches exist regarding the nature of the Qur'ān-science relationship. Moreover, depending on the new understanding of science formed with the industrial revolution, the forms of this relationship have become more intricate. Indeed, when the Qur'ān-science relationship is theoretically considered in the context of the religion-science relationship, six different

[11] For the life of Doctor Ismail Hakki Milaslı and the books, articles, conference texts, rally speeches, and letters he wrote between 1899-1946, see Nazlı Demirtaş - Ebubekir Eraslan, "Doctor Ismail Hakki Milasli's Life And Works", *The Journal Of Academic Social Science* 154 (2024), 431-444; Ebubekir Eraslan, "Doktor Milaslı İsmail Hakkı'nın (1869-1948) Hayatı, Eserleri ve Türk Dili Tarihindeki Yeri", *Çok Kimlikli ve Yönlü Bir Osmanlı Münevveri Doktor İsmail Hakkı Milaslı'nın Bilimsel Mirası,* ed. Ebubekir Eraslan, (İstanbul: BKY - Babıali Kültür Publications, 2025), 11-57.

approaches emerge. The first of these approaches is that the Qur'ān and science are evaluated on the same ground, and in this sense, their subjects are common. The second is that the Qur'ān encompasses all the subjects of science. The third is that science covers all the subjects of the Qur'ān; the fourth is that the Qur'ān and science are accepted as two separate compartments. The fifth is that science deals with facts and religion deals with values, thus accepting them as two realms of truth on separate planes. The sixth and final one is that although the Qur'ān and science are in two different fields and have different sources and methods, there is a togetherness of knowledge and subject between the Qur'ān and science in some areas.[12] These approaches, which are in the vein of explaining the essence of the Qur'ān-science relationship, can also be seen as efforts regarding how the Qur'ān should be understood and interpreted in line with new scientific developments.

In many of his writings, Milaslı emphasizes the structure of the Qur'ān that is compatible with science, reason, and logic. He emphasizes the importance the Qur'ān gives to science, saying that the command "اقرأ"(read)"[13], in the Qur'ān is the fundamental source of Muslims' scientific and cultural achievements in history.[14] Advocating an understanding of Islam that combines reason, science, and the guidance of revelation, Milaslı emphasized a rational religious thought. He stated that there is no contradiction between natural science and the Qur'ān; on the contrary, the Qur'ān expressed many truths that were reached by modern science, thousands of years ago. According to him, religious texts should be interpreted in the light of reason and science, and false and fabricated narrations should be avoided. Interpretations based on these carry the danger of leading to some misunderstandings and deviations.[15]

Again, while emphasizing the importance of interpreting religious texts conidering reason and science, he warned that interpretations based on false or fabricated narrations could lead to misunderstandings and deviations.[16] Milaslı asserted that there is a concordance between the Qur'ān and science, Milaslı said that the Qur'ān is a miraculous book compatible with scientific and technological advancements. Indeed, he emphasized that the meanings contained in the verses will continue to be discovered as science progresses until the Day of Judgment, that Islam can be interpreted in accordance with changing knowledge and conditions over time, and that the Qur'ān is a comprehensive guide.[17] He mentioned that Islamic civilization has made contributions to the foundation of modern science. To substantiate these claims, he references Charles Mismer's work, reminding us that sciences like algebra developed in the Islamic world.[18]

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12 Celal Kırca, *Hayatın İçinde Hayatla Birlikte Kur'ân'ı Anlama* (Sorunlar-Yöntemler) (Ankara: Anadolu Ay Publications, 2019), 238-239.

13 Sūrat al-ʿAlaq 96/1.

14 Milaslı İsmail Hakkı, *Dinimizi Bilelim ve Bildirelim* (Ankara, Yeni Cezaevi Basımevi, 1946), 2.

15 İsmail Hakkı, *Dinimizi Bilelim ve Bildirelim*, 6, 17.

16 İsmail Hakkı, *Dinimizi Bilelim ve Bildirelim*, 9-10.

17 Milaslı İsmail Hakkı, *İslam Dininde Etlerin Tezkiyesi* (İstanbul: Ahmet Sait Matbaası, 1933), 16, 22.

18 Milaslı İsmail Hakkı, "Din-i İslam ve Ulum-ı Fünun Namındaki Eser-i Mutebereden", *Sırat-ı Müstakim* 4/97 (14.07.1910), 329.

While focusing on the relationship between the Qur'ān and science, he first mentions the verse and then discusses it various aspects. He sometimes approaches words from a lexical perspective and points to their original meanings in the dictionary. Where appropriate, the author refers to the opinions of commentators. He mentions narrations related to verse interpretation as needed. However, in a large part of his work, he directly transmits the accumulation of positive sciences that had reached his time, sometimes mentioning the names of Western scientists, referring to them generally, and sometimes without any reference. For example, regarding the verses about man being created from earth or water; he first strives to show that there is no contradiction between these verses. Then, he explains the topics extensively considering positive sciences.

According to his conception of the Qur'ān, the Qur'ān addresses human creation not only in its material but also in its spiritual dimensions and offers subtle indications about it. While explaining the deep meanings of the Qur'ān, he emphasizes that every person benefits from these meanings in different ways and that the Qur'ān has a structure that addresses different levels at every stage. In this respect, he states that each verse of the Qur'ān does not only a literal meaning, but also, requires reflection in many layers. Consequently, he argues that the Qur'ān carries a multi-layered meaning with both its material and spiritual dimensions, and in this aspect, the Qur'ān is a miraculous and profound book.[19]

According to Milaslı, who states that the Qur'ān will be better understood as science and civilization progress, the Qur'ān is a miraculous book that will keep pace with scientific and technological progress. The meanings contained in the verses will continue to be discovered until the Day of Judgment as science and knowledge advance.[20] Milaslı, who frequently raises this view in many of his works, has nevertheless been unable to avoid the danger of rationalizing the verses that contain miraculous events when interpreting them. In this context, he attempted to interpret the relevant miraculous verses with explanations based on natural causes. For example, he rationally interpreted the miracle of Moses striking the sea with his staff and parting the Red Sea when the Children of Israel, led by Moses, crossed the sea during their exodus from Egypt from Pharaoh's oppression, as mentioned in several verses[21] of the Qur'ān. According to him, the sea calmed as Moses led his people across it. However, after Moses and his people reached the shore and were saved, a great storm arose in the sea, and Pharaoh and his soldiers drowned.[22] Milaslı accepted that this event was a natural occurrence related to the movements of the earth and sky rather than a miracle, and rationalized the relevant Qur'ānic verses. Based on this approach, defended by modernist and innovative currents within the tradition of Qur'ānic exegesis, the influence of a rational and scientific approach is quite evident in Milaslı Ismail Hakki's understanding of the Qur'ān.

19 Milaslı İsmail Hakkı, *Kur'ân'a Göre Hazreti İsa'nın Babası* (Ankara: Ankara Matbaası, 1934), 6, 11, 31.

20 İsmail Hakkı, *İslam Dininde Etlerin Tezkiyesi*, 16-22.

21 Sūrat al-Baqara 2/50; Sūrat Ṭā Hā 20/77-78; Sūrat al-Shuʿarāʾ 26/63-66; Sūrat al-Dukhān 44/23-24.

22 Milaslı İsmail Hakkı, *Kur'an'ın Mucizeleri ve Müteşabih Ayetlerin Tefsirleri* (İstanbul: Türkiye Matbaası, 1935), 116-118.

2. Evaluation of Milaslı's Views on the Relationship between Religion and Science

2.1. Creation and Evolution

Regarding the issue of creation, an ancient problem, a rich diversity of words and concepts can be mentioned in the Qur'ān. In this framework, the creation of the heavens and the earth is mentioned in approximately fifty verses, human creation in approximately a hundred verses, and creation in the general sense in nearly fifty verses.[23] Regarding creation, one of the important themes of the Qur'ān, Milaslı occasionally evaluated the creation process in the Qur'ān and especially the verses concerning human creation. In this context, he indicated that the human creation process is compatible with with modern science data. Touching upon the stages of human creation and evolution, Milaslı explained the process starting from clay, continuing with "مهين ماء"(despised/base fluid)[24] and later with the blowing of Allah's spirit. At this point, he emphasized that human creation could be a process lasting millions of years. He associated the reaching of a stage called "تسوي"(proportioning)[25] in human creation with the blowing of Allah's spirit. This level includes not only physical maturation but also spiritual and mental development. According to him, the blow from Allah's spirit represents human spiritual responsibilities and honor. This process encompasses the perfection of human beings both in external appearance and in the inner world. Thus, the declarations of the Qur'ān find meaning even in the modern era with their scientific and spiritual depth.[26]

Analyzing the words "سلالة"(seed/origin)[27] and "مهين"(despised/base)[28] related to human creation in various works, according to Milaslı, "سلالة" means something that strips off and emerges from an object. In human creation, this word expresses human genetic heritage, i.e., the continuation of lineage and progeny. By using these concepts in the human creation process, the Qur'ān indicates biological and generational continuity. "مهين" means despised, weak, and little. Additionally, it is also used to describe a weak liquid in a process, operating in a tolerable way, but necessary for humanity, i.e., semen and sperm. This word appears as a metaphor describing the weakness of humankind's processes in the initial creation and its initial state. According to him, the words used in the Qur'ān regarding human creation are used in an extremely compatible manner with the discoveries of biology today. Modern scientific findings have confirmed that after human creation started from clay, the continuation of the lineage is possible through processes like "سلالة" and "ماء مهين".[29]

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23 al-Rāghib al-Aṣfahānī, *al-Mufradāt fī gharīb al-Qur'ān* (Beirut: Dār al-Maʿrifah, n.d.), 38-39, 40-41, 94, 110, 157-158, 178, 286-287, 382, 493-494; Muhammad Fuād Abd al-Bāqī, *al-Muʿjam al-mufahras li-alfāẓ al-Qurʾān al-Karīm* (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣrī, 1364), 115, 117, 170-175, 194-195, 241-245, 269-270, 414-415, 522-523, 700-701.

24 Sūrat al-Sajda 32/8; Sūrat al-Mursalāt 77/20.

25 Sūrat al-Ḥijr 5/29; Sūrat Maryam 19/17; Sūrat Ṣād 38/72; Sūrat al-Qiyāma 75/4, 38; Sūrat al-Aʿlā 87/2.

26 Milaslı İsmail Hakkı, "Ahlak Vazifeleri V", *Kutlu Bilgi* 8 (1945), 231-234.

27 Sūrat al-Muʾminūn 23/12; Sūrat al-Sajda 32/8.

28 Sūrat al-Sajda 32/8; Sūrat al-Mursalāt 77/20.

29 İsmail Hakkı, *Kur'ân'a Göre Hazreti İsa'nın Babası*, 6, 11, 31.

According to him, human creation begins initially from clay and a simple substance, then enters the process of reproduction with "ماء مهين" i.e., sperm. This expression expresses the initial stages of human development, the beginning of a weak structure. This process in the Qur'ān is also indicated by Sūrat al-Insān, which describes a period when man was not "a thing worth mentioning," meaning he had not yet matured as an entity.[30] Then, humans are separated as male and female and progress toward the true human level. Afterward, humans reach the point of knowing Allah. This final stage represents the phase defined as "روح الله"(ruhullah). Through years of research and various technological tools, science has discovered much about human creation and the evolutionary process. However, the Qur'ān explained this information 1300 years ago, in a way far beyond the level of reason and knowledge of the time. This situation demonstrates the compatibility of scientific discoveries with the Qur'ān.[31]

Relating Qur'ānic verses with the findings of biology, he touched upon their similarities with the creation process based on the microbiological discoveries of French microbiologist and chemist Louis Pasteur (1822-1895) and the reproduction methods of microorganisms. He presented the existence of microorganisms that reproduce without mating as evidence that reproduction might have occurred similarly in the initial creation stage. Thus, he implied that the Qur'ān's verses related to creation point to the "law of evolution" in a way compatible with modern science, stating that a process from the simplest form to a more complex and perfect state was followed at the beginning of creation. Evaluating the term "ماء مهين" in some verses[32] both biologically and philosophically, he emphasized that this water is the beginning of a transformation from a weak and temporary structure to a strong and permanent one in the creation process.[33] Milaslı stated that, unlike classical understandings regarding the creation of Adam and Eve, the Qur'ān points to a more general creation process[34] and that these expressions are compatible with scientific realities. In short, he stated that the Qur'ān points to a more general creation process and that these expressions are compatible with scientific realities. He tried to show that there is a harmony between evolutionary biology and the divine creation process through analogies made via microorganisms.[35]

Milaslı, who deals with the verse "He created everything in the best form"[36] in the context of evolution, believes that this verse expresses that creation perfected itself through a process. He cited some interpretations of important commentators, such as al-Bayḍāwī (d. 1286) and Elmalılı Hamdi Yazır (d. 1942), to support his opinion.[37] Milaslı proposed that creation is a gradual process

30 Sūrat al-Insān 76/1: "Hath there come Upon man (ever) any period of time in which he was a thing unremembered?"

31 For a critical study addressing debates on whether scientific discoveries are compatible with the Qur'ān, see Ercan Şen, *Bilimsel Tefsiri Yeniden Düşünmek (Mahiyet-Tarihçe-Faktörler-Problemler)* (Bursa: Emin Publications, 2021), 221-302.

32 Sūrat al-Sajda 32/8; Sūrat al-Mursalāt 77/20.

33 Milaslı İsmail Hakkı, "Ahlak Vazifeleri III", *Kutlu Bilgi* 6 (1945), 167-170.

34 For a similar evaluation regarding the initial creation, see. Resul Öztürk, "A Contribution from Outside to the Field of New Ilm al-Kalam: Milasli Ismail Hakki's Views", *Journal of Ilahiyat Researches (ILTED)* 49 (2018), 121-122.

35 İsmail Hakkı, "Ahlak Vazifeleri III", 167-170.

36 Sūrat al-Sajda 32/7.

37 For these interpretations see 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Umar al-Bayḍāwī, *Anwār al-tanzīl wa-asrār al-ta'wīl* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmīyah, 2003), 2/100; Elmalılı Hamdi Yazır, *Hak Dini Kur'ân Dili* (İstanbul: Yazma Eserler Kurumu Başkanlığı Publications, 2023), 4/177-183.

and that humans were initially created at an instinctive level, and features like reason and discrimination developed over time. Thus, he expressed that the data of the Qur'ān are compatible with the results of modern science on issues such as evolution and creation. Accordingly, he stated that the Qur'ān's foretelling of scientific truths should be evaluated as a miraculous characteristic. Therefore, he expressed that the various declarations of the Qur'ān regarding the stages of human creation, starting from clay, then "ماء مهين" and later the blowing of Allah's spirit into humans, find meaning with the modern era's scientific discoveries.[38] In other words, he said that the verses in the Qur'ān that provide information about human creation in the Qur'ān are extremely compatible with the discoveries of today's biology, and modern scientific findings have confirmed that after human creation started from clay, the continuation of the lineage is possible through processes like "سلالة" and "ماء مهين".[39] According to him, science experts are re-understanding these truths through the endless studies of scholars and thinkers over many centuries and with the help of many tools and instruments. The Qur'ān, however, announced these miracles 1300 years ago.[40] In conclusion, it can be said that according to Milaslı, the Qur'ān described human creation and evolution in a way compatible with the scientific perspective and shed light on many of the most important discoveries in human history.

Milaslı said that the beginning of life on earth from water is accepted by both modern science and the Qur'ān, and he showed verse 30 of Sūrat al-Anbiyā'[41] as evidence for this. According to him, the initial creation started from water and earth, and it evolved and reached its current perfect state over time. While the Qur'ān clearly expresses evolution in the creation process, it also emphasizes that creation occurs in accordance with Allah's knowledge and will. It decrees that every species evolves within the framework of its own characteristics, and transformation from one species to another is impossible.[42]

While the Qur'ān carefully describes every stage of the human creation process, it first emphasizes creation from the earth, then from "نطفة" i.e., sperm, and then being made into pairs. This section describes the biological stages necessary for human reproduction. This kind of scientific accuracy is considered a miracle of the Qur'ān. Modern biology reached the discovery of each stage of this process only a few centuries later.[43] In conclusion, deep connections exist between the expressions in the Qur'ān regarding the human creation process and the findings of the natural sciences.

38 İsmail Hakkı, "Ahlak Vazifeleri V", 231-234.

39 İsmail Hakkı, *Kur'ân'a Göre Hazreti İsa'nın Babası*, 57-58.

40 İsmail Hakkı, *Kur'ân'a Göre Hazreti İsa'nın Babası*, 60.

41 Sūrat al-Anbiyā' 21/30: "Have not those who disbelieve known that the heavens and the earth were of one piece, then We parted them, and we made every living thing of water? Will they not then believe?" Bu meal için bk. Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall, *The Meaning of the Glorious Qur'ān* (Birmingham: Islamic Dawah Centre International, 2008), 198.

42 Milaslı İsmail Hakkı, "Ahlak Vazifeleri I", *Kutlu Bilgi* 7 (1944), 101-103.

43 İsmail Hakkı, *Kur'ân'a Göre Hazreti İsa'nın Babası,* 6, 11, 31.

2.2. His View on Miracles

One of the Milaslı's approaches that can be addressed within the framework of the relationship between religion and science also emerges in his interpretations of the miracles in the Qur'ān. The miracles contained in the Qur'ān have become a frequently debated topic in the modern period. Basically, regarding miracles, Milaslı defends the motto "There is an extraordinary custom, but no extraordinary nature," according to Milaslı, Allah creates everything with His power, but while creating and establishing order, He acts within the framework of fixed and unchanging laws of nature. Allah's power works through these laws and does not change the laws of nature. According to him, in Islamic belief, miracles should also be understood within this framework of laws. He interpreted the prophets' miracles as events that do not act contrary to the laws of nature but demonstrate Allah's power. For example, in the case of Prophet Ibrahim being thrown into the fire, the burning property of the fire was changed, but this change also occurred through Allah's power and was accepted as a miracle. The fact that the prophets did not immediately make people believe and conducted their propagation in a noncompulsory manner is also based on this wisdom. Allah does His works gradually by attaching them to causes. According to him, even if it is claimed that there were miracles in the life of the Prophet that broke the laws of nature, there is no place for such miracles in Islamic belief. While Allah's power is sufficient for everything, the laws He has established are unchangeable. The Prophet also performed miracles without contradicting these laws. Miracles are not contrary to reason, logic, and scientific data; they manifest more as spiritual manifestations and extraordinary events. The miracles accepted in Islam are extraordinary events that do not violate the laws of nature. The Prophet's Mi'rāj (ascension) miracle occurred through a spiritual journey. Similarly, examples such as spider webs and pigeons protecting the Prophet and Abu Bakr during the Hijrah journey are miracles that do not contradict the laws of nature. The miracles of Islam are events that ocur extraordinary, not in opposition to reason and the laws of nature, but are realized in an extraordinary manner. In conclusion, the miracles in the Prophet's life are extraordinary events that occurred through Allah's power and do not contradict the laws of nature in a manner consistent with Islamic teachings.[44]

To base his claims, Milaslı brought up the verse "The hour drew nigh and the moon was rent in twain."[45] which mentions the splitting of the moon, and claimed that various superstitions were fabricated regarding the interpretation of this verse. In this framework, although the splitting of the moon was interpreted in different ways, such as with a scientific interpretation as the disappearance of life on the moon and alongside a metaphorical interpretation like the fragmentation of the disbelievers' flag in the shape of the moon, he argued that the verse actually carries a reasonable meaning like "the matter became clear." Also evaluating the verse "The earth and the heavens were a joined entity, and We separated them."[46] Milaslı said in the interpretation

[44] İsmail Hakkı, *Kur'ân'ın Mucizeleri ve Müteşabih Ayetlerin Tefsirleri*, 10, 13; Idem, *Dinimizi Bilelim ve Bildirelim*, 7, 31.

[45] Sūrat al-Qamar 54/1.

[46] Sūrat al-Anbiyāʾ 21/30.

of this verse that the earth was created separated from the heavens and that life began from water. He similarly evaluated this as one of the Qur'ān's miracles compatible with science.[47]

Although Muḥammad 'Abduh's (1849-1905) interpretation of the verse in Sūrat al-Fīl, "Throwing at them stones of baked clay."[48] as meaning that smallpox was carried by birds[49] was criticized by Elmalılı Hamdi Efendi, Milaslı argued that it is a scientifically possible interpretation. According to him, the incident of birds throwing stones was evaluated as a miraculous event in a way suitable for the understanding of time. However, this event should be reinterpreted in light of the scientific findings. In conclusion, he stated his preference for Muḥammad 'Abduh's more rational interpretation method.[50]

The miracles of the Qur'ān are not only linguistic but also have moral, philosophical, and metaphysical dimensions. Milaslı says that these miracles are of great importance for strengthening people's faith and ensuring that they fulfill their moral responsibilities. According to him, the Qur'ān is also a miracle with its social and political rulings, historical data, and future news. The Qur'ān is also a miracle in its linguistic superiority. Because the Qur'ān brought both jinn and humans together and asked them to produce something similar, but until today, no one has been able to bring forth such a thing. This situation proves its eloquence and rhetorical excellence.[51]

He stated that the laws of nature never change and that the miracles of the Prophets cannot be of a nature that breaks the laws of nature, and this is clearly and definitively declared in the verse "You will never find in Allah's way any change, and you will never find in Allah's way any alteration."[52] According to him, Allah Himself did not wish to break the laws He established, the order He set up, and did not allow them to be broken. Again, according to him, there are wisdoms in the manner those mutashābih (allegorical) verses that appear contrary to reason and logic on the surface are expressed, and their ta'wīl, i.e., their true meanings, must be sought and found in accordance with reason and science.[53]

In short, he argued that the miracles of the Prophets and saints do not break physical laws but, occur through spiritual manifestations and are, always consistent with reason and science. According to him, because reason is the foundation of religion, miracles or oracle cannot be contrary to reason. This understanding shows that he saw science, religion, and reason in harmony and reveals that he advocated a religious understanding that combines science and the guidance of revelation, emphasizing a rational religious thought. In conclusion, Milaslı stated that the laws (sunnatullah) established by Allah do not change, and therefore emphasized that these

47 Milaslı İsmail Hakkı, *Din-i İslam ve Ulum ve Fünun* (Dersaâdet: Nümune-i Tıbaat, 1327), 320-321.

48 Sūrat al-Fīl 105/4.

49 Muḥammad 'Abduh's, *Tafsīr Juz' 'āmme* (Egypt: Maṭba'at Egypt, 2010), 157-158.

50 İsmail Hakkı, *Dinimizi Bilelim ve Bildirelim*, 13-14.

51 İsmail Hakkı, *Kur'ân'ın Mucizeleri ve Müteşabih Ayetlerin Tefsirleri*, 21, 32.

52 Sūrat Fāṭir 35/43.

53 Milaslı İsmail Hakkı, *Hristiyanlık ve Müslümanlık* (İstanbul: Türkiye Matbaası, 1935), 69-70.

laws would not be contradicted by miracles and oracles. On this bases, he considered most of the narrations that appear contrary to the laws of nature as superstitions.

2.3. Method of Interpreting Mutashābih Verses

As is known, Qur'ānic verses are divided into two in terms of understanding: muḥkam (clear) and mutashābih verses. According to Milaslı, muḥkam verses form the foundations of religion, with clear and definite expressions pointing to the oneness of Allah. Such verses are not open to ta'wīl or interpretations and should be directly accepted. Muḥkam verses ensure that the basic principles of religion are clearly explained. Mutashābih verses, on the other hand, are verses that carry deeper meanings and are open to developing scientific discoveries or different interpretations. Mutashābih are verses that are not always easy to understand and can carry different meanings at different times. The interpretation of such verses may not always be fully understood in a limited human knowledge period. For example, expressions in the Qur'ān about the movement of mountains and the creation of the heavens may be verses difficult to understand at first, but over time their meanings may become clearer. Milaslı states that mutashābih verses both carry meanings appropriate to the understanding of the period and point to truths discovered in advancing times. This multi-layered meaning structure is a miracle of the Qur'ān.[54]

Milaslı states that the expression "those firmly grounded in knowledge"[55] in Sūrat Āl ʿImrān necessitates the existence of those with deep knowledge for the correct interpretation of mutashābih verses. However, he says that even these individuals must submit to Allah's knowledge and wisdom. The ultimate meaning of mutashābih verses belongs only to Allah. Even if those firmly grounded in knowledge correctly interpret the meanings of these verses, they must always acknowledge the greatness of Allah's infinite knowledge. In conclusion, the existence of mutashābih verses reminds us that human reason is limited and that we can only grasp a portion of Allah's knowledge. Even at the highest level of reason and knowledge, humans must always trust and submit to Allah's definitive judgment and decree. This is a point where reason and faith unite.[56]

Expressing that mutashābih verses are verses carrying metaphorical and symbolic meanings, Milaslı states that these verses are open to multiple interpretations. The purpose of these verses is to strengthen the foundations of religion while also pointing to scientific and philosophical discoveries that will emerge over time. For example, any verse related to the movement of the sun contained a scientific reality at a level that the people of that period could not understand. If the people of that time had been told, "The sun revolves around the earth," this information would have been very complex and incomprehensible to them, and thus people's faith in Allah and religion might have been made difficult. Allah gave information at the right time and in an appropriate language. Thus, both the basic teachings of religion were preserved, and scientific developments on these subjects were clarified as time progressed. According to him, some people do not accept the ta'wīl of mutashābih verses in the Qur'ān. However, this prohibition of ta'wīl is valid for interpretations made with bad intention and for causing sedition. Ta'wil done with good

54 İsmail Hakkı, *Dinimizi Bilelim ve Bildirelim*, 13-14.

55 Sūrat Āl ʿImrān 3/7.

56 İsmail Hakkı, *Kur'ân'a Göre Hazreti İsa'nın Babası*, 29-30.

intention, with reason and wisdom, is necessary. This can be explained using the principle "Reason is primary, transmitted text is secondary." That is, first comes reason, then transmitted text. Proceeding from this, Milaslı, stating that the Qur'ān is entirely based on reason and wisdom, expresses that the transmitted text must be interpreted according to reason when there is a conflict between reason and transmitted text.[57] In conclusion, he advocates the interpretation of mutashābih verses but, proposes that this interpretation should be in line with scientific data, with correct intention and through reason.

2.4. The Scientific Interpretation of Worship

Milaslı accepted the reconciliation of religion and science as a fundamental principle, Milaslı drew attention to the scientific dimensions of the acts of worship commanded by the Qur'ān as one of the indicators of Islam's reconciliation with science. According to Milaslı, acts of worship in the Islamic religion not only carry spiritual value but are also beneficial for physical and mental health.[58] Acts of worship, such as prayer, fasting, and zakat, provide both individual and social benefits. Prayer, strengthens the body and soul, whereas fasting increases willpower. The physical movements of prayer support health.[59]

Emphasizing that the benefits of acts of worship in the Islamic religion are confirmed by medical science, Milaslı states that from a gymnastic perspective, the benefit of sajda (prostration), which forms a part of prayer, is included in textbooks in Europe and is taught and applied in lessons. He says that, particularly in these applications, saying "five or six times in twenty-four hours" is a truth confirming the wisdom that all prayers are not performed at one time but are distributed to various hours, and he conveys"[60] that this is exactly confirmed by the verse "Indeed, prayer has been decreed upon the believers at specific times."[61]

Acts of worship support the training of the human body, mind, and soul. In particular, prayer stands out as an act of worship that simultaneously develops all three aspects. Milaslı, being a doctor, lists the medical benefits of the five daily prayers as follows: It is a form of beneficial exercise suitable for everyone. It aids digestion and supports general body functions. Provides calmness for physically active people. Provides movement for those with sedentary jobs. It provides rest for those working actively mentally. He explains the benefits of each prayer time as follows: The morning prayer encourages early rising. It creates a healthy sleep pattern. It prevents mental health problems associated with late waking up. The noon prayer provides the necessary break during work. Offers a structured rest period. The afternoon prayer serves as a work break. It prepares the body for the evening meal. The evening prayer prevents hastily eating when tired. It provides a gradual transition to rest. The night prayer provides an appropriate gap between the evening meal and sleep. It provides light exercise before sleeping.[62]

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57 İsmail Hakkı, *Dinimizi Bilelim ve Bildirelim*, 6-7;Idem, *Kur'ân'ın Mucizeleri ve Müteşabih Ayetlerin Tefsirleri*, 35.

58 Milaslı Ismail Hakkı, *Hakikat-i İslam* (İstanbul: Hilal Matbaası, 1343), 72-74.

59 İsmail Hakkı, *Kur'ân'ın Mucizeleri ve Müteşabih Ayetlerin Tefsirleri*, 46-47;Idem, *Hakikat-i İslam*, 85-86, 95-96.

60 İsmail Hakkı, *Kur'ân'ın Mucizeleri ve Müteşabih Ayetlerin Tefsirleri*, 35; Idem, *Hakikat-i İslam*, 72-74.

61 Sūrat al-Nisāʾ 4/103.

62 Milaslı İsmail Hakkı, *Namazın Tıbben Faydası* (Konstantiniye: Malumat Kütüphanesi, 1316), 3-24.

He also emphasized the importance of cleanliness and hygiene rules in acts of worship for protecting human health and stated that this is medically confirmed. He expressed how scientifically accurate Islam's commands regarding cleanliness are, especially after the discovery of germs. For instance, he stated that ghusl (ritual bath), beyond cleansing the body, creates positive effects on the nervous system, providing physiological relaxation; cold water accelerates blood circulation in the body and gives strength to the skin; and warm water relieves fatigue, relaxes nerves, and induces sleep. He emphasized that the frequent cutting of nails is both a religious sunnah and important for health as it prevents the accumulation of germs; that regular cleaning of the armpit and genital hair prevents germ accumulation; and that excessively long mustaches can lead to health problems and can contact food and drinks. The tradition of circumcision is important both religiously and health-wise. He said that circumcision reduces the risks of infection and provides protection from some ailments.[63]

2.5. Scientific Aspect of Pork Prohibition

Being a medical doctor, Milaslı also presented information evaluating the medical harms of pork prohibition from an Islamic perspective. In this context, he explained the harms of pork from medical, individual, and social aspects, alongside the religious bases[64] for its prohibition, and particularly with examples from practices in Europe, why pork consumption is harmful. He expressed that everything prohibited in Islam is based on wisdom, and that this wisdom is understood scientifically over time.[65]

Stating that expressions like the pig itself being najis (impure) are not found in the Qur'ān and that this is a mistaken interpretation, Milaslı argued that pork is not absolutely haram, but perhaps it is prohibited because it contains substances that could be harmful to health.[66] He focused on how the meats declared haram and halal in the Qur'ān should be addressed within the framework of the concept of "tazkiyah" (purification), explaining that the meat of animals that have died by drowning, beating, falling, goring, or being torn by predatory animals could be harmful to health. He expressed that various modern and scientific procedures (cooling, salting, or sterilization by certain methods) are required to make such meats suitable for health, emphasizing the necessity of modern scientific methods to ensure the soundness of meats. He stated that religious commands do not constitute an obstacle to these scientific methods but rather encourage them. He said that although the nine types (carrion, blood, pork, etc.) mentioned as exceptions in verse 3 of Sūrat al-Māʾida[67] were initially considered completely

63 İsmail Hakkı, *Din-i İslam ve Ulum ve Fünun*, 33-150; Idem, *Hakikat-i İslam*, 39.

64 Sūrat al-Baqara 2/173; Sūrat al-Māʾida 5/3; Sūrat al-Anʿām 6/145; Sūrat al-Naḥl 16/115.

65 İsmail Hakkı, *Din-i İslam ve Ulum ve Fünun*, 37-38.

66 İsmail Hakkı, *Dinimizi Bilelim ve Bildirelim*, 16.

67 Sūrat al-Māʾida 5/3: "Forbidden unto you (for food) are carrion and blood and swineflesh, and that which hath been dedicated unto any other than Allah, and the strangled, and the dead through beating, and the dead through falling from a height, and that which hath been killed by (the goring of) horns, and the devoured of wild beasts, saving that which ye make lawful (by the death-stroke), and that which hath been immolated unto idols. And (forbidden is it) that ye swear by the divining arrows. This is an abomination. This day are those who disbelieve in despair of (ever harming) your religion; so fear them not, fear Me! This day have I perfected your religion for you and completed My favour unto you, and have chosen for you as religion al-Islam. Whoso is forced by hunger, not by will, to sin: (for him) lo! Allah is Forgiving, Merciful."

haram, with the development of science and technology, these can be purified(tazkiyah). Therefore, he stated that in Islam, the meat of dead animals and blood are haram, but if modern science and technology render these substances harmless, their use could be possible. In other words, he claimed that modern methods could make pork safe.[68] In summary, he emphasized that some verses in the Qur'ān need to be reinterpreted according to contemporary conditions, pointing to the Islamic religion's flexibility and compatibility with scientific developments.

Conclusion

Milaslı Ismail Hakki was primarily a medical doctor and an author. In addition, he received a qualified religious education and used this scholarly accumulation when interpreting religion and the Qur'ān. Frequently employing the concepts of religion and science in his works, Milaslı bridged the intellectual history of the late Ottoman and early Republican periods, offering a rationalist-modernist approach to Qur'ānic interpretation. Although he pursued a rationalist line, his roots remained connected to the Islamic tradition. By interpreting religious texts considering reason and science, Milaslı became a typical representative of Ottoman modernization. He pioneered contemporary Islam-science debates through his quest for reconciliation between religion and science.

Milaslı grounded his scientific interpretations on a broad foundation encompassing medicine, biology, chemistry, physics, psychology, and social psychology, Milaslı mentioned the names of many Western scientists in this context and incorporated their scientific theories into his interpretations. When one examines the abundance of works he authored and the scope of issues that interested him, it becomes clear that Milaslı possessed a highly advanced intellectual personality. When his views are considered as a whole, it becomes evident that he maintained a perspective that blended traditional understanding with modernizing and innovative thoughts.

Like every thinker, Milaslı Ismail Hakki was influenced by his era's conditions and the prevailing opinions of that period. Although he occasionally diverged, his attempt to reconcile religion with the truths of modern science was, actually the result of a widespread understanding that conservative circles of the period sought to establish. Particularly during the Tanzimat era and Constitutional periods in the late Ottoman era, since the prevailing view held that religion should play a role in supporting the modernization process rather than conflicting with it, Milaslı also argued within this framework that religion should be addressed in conjunction with science and reason. His defense is also significant because it reveals that the search for a reconciliation between science and religion is not only on the agenda of progressive or modernist circles but, also of conservative segments.

He valued interpreting the Qur'ān not merely literally but also through its esoteric meanings. Because he was acutely aware of the power of modern natural sciences, he believed in the universal objectivity of natural sciences discoveries. He indicated that Islam was compatible with science and did not conflict with reason and logic and, that one should trust the guidance of reason and science. At every opportunity, he frequently expressed, both directly and between the

[68] İsmail Hakkı, *İslam Dininde Etlerin Tezkiyesi*, 5-6.

lines, that science occupied a fundamental place in Islam, that hundreds of verses and hadiths testified to this, and that engaging with natural sciences simultaneously constituted a religious duty. Like many Islamic thinkers, Milaslı emphasized that the Qur'ān illuminated science and was a book that guided reason, stressing that certain truths that science had only recently discovered had been proclaimed by the Qur'ān fourteen centuries ago. According to him, as scientific research deepened and approached truths, one would draw closer to the truths of the Qur'ān. In his view, science and religion should be adopted together as guides. Science and religion should be regarded as two torches. A course of action that derives power and measure from science must simultaneously unite with religion and receive support from faith to lead humanity to its goal.

Milaslı adopted an approach that placed greater emphasis on dirāyah—that is, reason and logic—in the Qur'ānic interpretation process, and in his commentaries, he attempted to synthesize the classical Islamic exegetical tradition with modern-era interpretations. He also attempted to evaluate the Qur'ān from a rational perspective. However, it is not clear exactly what kind of reason Milaslı is referring to here. In other words, whether he is referring to the enlightenment's rationalism or the traditional rationalist line in Islamic theology is unclear.

Among those who choose to reconcile the Qur'ān with science, Milaslı's stance can be said to align with the approach known as concordism, which is defined as the effort to reconcile and harmonize religious texts, and especially the Qur'ān, with modern scientific data. However, this approach often carries the risk of instrumentalizing the text of the Qur'ān for defensive purposes and opens the door to excessive interpretations under the name of exegesis. On the other hand, this approach often results in the coding of religious texts as scientific texts and the disregard of the variability of science.

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Ideological and Metaphysical Dimensions of Modern Biology: A Review of *Biology and Ideology from Descartes to Dawkins*

"Alexander, Denis R. – Ronald L. Numbers (ed.). *Biology and Ideology from Descartes to Dawkins*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010, 454 s."

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Abstract

Biology and Ideology from Descartes to Dawkins (The University of Chicago Press, 2010), a 454-page edited volume by Denis R. Alexander and Ronald L. Numbers, explores the dynamic interplay between science, religion, and ideology in a continuous historical framework. Comprising thirteen scholarly essays, the book examines how biology interacts with theological and philosophical domains of meaning. Employing a historical-analytical methodology, it demonstrates that biology has evolved not merely as an explanatory science of nature but also as an intellectual framework that functions as an ideological authority—constituting a significant contribution to the contemporary literature on science–religion relations.

Keywords: Biology, Ideology, Science-Religion relationship, Evolution, Naturalism, Theology.

Öz

Biology and Ideology from Descartes to Dawkins (University of Chicago Press, 2010), Denis R. Alexander ve Ronald L. Numbers tarafından derlenmiş 454 sayfalık bu eser, bilim, din ve ideoloji arasındaki dinamik etkileşimi süreklilik arz eden tarihsel bir çerçevede incelemektedir. On üç akademik makaleden oluşan kitap, biyolojinin teolojik ve felsefî anlam alanlarıyla nasıl etkileşime girdiğini ele almaktadır. Tarihsel-analitik bir yöntem benimseyen çalışma, biyolojinin yalnızca doğayı açıklayan bir bilim dalı olmaktan çıkarak, aynı zamanda ideolojik bir otorite işlevi gören entelektüel bir çerçeveye dönüştüğünü ortaya koymakta ve bu yönüyle bilim-din ilişkisine dair çağdaş literatüre önemli bir katkı sunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Biyoloji, İdeoloji, Bilim-Din ilişkisi, Evrim, Doğalcılık, Teoloji.

Introduction

The revolutions in physics, astronomy, and chemistry profoundly reshaped the intellectual foundations of human thought. For example, Copernicus's heliocentric model prompted a radical re-examination of humanity's cosmic position, Galileo's telescopic observations undermined ecclesiastical authority, and Newton's law of universal conceived of nature as a mathematically ordered system. Lavoisier's chemical revolution further liberated the conception of matter from mystical interpretations. Yet none of these scientific transformations provoked epistemological and metaphysical debate as profoundly as those initiated by the rise of biology.

The emergence of evolutionary theory has transformed biology from a merely descriptive science into one situated at the heart of discussions about religion, belief, and the existence of God. Within this intellectual landscape, *Biology and Ideology from Descartes to Dawkins* stands as a major anthology exploring the interaction between science, religion, and ideology across historical and philosophical continua. Edited by Denis R. Alexander (The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion, Cambridge) and Ronald L. Numbers (University of Wisconsin–Madison)[1], the volume was published by The University of Chicago Press in 2010 with the support of the Templeton Publishing Subsidy Program. Consisting of thirteen essays are handled by scholars in the history of science, philosophy, theology, and sociology, the work demonstrates that science operates not merely as a means of explaining nature but as a framework for constructing meaning, morality, and worldviews.

1 Denis R. Alexander - Ronald L. Numbers, "Introduction", *Biology and Ideology from Descartes to Dawkins*, ed. Denis R. Alexander - Ronald L. Numbers (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2010), 5-7.

The central contribution of the collection lies in its analysis of the tension between the explanatory limits of science and the semantic field of faith. Alexander and Numbers emphasize two conceptual foundations—*methodological naturalism* and *metaphysical naturalism*—which together define the boundaries of modern scientific thought. While the former confines explanation to natural causes, the latter transforms this methodological constraint into an ontological claim that excludes divine agency. When science confines itself to the question of "how" and neglects "why", the editors argue, the epistemic scope of both science and theology is diminished.

At this point, it would be appropriate to emphasize that the contributors to the edited volume employ the concepts of methodological and metaphysical naturalism in differing ways. For instance, Peter Harrison's account of natural theology rests on a conception of order that may be understood as a historical interpretation of methodological naturalism[2], whereas Nicolaas Rupke's claim that Darwin deliberately excluded the question of life's origins appears to open the way for a broader naturalistic framework that assigns a metaphysical function to natural selection.[3] Similarly, we consider Alister McGrath's critique of the transformation of Darwinism into an atheistic worldview to present an approach that questions the limits of metaphysical naturalism.[4] Within this context, Ronald L. Numbers's chapter, *"Creationism, Intelligent Design, and Modern Biology,"* may be regarded as the contribution that most clearly articulates the conceptual distinction between these two uses of naturalism. Numbers provides significant conceptual clarity by arguing that methodological naturalism constitutes a procedural principle of scientific inquiry, whereas metaphysical naturalism represents an ontological claim.[5] As he notes, while Phillip E. Johnson interprets even methodological naturalism as a form of implicit atheism,[6] other contributors in the volume defend it as a methodological boundary that focuses not on the ultimate source of existence but on its observable processes. Recognizing these varied uses of naturalism, we suggest, enables a more rigorous assessment of both the conceptual diversity within the volume and the ideological dimensions of contemporary debates in modern biology.

Despite the absence of an explicit taxonomy, we can interpret the volume's essays according to three thematic axes. The first examines the relationship between biology and natural theology in

2 Peter Harrison,"The Cultural Authority of Natural History in Early Modern Europe", *Biology and Ideology from Descartes to Dawkins*, ed. Denis R. Alexander - Ronald L. Numbers (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2010), 11–38.

3 Nicolaas Rupke, "Darwin's Choice", *Biology and Ideology from Descartes to Dawkins*, ed. Ronald L. Numbers (Chicago: University of Chicago press, 2010), 158.

4 Alister McGrath, "The Ideological Uses of Evolutionary Biology in Recent Atheist Apologetics", *Biology and Ideology from Descartes to Dawkins*, ed. Denis R. Alexander - Ronald L. Numbers (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2010), 329-352.

5 Ronald L. Numbers, "Creationism, Intelligent Design, and Modern Biology", *Biology and Ideology from Descartes to Dawkins*, ed. Denis R. Alexander - Ronald L. Numbers (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2010), 303-305.

6 Phillip E. Johnson, *Defeating Darwinism by Opening Minds: An Easy-to-Unterstand Guide* (Downers Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Press, 1997), 91-92; See also: Phillip E. Johnson, an American Presbyterian lawyer and an early leader of the Intelligent Design movement, contends that methodological naturalism—despite claims of neutrality—operates as a form of thinly veiled atheism. By interpreting the methodological exclusion of divine agency as an implicit metaphysical stance, he argues that modern science embeds an atheistic framework beneath its procedural norms. Numbers, "Creationism, Intelligent Design, and Modern Biology", 325-326.

the early modern period. William Paley's *Natural Theology* (1802)[7] is presented as the classic articulation of the teleological argument, grounding belief in God on the order and purposiveness visible in nature. Paley's famous "watch on the heath" analogy interprets nature as the rational reflection of divine wisdom. Peter Harrison's essay "The Cultural Authority of Natural History in Early Modern Europe"[8] highlights Robert Boyle's *metaphor of natural philosophers* as "priests of nature"[9], reflecting an era when science was viewed as a sacred vocation aimed at discerning divine order.

The second axis investigates the ideological transformation of biology in the post-Darwinian context. Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* (1859) [10] introduced a new paradigm capable of explaining natural processes without recourse to divine intervention. While Darwin did not intend to deny God, his theory displaced theological explanations, situating biology in an ideological rather than epistemological framework. Over time, Darwinian evolution expanded beyond its biological scope, and has shaped modern conceptions of society, morality, and human nature. The third axis explores the influence of modern biology on religion, ethics, and society. Richard Dawkins's *The Blind Watchmaker* (1986)[11] epitomizes this stage, replacing Paley's designer with the metaphor of the "blind watchmaker". By contrast, Dawkins argues that nature's apparent order emerges from unconscious natural mechanisms. This interpretation elevates biology to a metaphysical domain, transforms science into an ideological instrument that supports atheistic interpretations of existence.

This position provoked a response from some contributors within the anthology itself. In "The ideological uses of evolutionary biology in recent atheist apologetics", Alister McGrath criticises the instrumentalization of Darwinism in support of atheism, asserting that such usage extends science beyond its legitimate epistemic boundaries and undermines its neutrality.[12] Science, he insists, must maintain its methodological discipline while avoiding metaphysical speculation. Likewise, in "Evolution and the Idea of Social Progress", Michael Ruse—who identifies himself as an atheist—expresses discomfort with the transformation of biology into a defence of atheism. Ruse[6] argues that when science becomes an ideological belief system, it loses impartiality and collapses into metaphysical dogmatism. Biology thus becomes a framework within which humanity's moral and existential questions are redefined. [13]

7 Jonathan R. Topham, "Biology in the Service of Natural Theology: Paley, Darwin, and the Bridgewater Treatises", *Biology and Ideology from Descartes to Dawkins*, ed. Denis R. Alexander - Ronald L. Numbers (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2010), 92-101; see William Paley, *Natural Theology*, ed. Matthew D. Eddy - David Knight (Oxford: Oxford University Press, UK, 2006).

8 Harrison, "The Cultural Authority of Natural History in Early Modern Europe", 11-13-25-29.

9 Harrison, "The Cultural Authority of Natural History in Early Modern Europe", 28.

10 Rupke, "Darwin's Choice", 139-141,157-163; See also Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species* (New York: P. F. Collier & Son, 1909); Alexander - Numbers, "Introduction", 7-8.

11 McGrath, "The Ideological Uses of Evolutionary Biology in Recent Atheist Apologetics", 329-335.

12 McGrath, "The Ideological Uses of Evolutionary Biology in Recent Atheist Apologetics", 329-335.

13 Michael Ruse, "Evolution and the Idea of Social Progress", *Biology and Ideology from Descartes to Dawkins*, ed. Denis R. Alexander - Ronald L. Numbers (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2010), 247-249,270-272.

The volume's overarching thesis is that biology has consistently maintained "two-way traffic" with the ideological climates of its time. From Paley's theological "watchmaker God" [14] to Darwin's "blind selection" [15] and Dawkins's "metaphysical naturalism" [16], this genealogy demonstrates that science not only interprets nature but also reshapes the moral and religious imagination of modernity.

The anthology's significance extends beyond Western academia. Denis R. Alexander's invitations to speak at conferences in Turkey on "Evolution and Religion" underscore its influence on broader global intellectual discourse. Hence, the work provides an interdisciplinary model for analysing how scientific paradigms intersect with theological and philosophical commitments across cultures.

In conclusion, *Biology and Ideology from Descartes to Dawkins* emerges as a foundational reference for scholars investigating the epistemological limits and ideological extensions of science. Through its thirteen essays, the collection elucidates how biology has evolved from explanatory framework of natural theology into an intellectual system shaping moral and metaphysical assumptions. It approaches the history of science not simply as the accumulation of empirical knowledge but as an enterprise deeply intertwined with questions of meaning, ethics, and belief.

For researchers in Kalām, theology, and the philosophy of science, the anthology offers a comprehensive and critical framework for understanding how methodological naturalism can transition into metaphysical naturalism and how biology continually negotiates between scientific explanation and ideological interpretation. By mapping this intellectual trajectory—from divine design to blind mechanism and beyond—the work demonstrates that science, while methodologically limited, remains inseparable from humanity's broader quest for meaning and moral orientation.

1. Content Analysis and Evaluation

At this point, we believe that examining the relevant sections of the work within a framework of three turning points will be extremely useful for analysing how the authors relate biology to ideologies. The first period is shaped by the ideas of William Paley, which represent the intellectual culmination of natural theology. In the continuation of our study, we will closely examine the articles included in the compilation in detail within the context of this historical continuum, which extends from Paley to Darwin and from there to modern biological ideologies.

1.1. Early Modern Period: From Natural Theology to an Understanding of Evolutionary Natural Order

The anthology begins with Peter Harrison's essay "The Cultural Authority of Natural History in Early Modern Europe", which argues that natural theology provided the intellectual foundation for modern scientific inquiry. William Paley's *Natural Theology* (1802) is presented as the classical articulation of the theological "design argument," grounding belief in God upon the apparent

14 Topham, "Biology in the Service of Natural Theology", 92-101; Harrison, "The Cultural Authority of Natural History in Early Modern Europe", 25-29.

15 Rupke, "Darwin's Choice", 159.

16 Numbers, "Creationism, Intelligent Design, and Modern Biology", 325-327; McGrath, "The Ideological Uses of Evolutionary Biology in Recent Atheist Apologetics", 337-349.

order and purposefulness of nature. For Paley, nature was a readable "text" revealing divine wisdom; biology, therefore, assumed both scientific and theological significance.[17] As Harrison notes, Robert Boyle described natural philosophers as "priests of nature"[18] a metaphor expressing the early modern conviction that scientific investigation was a sacred vocation devoted to discerning divine order. This synthesis of science and theology persisted until Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* (1859) radically transformed it. Darwin sought to point out the order of life without divine intervention, effectively displacing theology from the realm of scientific explanation.[19]

Nicolaas Rupke's "Darwin's Choice" explores this shift, arguing that Darwin deliberately excluded the question of life's origin, reducing the debate to the binary of "evolution or creation. By doing so, biology became central to a metaphysical confrontation. [20] Darwin's theory presented nature as a self-sufficient mechanism operating independently of divine agency, laying the groundwork for scientific naturalism. Similarly, the editors of the volume argue that Darwinism developed beyond a biological theory into a secular worldview, transforming science into a system of meaning that supplanted divine teleology and contributed to the rise of "secular theology".[21]

1.2. The Ideological Expansion of Biology in the Post-Darwinian Period, Eugenics, and Social Implications

The second major turning point emerges in the late nineteenth century, when biology assumed an ideological authority within social and moral domains. Evolutionary theory began to be invoked to justify political hierarchies and social policies. Paul Weindling's "Genetics, eugenics, and the Holocaust"[22] analyses how biology influenced eugenic and racial hygiene movements. He argues that science moved beyond mere explanation to legitimise social order, constructing a new "secular theology" that grounded moral norms in natural law. Michael Ruse's "Evolution and the Idea of Social Progress"[23] similarly critiques the ideological misuse of evolutionary theory. Ruse maintains that transforming Darwinism into a "metaphysical weapon" against theology undermines the neutrality of science and risks converting it into a new belief system functioning in place of religion. As Paul Weindling argues, Darwinian thought in the post-Darwinian period began to transcend its scientific domain, evolving into a secular ideology that shaped moral and cultural values[24]. Similarly, Michael Ruse maintains that science, having moved beyond its explanatory function, began to act as an arbiter of ethical norms, thereby reshaping the modern understanding of knowledge and moral authority. In this post-Darwinian context, biology no longer merely described the natural world but assumed a formative role in constructing social

17 Topham, "Biology in the Service of Natural Theology", 92-101; see Paley, *Natural Theology*, 1-3.

18 Harrison, "The Cultural Authority of Natural History in Early Modern Europe", 27.

19 Rupke, "Darwin's Choice", 139-141,157-163; See also Darwin, *The Origin of Species*; Alexander - Numbers, "Introduction", 7-8.

20 Rupke, "Darwin's Choice", 139-163.

21 Alexander - Numbers, "Introduction", 6-9.

22 Paul Weindling, "Genetics, Eugenics, and the Holocaust", *Biology and Ideology from Descartes to Dawkins*, ed. Denis R. Alexander - Ronald L. Numbers (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2010), 192-214.

23 Ruse, "Evolution and the Idea of Social Progress", 247-272.

24 Weindling, "Genetics, Eugenics, and the Holocaust", 215-219.

ideology. The belief that natural laws determined moral and social order signified a decisive expansion of biology's intellectual influence, extending its authority into domains traditionally governed by philosophy and religion.[25]

1.3. The Effects of Modern Biology on Religion, Morality, and Society

The third analytical axis examines the continuing impact of modern biology on religious thought, ethics, and society. Alister McGrath's "The Ideological Uses of Evolutionary Biology in Recent Atheist Apologetics" contends that evolutionary theory has been reconstituted as a metaphysical framework in contemporary discourse. Darwinism, he suggests, now functions not merely as a scientific theory but as a comprehensive worldview that assumes the interpretive and existential functions once held by religion. McGrath identifies Richard Dawkins's *The Blind Watchmaker* (1986) as an emblem of this shift: Dawkins's "blind watchmaker" metaphor elevates biology to a metaphysical level, transforming it into a vehicle for atheistic ideology.[26]

McGrath cautions that when science answers the "how" of natural phenomena while encroaching upon the "why" of existence, it risks falling into ideological dogmatism. He argues that science should explain natural laws without making ultimate theological judgments—a position resonant with the kalām tradition, which holds that divine creation and natural law coexist harmoniously. As McGrath succinctly states, science does not eliminate God but rather describes the manner in which divine action operates within nature. [27]

Thus, science and religion can coexist as epistemically complementary rather than mutually antagonistic pursuits. Erika Lorraine Milam's "Beauty and the Beast? Conceptualising Sex in Evolutionary Narratives" examines how sociobiology and evolutionary psychology have sought to biologise ethics, producing a "scientific morality" grounded in evolutionary utility. Milam contends that this reduction of moral freedom to biological determinism narrows ethical responsibility and risks collapsing moral philosophy into natural mechanism. [28]

The anthology concludes with Ronald L. Numbers's "Creationism, Intelligent Design, and Modern Biology", which traces the evolution–creationism controversy from the Scopes Trial (1925) to *Kitzmiller v. Dover* (2005). Numbers shows how legal disputes transformed science into the standard of "public reason", relegating theological discourse to the intellectual margins. He argues that in modern societies, science has assumed the role of a public theology—an institutional authority defining the acceptable boundaries of rationality.[29]

Across these three historical stages, the anthology demonstrates that biology has functioned not merely as a science of nature but as a transformative intellectual force shaping ideology, morality, and theology. The progression from Paley's natural theology through Darwin's evolutionary

25 Ruse, "Evolution and the Idea of Social Progress", 351-359.

26 Richard Dawkins, *The Bind Watchmaker: Why the Evidence of Evolution Reveals a Universe without Design* (New York: Norton, 1996), 54-55.

27 McGrath, "The Ideological Uses of Evolutionary Biology in Recent Atheist Apologetics", 339-341.

28 Erika Lorraine Milam, "Beauty and the Beast? Conceptualizing Sex in Evolutionary Narratives", *Biology and Ideology from Descartes to Dawkins*, ed. Denis Alexander - Ronald L. Numbers (Chicago ; London: The University of Chicago Press, 2010), 266-276.

29 Numbers, "Creationism, Intelligent Design, and Modern Biology", 302-320.

mechanism, Dawkins's metaphysical naturalism illustrates both the expanding ambition and the inherent limits of science's claim to meaning.

As an interdisciplinary synthesis, *Biology and Ideology from Descartes to Dawkins* clarifies the ongoing tension between the methodological boundaries and ideological extensions of science. It provides scholars with a conceptual framework to comprehend the recurring intersections between biology's explanatory scope and metaphysical interpretation, thereby validating the work's enduring significance for theology, philosophy, and the history of scientific thought.

Results and Evaluation

The collection "Biology and Ideology from Descartes to Dawkins" demonstrates that biology is not merely a scientific discipline that explains nature; it has also become a decisive philosophical field in the construction of meaning, value, and belief. The articles in the work discuss how biology intertwined with theological, moral, and ideological discourses in different periods of scientific history from an interdisciplinary perspective. In this respect, the work is a significant contribution to the critical examination of science's epistemic authority in the modern world and particularly prompts a reevaluation of the claim of "scientific knowledge's neutrality." The studies included in the compilation demonstrate with concrete examples the transformation of methodological naturalism into metaphysical naturalism over time. The most striking example of the change can be seen in the intellectual line that extends from Paley's God-centred natural theology to Darwin's understanding of natural selection and, from there, to Dawkins' "blind watchmaker" metaphor. This process clearly demonstrates how science transcends its boundaries and transforms into an ideological framework.

In this context, the articles in the work have not only historical but also enduring intellectual value. The compilation offers an interdisciplinary analytical framework for analysing the emergence of science as a new "authority of meaning" replacing religion in modern societies, and it is considered an important reference source for understanding the effects of the biology-ideology nexus on modern thought.

However, it's important to acknowledge certain limitations of the work. Discussions, particularly those concerning biology and ideology, largely approached from a Euro-American perspectives, resulting in an insufficient representation of Islamic and Eastern thought traditions regarding the relationship between science and religion. However, the ways in which the theory of evolution and biological thought were received in Ottoman and Islamic intellectual circles have dynamics quite different from the secular-theological opposition in the West. Therefore, addressing this deficiency in future editions or the continuation of similar studies could enrich the scope of the work and provide a comparative depth. Additionally, certain imbalances in conceptual depth are noticeable among the chapters included in the compilation. Some articles emphasise historical descriptions, while others focus on intensive philosophical analyses. This variation is unavoidable in an interdisciplinary study; however, it sometimes disrupts the logical coherence of the work. However, the convergence of different approaches enhances the intellectual diversity and richness of the compilation and reveals the different dimensions of the biology-ideology relationship.

In conclusion, Biology and Ideology from Descartes to Dawkins is a key reference for researchers investigating the epistemological limits, ideological assumptions, and metaphysical assertions of science. This compilation, meticulously prepared by the editors, analyses modern humanity's search for meaning, morality, and belief, focusing on the historical development of biology. In this respect, the work makes original contributions to the literature on science-religion relations and provides a significant contribution to efforts to understand the ideological dimensions of science and its transformative effects on contemporary thought.

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PUBLISHING POLICY

- The text submitted for publication may not be previously published or accepted for publication by another publisher.
- Papers may not exceed 10.000 words, including appended material such as pictures, charts and maps etc. (and excluding keynotes, bibliographies, abstracts and summaries in English). Papers must be submitted with abstracts comprising the introduction, methodology, findings, discussions and conclusion sections briefly, both in Turkish and English (350-400 words, may not exceed 5000 characters including space) along with key words (5-7 words).
- The language of KADER is Turkish. However, each issue may include papers in English or in Arabic as long as the number of these do not exceed one-third of the total number of papers in the issue.
- The editorial board peruses the submitted paper with regard to both form and content before sending it on to referees. They may also consider the views of the advisory board. After the deliberation of the editorial board, the submitted paper is sent to two referees. If the paper is rejected by one of them, it is sent to third referee. In order for any paper to be published, at least two of the referees must approve it. The revision and improvement demanded by the referees must be implemented in order for a paper to be published. Authors are informed within the process about the decision regarding the publication of their papers.
- A paper cannot be withdrawn by its author after the completion of the evaluation process without a reasonable justification within the scope of publication ethics. In case of such a request, the paper is removed from the system by rejection.
- The authors have to take notice of referees' report. The authors assume the responsibility of the paper with regard to the style, content, scholarly value and legal aspects. The editorial board reserves the right to accept or reject the text. The texts submitted to the journal are not returned, even if they are not accepted for publication. The published texts of the authors could be removed from publication in accordance with the decision of the board. They could not be withdrawn from the journal without the decision of the board. The copyright fee is not paid for the texts.
- All texts published in KADER are copyrighted by the journal; they cannot be used without proper reference.
- According to publication standards of the journal, texts to be considered for publication must be uploaded in "word" file format without specifying name and surname, after being a member of KADER, by paper sent button.
- The texts submitted for publication should be written in A4 size with white space at the top, bottom, right 4 cm and 5 cm from the left side with at least 12nk line spacing, two sides, without line hyphenation and 10 points Isnad font (You can download the font here). However, the

submitted tables, figures, pictures, graphics and etc. should not exceed 12X17 cm in order that they will not go beyond the edges of the page and will be for easy usage. Therefore, smaller points and single space could be used in tables, figures, pictures, graphics and etc. the ISNAD Citation Style 2nd Edition is highly required in footnotes and references.

- Papers will be tested in that are subjected to plagiarism detection program, whether they contain plagiarism or not.

The information below must be given:

- The title of the paper (both in Turkish and English), the name and surname of the author, his/her title, institution, ROR ID of the institution (https://ror.org/) and ORCID ID number must be specified. Besides, information of the author (e-mail address) must be given completely.

Processing Charges

- KADER does not charge any article submission, processing charges, and printing charge from the authors.

THE PERIODICAL RANGE AND TIME

June (30th June)

Submissions: 1st January – 15th April

December (31th December)

Submissions: 1st July – 15th October

The last submission date for special issue is a later date and announced via the web site specifically.

FOOTNOTES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY REFERENCING STYLE

KADER highly requires the authors to use the ISNAD Citation Style 2nd edition. For more information you can visit the website http://www.isnadsistemi.org/en/guide/ and download the handbook and templates from http://www.isnadsistemi.org/en/downloads/ .

ETHICS POLICY

Publication Ethics

The publication process at KADER is the basis of the improvement and dissemination of information objectively and respectfully. Therefore, the procedures in this process

improve the quality of the studies. Peer-reviewed studies are the ones that support and materialize the scientific method. At this point, it is of utmost importance that all parties included in the publication process (authors, readers and researchers, publisher, reviewers and editors) comply with the standards of ethical considerations. KADER expects all parties to hold the following ethical responsibilities.

The following ethical duties and responsibilities are written in the light of the guide and policies made by Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE).

The publication of an article in a peer-reviewed journal is an essential building block in the development of a coherent and respected network of knowledge. It is a direct reflection of the quality of the work of the authors and the institutions that support them. Peer-reviewed articles support and embody the scientific method. It is therefore important to agree upon standards of expected ethical behavior for all parties involved in the act of publishing: the author, the journal editor, the peer reviewer, and the publisher.

1. Ethical Responsibilities of Authors

The authors who submit their manuscripts to KADER are expected to comply with the following ethical responsibilities:

- There is no charge for the paper submitted to the journal.
- Author(s) must submit original studies to the journal.
- If author(s) utilize or use other studies, they must make the in-text and end-text references accurately and completely.
- People who have not contributed to the study at the intellectual level should not be indicated as author.
- If the manuscripts submitted to be published are subject of conflicting interests or relations, these must be explained.
- During the review process of their manuscripts, author(s) may be asked to supply raw data. In such a case, author(s) should be ready to submit such data and information to the editorial board.
- Author(s) should document that they have the participants' consent and the necessary permissions related with the sharing and research/analysis of the data that are used.
- Author(s) bears the responsibility to inform the editor of the journal or publisher if they happen to notice a mistake in their study which is in early release or publication process and to cooperate with the editors during the correction or withdrawal process.
- Authors cannot submit their studies to multiple journals simultaneously. Each submission can be made only after the previous one is completed. A study published in another journal cannot be submitted to KADER.

- Author responsibilities given in a study (e.g., adding an author, reordering of author names) cannot be changed if the review process has begun.

2. Ethical Responsibilities of Editors

The editors of KADER should hold the following ethical responsibilities that are based on the guides "COPE Code of Conduct and Best Practice Guidelines for Journal Editors" and "COPE Best Practice Guidelines for Journal Editors" published as open Access by Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE).

General duties and responsibilities

Editors are responsible for each study published in KADER. In this respect, the editors have the following roles and responsibilities:

- Making efforts to meet the demand for knowledge from readers and authors,
- Ensuring the continuous development of the journal,
- Managing the procedures aimed to improve the quality of the studies published in the journal,
- Supporting intellectual freedom,
- Ensuring academic integrity,
- Following the procedures without making concessions on intellectual property rights and ethical standards,
- Being transparent and clear in issues that require correction or explanation.

Relationships with Readers

Editors must make decisions taking into consideration the knowledge, skills and expectations of all readers, researchers and practitioners that they need. Editors must also ensure that the published studies should contribute to literature and be original. Moreover, they must take notice of the feedback received from readers, researchers and practitioners and provide explanatory and informative feedback.

Relationships with Authors

Editors have the following duties and responsibilities in their relations with authors:

- Editors must make positive or negative decisions about the studies' importance, originality, validity, clarity in wording and suitability with the journal's aims and objectives.
- Editors must take the studies that are within the scope of publication into pre-review process unless there are serious problems with the study.

- Editors must not ignore positive suggestions made by reviewers unless there are serious problems with the study.
- New editors, unless there are serious issues, must not change the previous editor's decisions about the studies.
- "Blind Review and Review Process" must be published and editors must prevent possible diversions from the defined processes.
- Editors must publish an "Author's Guide" that is comprehensive enough in answering queries by authors. This guide must be updated regularly.
- Authors should be provided with explanatory and informative feedback.

Relationships with Reviewers

Editors have the following duties and responsibilities in their relations with reviewers:

Editors must

- respect that their own papers are evaluated by appropriate independent referees from the editorial board.
- choose reviewers according to the subject of the study.
- provide the information and guidance reviewers may need during the review process.
- observe whether there are conflicting interests between reviewers and authors.
- keep the identities of reviewers confidential in blind review.
- encourage the reviewers to review the manuscript in an unbiased, scientific and objective tone.
- evaluate reviewers regularly based on criteria like performance and timing.
- develop practices and policies that increase the performance of reviewers.
- take necessary steps to update the reviewer pool dynamically.
- prevent unkind and unscientific reviews.
- make effort to ensure the reviewer pool has a wide range.

Relationships with the Editorial Board

Editors must make sure that the members of the editorial board follow the procedures in accordance with the publication policies and guidelines, and must inform the members about the publication policies and developments. The editors must also train new members of the editorial board and provide the information they need.

Moreover, editors must

- ensure that the members of the editorial board review the manuscripts in an unbiased and independent manner.

- select the new members of the editorial board from those who can contribute to the journal and are qualified enough.
- send manuscripts for review based on the subject of expertise of the editorial board members.
- regularly communicate with the editorial board.
- arrange regular meetings with the editorial board for the development of publication policies and the journal.

Relationships with the Journal's Owner and Publisher

The relationship between the editors and publisher is based on the principle of the independency of editors.

Editorial and Blind Review Processes

Editors are obliged to comply with the policies of "Blind Review and Review Process" stated in the journal's publication policies. Therefore, the editors ensure that each manuscript is reviewed in an unbiased, fair and timely manner.

Quality Assurance

Editors must make sure that articles in the journal are published in accordance with the publication policies of the journal and international standards.

Protection of Personal Information

Editors are supposed to protect the personal information related with the subjects or visuals in the studies being reviewed, and to reject the study if there is no documentation of the subjects' consent. Furthermore, editors are supposed to protect the personal information of the authors, reviewers and readers.

Encouraging Ethical Rules and Protection of Human and Animal Rights

Editors are supposed to protect human and animal rights in the studies being reviewed and must reject the experimental studies which do not have ethical and related committee’s approval about the population given in such studies.

Precautions against possible Abuse and Malpractice

Editors are supposed to take precautions against possible abuse and malpractice. They must conduct investigations meticulously and objectively in determining and evaluating complaints about such situations. They must also share the results of the investigation.

Ensuring Academic Integrity

Editors must make sure that the mistakes, inconsistencies or misdirections in studies are corrected quickly.

Protection of Intellectual Property Rights

Editors are responsible for protecting the intellectual property rights of all the articles published in the journal and the rights of the journal and author(s) in cases where these rights are violated. Also, editors must take the necessary precautions in order to prevent the content of all published articles from violating the intellectual property rights of other publications.

Constructiveness and Openness to Discussion

Editors must

- pay attention to the convincing criticism about studies published in the journal and must have a constructive attitude towards such criticism.
- grant the right of reply to the author(s) of the criticized study.
- not ignore or exclude the study that include negative results.

Complaints

Editors must examine the complaints from authors, reviewers or readers and respond to them in an explanatory and enlightening manner.

Political and Economic Apprehensions

Neither the owner of the journal, publisher or any other political or economical factor can influence the independent decision taking of the editors.

Conflicting Interests

Editors, acknowledging that there may be conflicting interests between reviewers and other editors, guarantee that the publication process of the manuscripts will be completed in an independent and unbiased manner.

3. Ethical Responsibilities of Reviewers

The fact that all manuscripts are reviewed through “Blind Review” has a direct influence on the publication quality. This process ensures confidentiality by objective and independent review. The review process at KADER is carried out on the principle of double blind review. Reviewers do not contact the authors directly, and the reviews and

comments are conveyed through the journal management system. In this process, the reviewer comments on the evaluation forms and full texts are assigned to the author(s) by the editor. After the blind review process is completed, the accepted papers will be tested in that are subjected to plagiarism detection program, whether they contain plagiarism or not, and they have been previously published or not. In this context, the reviewers doing review work for KADER are supposed to bear the following ethical responsibilities:

- Each paper submitted to the journal is evaluated by two referees at least.
- If one of the two referees rejects a paper while the other accepts it; the paper is sent to third referee or to the editor for making final decision.

Reviewers must

- agree to review only in their subject of expertise.
- review in an unbiased and confidential manner.
- inform the editor of the journal if they think that they encounter conflict of interests and decline to review the manuscript during the review process.
- dispose the manuscripts they have reviewed in accordance with the principle of confidentiality after the review process. Reviewers can use the final versions of the manuscripts they have reviewed only after publication.
- review the manuscript objectively and only in terms of its content and ensure that nationality, gender, religious and political beliefs, and economic apprehension do not influence the review.
- review the manuscript in a constructive and kind tone, avoid making personal comments including hostility, slander and insult.
- review the manuscript they have agreed to review on time and in accordance with the ethical rules stated above.

4. Ethical Responsibilities of Publisher

The Board of KADER is conscious of the fact that they must observe the ethical responsibilities below and act accordingly:

- KADER does not charge any article submission from authors.
- Editors are responsible for all the processes that the manuscripts submitted to KADER will go through. Within this framework, ignoring the economic or political interests, the decision-makers are the editors.
- The publisher undertakes to have an independent editorial decision made.
- However, the journal has left the database open on the internet.
- The publisher bears all the responsibility to take the precautions against scientific abuse, fraud and plagiarism.

5. Unethical Behavior

Should you encounter any unethical act or content in KADER apart from the ethical responsibilities listed above, please notify the journal by e-mail at kaderdergi@gmail.com.

FOOTNOTES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY REFERENCING STYLE

Kader, uses ISNAD Citiation style 2nd edition. Articles that submitted to our journal should be written in accordance with this style. You can review ISNAD citiation style at http://www.isnadsistemi.org/guide/.

ABBREVIATIONS

abr.	abridged by
b.	born
ca.	about, approximately
cf.	compare
chap. /chaps	chapter/chapters
comp.	compiler/compiled by
d.	died
diss.	dissertation
ed.	edited by/edition/editor
eds.	editors
et al.	and others
fn.	footnote
n.d.	no date
no.	number/issue
n.p.	no place/no publisher
p./pp.	page/pages
par.	paragraph
pt.	part
rev. ed.	revised edition
sec.	section
trans.	translated by
vol.	volume