



ISSN 2645-9132
Volume: 4 Issue: 1 (July 2021)

Word Made Book
A Semantic and Historical Study of the Supra-Rationality of the Qur'ān as Transmitted in the Medium of Revelation within the Metaphysical Sociology of Arabia

Syed Waqas	
Cincinnati Christian University, Department of Theology, Cincinnati, Ohio, USA	
syed.waqas@ccuniversity.edu	ORCID 0000-0003-0867-5400

Article Information		
Type Research Article		
Received 11 November 2020	Accepted 29 July 2021	Published 31 July 2021
Cite as Waqas, Syed. "Word Made Book A Semantic and Historical Study of the Supra-Rationality of the Qur'ān as Transmitted in the Medium of Revelation within the Metaphysical Sociology of Arabia". <i>ULUM</i> 4/1 (2021), 7-24.		
Research / Publication Ethics This article was reviewed by at least two referees, a similarity report was obtained using Turnitin, and compliance with research/publication ethics was confirmed.		
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Word Made Book

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Abstract

This article argues that the Qur'ān seeks to place its modality of revelation within the oracle of Arabia and recognizes it as such a valid “form” of revelation. It inducts its medium of revelation within the familiar apparatus of the pagan divination institution by tapping into the realm of supra-rationality while, simultaneously, making a radical departure from it at the doctrinal level. The Qur'ānic oracle speaks for one *universal* God as opposed to a tribal deity, pantheon of gods, or an anthropomorphized divinity that partakes of the experience of humanity. The article seeks to work with the core Islamic concept of *revelation* in dialogue with the notion of the Word of God in a semantic slash historical context.¹ The inquiry glances at the historical presentation of what Islam warrants as a rationale of revelation by maintaining a propositional and qualitative distinction from the pagan oracle. It projects the dialectics of quality versus quantity and principle versus form rather than undertaking a complete break with the existing metaphysical and epistemological cosmos. Such a claim of *external* guidance, from the above, as laid by all three Semitic religions is, inherently, based upon, and rooted within the source of a higher realm attributed to the divinity. Islam's hierarchy of being and non-being revolves around an essential Being, the one *true* God, as a theological necessity, whereas all contingency, the creation including mankind, is granted existence in the sanctuary of the divine will that takes place through God's grace.² The will of God, *Logos*, defines the relationship between the necessity and the contingency in the self-consciousness of the Qur'ān.

Keywords

Logos, Word of God, Book, *kāhin*, *shā'ir*, *nabī*, *waḥī*, *tanzīl*

Introduction

Man is a special creation in the divine plan, an image-bearer and deputy of God, who embodies the manifestation of divine attributes, especially, in accordance with the teachings of the two most sacred scriptures of Abrahamic religious tradition, the Bible and the Qur'ān.³ Man, being ordained as the vicegerent of God, is directed and aided by the higher intellect outside man's own intellectual limits, the supra-rationality,

¹ The inquiry of the subject centers on the use of terminology from epistemological and conceptual standpoints, particularly the Qur'ānic text's response to, and reception of the biblical text.

² R. Baine Harris, ed., *Neoplatonism and Contemporary Thought: Part Two* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2002), 330.

³ Genesis 1:26-28; Qur'an 2:30 and 15:29.

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which, Islam has posited as *wahī*, “revelation.”⁴ This Islamic concept of revelation characterizes the crucial process of *external* guidance and bears the essential qualification of a God-man communication. Revelation is, technically, a subjective reality for the one undergoing such an ecstatic slash mystical experience, for it does not yield the possibility of an *a posteriori* inquiry into the stated dimension of being and enlightenment. It is, therefore, crucial for the present study of the history and semantics of God-man communication as discoursed in the sociological construct of religious phenomena to analyze the concept, structure, and background of Islam’s cornerstone of revelation. It is this medium of revelation, a refined form of biblical inspiration, that Islam employs for the event of “sending down” (Arabic, *tanzīl*) the so-called Word that is made *the Book*, Al-Qur’ān.⁵

In the present study of the transcendent and revealed Word of God, at least three historical terms—which were all well known to the Arabs of early 7th century⁶—are primarily important for an inquiry to be carried out within Islam’s metaphysical purview. The Qur’ān’s semantic structure, in principle, offers an epistemological threshold to distinguish revelation from what it calls “roaming in imagination” and “whispering” on a qualitative scale.⁷ *Shā’ir*, “poet,” *kāhin*, “soothsayer,” and *nabī*, “prophet,” for instance, are those particular terms, representing three diverse socio-religious phenomena, that are employed by the Qur’ān to explore into the origin of what it purports to be an epiphany from the higher intellect. The nature and veracity of such an epiphany set the stage here for the intuitive perception of the substance received by a person and to distinguish between the true and false origins of an alleged revelation. The divination category outlined in the Qur’ān includes the above spoken three classes into the fold of those supposedly “aided from on high” against a falsification test that the Qur’ān devises to authenticate each claim, thereof. The criterion suggested in the Qur’ān, for instance, grants authenticity in association with truth to the intuition and epiphany of the “prophet” alone in the stated falsification test.⁸ A prophet is the recipient of true revelation, the Qur’ān concludes, because the origin of the content of a prophet’s revelation is the only true *essential* being, God.

The present historical analysis of those allegedly supernaturally aided pagan institutions of pre-Islamic Arabia begins with the cadre of poets. The word poet appears 11 times in the Qur’ān and it is

⁴ *Sūrah Baqarah* 2:30-33 narrates the purpose and story of man’s creation. It articulates Islam’s doctrine of man’s special creation as an ‘intelligent creature’ and selection of the ‘earth’ for man’s dwelling. For instance, verses 30-31 explicitly lay it out: “Behold, thy Lord said to the angels: ‘I will create a vicegerent on earth.’ They said: ‘Wilt Thou place therein one who will make mischief therein and shed blood?— whilst we do celebrate Thy praises and glorify Thy holy (name)?’ He said: ‘I know what ye know not.’ And He taught Adam the nature of all things...” [see footnote 10]

⁵ *Tanzīl* is the Arabic word employed by the Qur’ān to state the gradualness of the process of revelation. It resembles the Christian doctrine of incarnation to a degree that the divine attribute of *Logos*, whether abstract or real, is sent down to mankind and transformed in (a) human language. However, there is a marked difference between the Qur’ān’s “sending down” and the Johannine incarnation because the concept of *tanzīl* stands for a piecemeal revelation process rather than birth in flesh in a single instance.

⁶ This reference is to the moment of the commencement of the Qur’ānic revelation. Historically, it is placed between the years 608 and 611 of the Common Era, whereas the most favored year is 610. See ‘Abdullah Saeed, *The Qur’an: An Introduction* (New York, NY: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2008), 26, 45.

⁷ “Roaming in imagination” in *Sūrah Shu’ara* 26:224-225 and “whispers of whisperer” in *Sūrah Nās* 114:4-5.

⁸ Some instances in the Qur’ān where the test can be recognized in the trajectory of discerning the truth from falsehood are *Sūrah Baqarah* 2:147, *Sūrah Nahl* 16:116, *Sūrah Hajj* 22:62, *Sūrah Nūr* 24:25, *Sūrah Fāṭir* 35:31, *Sūrah Fuṣṣilat* 41:42, *Sūrah Shūrā* 42:51 etc.

noteworthy that it bears negative connotation in almost every single instance.⁹ The Qur'ān does not condemn poetry itself *per se*, albeit it looks down upon the contemporary Arabic poetry, which it terms fallacious and misleading. The Qur'ānic voice, for instance, explains the above stipulation in the following verses.

And We have not taught him (Muḥammad) poetry, nor is it suitable for him. This is only a Reminder and a plain Qur'ān. (*Sūrah Yā-Sīn* 36:69)¹⁰

Shall I inform you (O people) upon whom the Shayāṭīn (devils) descend? They descend on every lying, sinful person. Who gives ear (to the devils), and most of them are liars. As for the poets, the erring ones follow them. Do you not see that in every area they imagine? And that they say what they do not do. (*Sūrah Shu'arā* 26:221-226)

Pre-Islamic Arabia is said to be a land of peerless eloquence expressed in the heart-rending poetry of the desert poets, which was often termed as 'magic.'¹¹ The boastful Arabs were extremely proud of the excellence of their language, because they had preserved the primordially of their language not only in the genius of poetry, but even in the ordinary speech that would yield original meaning without reducing the language to the Indo-European languages' subordination and architectonic model, and thereby it preserves the originality of language in addition to bearing powerful rhythmic patterns and poetical qualities.¹² And above all, the genre of poetry had taken on the form of an art among the nomadic Arabs and was, in fact, a source of pride and glory in the chivalrous culture of the desert.¹³ The primitive concept of poetry was, however, still alive behind the façade of art, for the outpouring of poetry was deemed as an initiative external to man's own faculties. The poetical process was understood to be a sudden outburst of an intuitively received message from a higher source coded in a majestic and overly ornate language—an Arabian version of the Greek Muses of Poetry.¹⁴ Such a process of reception and transmission of the descending verses would take place in a state of trance as a norm rather than an exception.¹⁵

When the Prophet Muḥammad first brought forth the verses of the Qur'ān, his pagan audience in Mecca alleged him to be a poet due to the language phenomenon. Their initial reaction was of surprise and disbelief confusing the verses of the Qur'ān with plain poetry, primarily, because of the use of poetic meter, eloquent language, allegory and symbolism, and rhyming arrangement of powerful vocabulary.¹⁶ The Qur'ānic narrator promptly responded to that situation and the Qur'ān vehemently defended itself against

⁹ Thomas Patrick Hughes, *A Dictionary of Islam* (London: W.H. Allen & Co., 1885), 459-460s, art. "Poet."

¹⁰ I have not restricted myself to one particular translation of the Qur'ān in the article, for such a thing does not fulfill the requirement of an academic research with reference to the transmission of the Islamic scripture's meaning and message. The article has preferably benefited from the renowned English translations of 'Abdullah Yusuf 'Ali [*The Meaning of the Holy Qur'an*] and Taqi-ud-Din Hilali and Muhsin Khan [*The Noble Qur'an: The English Translation of the Meanings and Commentary*].

¹¹ Akhtar, *Quran and Secular Mind*, 121.

¹² Cyril Glassé, *The New Encyclopedia of Islam* (3rd Edition. Lanham, MD: Roman & Littlefield Publishers, 2008), 59, art. "Arabic."

¹³ Robert G. Hoyland, *Arabia and the Arabs: From the Bronze Age to the Coming of Islam* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2003), 212.

¹⁴ Yudit Kornberg Greenberg, *Encyclopedia of Love in World Religions* (vol. 2; Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO Inc., 2008), 473.

¹⁵ Glassé, *New Encyclopedia of Islam*, 278, art. "Kāhin."

¹⁶ Nasr, *Study Quran*, p.925, footnote *al-Shu'arā* 26:224-226.

being a creation of a poet.¹⁷ The Qur'ān, in turn, polemically charged at this critical point laying a bold “challenge” (Arabic, *taḥaddī*) to the pagan poets of producing a similar piece of linguistic artwork.¹⁸ As it turns out, it was the traditional Arabic poetry embedded in the pre-Islamic *poetics* of the land, which the Qur'ān laid a challenge to and upset with its exquisite lyricism and distinct genre. The primitive concept of poetry had not undergone yet a complete transformation in the Arab mind as to drift away from the idea of supernatural influence.¹⁹ Poets were believed to be possessed by supernatural entities, particularly a *jinn*, “genie” or a *shayṭān*, “demon.”²⁰ It was a *jinn* who was believed to inspire a poet in the process of the composition of poetry.²¹ The poet would gush forth the desired poetic verses of his/her supernatural inspirer in a state of trance—conceptually not dissimilar to the Greek composition and function of poetry under the influence of Muses.²² The Qur'ān has used a compound expression for this phenomenon, *shā'ir majnūn*, “a *jinn*-possessed poet” (*Ṣāffāt* 37:36)—demonic poetry.²³ This personal *jinn* of the Arab poets, deriving its roots from the folklore, was conventionally called *khalīl*, “a close friend,” in both cultured and nomadic settings of Arabia. The Prophet of Islam, due to the cultural and experiential relativism of the Arabs peculiar to the Muses phenomenon, was also termed as one “possessed by the *jinn*.” The Qur'ān confirms the charge of pagans on the Prophet Muḥammad.

And they say: “What! Shall we give up our gods for the sake of a Poet possessed?” (*Sūrah Ṣāffāt* 37:36)

A poet has a twofold function according to the pre-Islamic Arabian model of poetry: (a) he entertains his audience with his musical poetry in public gatherings, particularly with a touch of romance, and (b) he acts as a political as well as tribal agent to incite their chauvinism while arraying up for a battle with his magical words.²⁴ The poet, being himself only a channel, is purportedly aided from the “above” while the poetic substance “descends” (Arabic, *nuzūl*) on him in a process similar to dictation.²⁵ Historically, it was presumed that a poet’s job was inherently structured along the needs of occasion, which would innately

¹⁷ Thomas Hoffmann, *The Poetic Qur'an* (Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2007), 17.

¹⁸ *Sūrah Baqarah* 2:23 lays the challenge in following words: “And if ye are in doubt as to what We (Allah) have revealed from time to time to Our servant (Muḥammad), then produce a Chapter like thereunto; and call your witnesses or helpers (If there are any) besides Allah, if your (doubts) are true.”

¹⁹ (a) Toshihiko Izutsu, *God and Man in the Qur'an* (Kuala Lumpur: Islamic Trust, 2002), 182.

(b) Toshihiko further comments on the Arabian Muse’s inspiration activity on page 182 in the following words: “(Poet) was a person who had the first-hand knowledge of the unseen world. And this knowledge of the unseen world he was supposed to derive, not from his own personal observation, but from constant intimate commerce with some supernatural beings, called *jinn* ... who were believed to be hovering around in the air.”

²⁰ Raymond H. Prince, *Trance and Possession States* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University, 1968), 189. The Arabic word for the possession or being under the influence of a supernatural entity, particularly a *jinn*, is *tajnīn*.

²¹ In Arabic, *jinn* is a plural form of the singular word *jinnī*. However, it is commonplace to use the plural form, *jinn*, to reference one individual *jinnī*. I will follow this popular understanding in the article.

²² Guthrie in Yoram Hazony, *The Philosophy of Hebrew Scripture* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 276.

²³ The compound *shā'ir-i-majnūn* can also be described as a “demon possessed poet,” but the problem with such a translation would be that the word “demon” primarily carries a negative connotation in English, whereas a *jinni* can be both good and bad in the mind of the ancient Arabs. Theodore Nöldeke brings up discussion on this topic in *The History of the Qur'an*. See Theodore Nöldeke et al, *The History of the Qur'an*, ed. and trans. Wolfgang H. Behn (Leiden, the Netherlands: Brill Publishing, 2013), 20-22.

²⁴ Ali Ahmad Hussein, *The Lightning-Scene in Ancient Arabic Poetry* (Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2009), 23, 66.

²⁵ Reuven Snir, *Religion, Mysticism and Modern Arabic Literature* (Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2006), 94.

require of him to accomplish the crucial task of bringing forth occasion-based poetry—that too spontaneously. It was a role primarily ordained and assigned by the poet's tribe for political ends and was *ipso facto* embedded in the framework of Arabia's pagan religiosity.²⁶ The poet, nevertheless, only represents the supernatural phenomena of lower ranks and remains completely inadmissible into the more powerful and complex realm of gods. Due to such an overlapping role and loose understanding of the poet's dominion, the pagan audience of the Prophet Muḥammad did not authenticate his prophetic message as God's "Word" and thereby confused the "God-breathed" verses of the Qur'ān, as it claims for itself, with the "jinn-breathed" poetry of Arabian mythology.²⁷ By committing this error of judgment, therefore, they were responsible for setting up in the language of the Qur'ān "a kinship between Allah and the jinns" (Ṣāffāt 37:158).

Kāhin, "oracle," "soothsayer" or "diviner," on the other hand, is the mouthpiece of a god or goddess whom that particular deity, say the god of a tribe, battle, or affluence, has endowed with occult powers.²⁸ This Arabian soothsayer hears a mysterious voice from a supernatural entity invisible to human eye, directly descending from the realm of the unseen, and thereupon transmits the formless sound to his clients in a mysteriously worded human speech in a state of overwhelming excitement often leading to frenzy.²⁹ He performs the miracle of transforming speechless *mantic* sound into a sensible speech, allegedly, by using his occult powers. A *kāhin*, moreover, interprets dreams, casts lots, and guides his tribesmen through various religious, socio-economic, and political enterprises, whereas, most importantly, leading his community into the observance of sacrificial and religious rituals is an inherent part of the vocation of *kahānah*. A *kāhin*, therefore, enjoys a socially privileged status, which is, universally, embedded in the core of mythological *weltanschauung* of the world. The *kāhin*-oracle is presumed to be the portal of connectivity between the divine and the human realms as conceived in the mythological principle of "continuity" in the ancient Near East.³⁰

The office of *kahānah*, critically speaking, closely resembles the office of prophethood in its mechanics, dynamics, and objectives—the difference being the claim to truth and the origin of inspiration.³¹ However, it is emphasized that an oracle is an "antitype of the prophet (*nabī*) in the same sense as a king (*malik*) is an antitype of an apostle (*rasūl*)."³² The Qur'ān distinguishes between the two vocations by considering the origin of each institution rather than the function, whereby it builds the argument for the truth of

²⁶ Roger Allen, *The Arabic Literary Heritage: The Development of Its Genres and Criticism* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 109.

²⁷ Snir, *Religion*, 95.

²⁸ The word *kāhin* appears only two times in the text of the Qur'ān (*Sūrah Ḥāqqah* 69:42; *Sūrah Ṭūr* 52:29). The Hebrew word for the Arabic *kāhin* is כהן (Cohen), but it bears a slight difference in meaning.

²⁹ *The Encyclopedia Britannica: A Dictionary of Arts, Science, and General Literature* (vol. 19; New York, NY: The Henry G. Allen Company, 1890), 727.

³⁰ John N. Oswalt, *The Bible Among the Myths* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 29.

³¹ Here the resemblance is being spoken of in terms of the word's Arabian context. The Qur'ān views "prophethood/prophesy" in a relatively broader context than the Judeo-Christian Bible does, which is the reason why it develops conceptual details and theological connotations based on context around the concept that were unheard of in the Hebrew culture.

³² Cohn-Sherbok, *Islam in a World*, 97.

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prophethood.³³ On the other hand, furthermore, a *kāhin*'s distinction from a poet crystallizes in the fact that his utterances are in no way conventional poetry. Such homiletic utterances, instead, consist of a specialized discourse called *saj*, "cooing of the dove."³⁴ It is a genre of Arabic literature that is made up of rhymed prose in the literary art, which is stylistically close to the early Qur'ānic language. Ahmad Von Denffer, a modern Muslim expert of the Qur'ānic sciences, defines *saj* genre as:

[*Saj*] is a literary form with some emphasis on rhythm and rhyme, but distinct from poetry. *Saj* is not really as sophisticated as poetry, but has been employed by Arab poets, and is the best known of the pre-Islamic Arab prosodies. It is distinct from poetry in its lack of metre.³⁵

The particular style of *saj* is generally understood to be a blend of the characteristic features of both poetry and prose, whereas the beginning of a piece of *saj*, as a norm, is marked with a formula of "oaths" (Arabic, *wa*). In this form of language, as linguistic scholars have observed, the most recurring among the oaths are those of the objects of nature.³⁶ A popular southern Arabian legend, for instance, narrates the story of a *kāhin* named *Saṭīḥ*, who, according to the early Islamic chronicler *Ibn Ishāq*, was interviewed by the chief of Yemen's Lakhmīd Kingdom, *Rabī'ah ibn Naṣr*. The event took place before the dawn of Islam and the chief of the Lakhmīd Kingdom asked him if a certain prophecy of his regarding a looming foreign invasion, which afterwards turned out to be the Abyssinian attack, was true.³⁷ Upon hearing the question, he replied to the king in his *saj*-style oracular discourse breaking it into a series of invocative oath-propositions:

<i>wa-shafaq,</i>	By the evening twilight.
<i>wa'l ghasaq,</i>	By the darkness.
<i>wa'l falaq,</i>	By the dawn.
<i>idhā-tasaq,</i>	When it breaks bright.
<i>innā mā anbā'tukā bihī lā-ḥaq.</i>	Verily what I have told you is true. ³⁸

According to the majority of the Arabists, *saj* is the prototype of the classical Arabic poetry.³⁹ What appeals the interest of critical scholarship at this stage is the discovery of an identical linguistic character in the opening of the Qur'ānic *sūrah*s, particularly those composed in the Prophet Muḥammad's native city, Mecca. Some critics, especially those coming of the Western Orientalist and secular schools, contend that the early Qur'ānic revelation, which is often rendered as the "Qur'an in miniature," proceeded under a direct influence of Arabia's *kāhin* discourse—ubiquitous in southern Arabia in particular.⁴⁰ This scholarly stance may broadly be termed as the 'similarity hypothesis.'

³³ See *Sūrah Ḥāqqah* 69:41-43 where the Qur'ān compares and contrasts all three classes in question.

³⁴ Allen, *Heritage*, 87.

³⁵ Ahmed Von Denffer, *‘Ulum al-Qur’an: An Introduction to the Sciences of the Qur’an* (Leicester, UK: The Islamic Foundation, 2003), 75.

³⁶ Allen, *Heritage*, 86.

³⁷ *The Encyclopedia of Islam* (New Edition, vol. IX. Sana'a: The International Union of Academies, 1989), 84, art. "Saṭīḥ,"

³⁸ Izutsu, *God*, 188.

³⁹ *Ibid*, 184.

⁴⁰ Diane Morgan, *Essential Islam: A Comprehensive Guide to Belief and Practice* (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger ABC CLIO, 2010), 24.

Textual critics will recognize that the Qur'ānic language reflects a bearing of the *saj* patterns originally developed by the institution of *kāhānah*. It is historically plausible that the Qur'ān came to adopt the linguistic threshold from the discourse of *kāhin* to develop its own thesis on a structure already recognized by the immediate audience of the Qur'ānic voice.⁴¹ It is not, however, a total reliance on the *saj* structure that advances the Qur'ānic thesis, because the overall style is fully immersed in the paradigmatic dimensions of supra-rational theme and message of the Scripture, which transforms poetic language structure to transcend human emotionality in order to adjust it within its own devised framework. Toshihiko Izutsu, for instance, comments on this aspect of the Qur'ān's linguistic evolution.

The rhythm of some verses resembles the regularity of *saj*... But it was recognized by the *Quraysh* [sic] critics to belong to neither one nor the other category.⁴²

Having observed such a technical difference between the traditional *saj* genre and the Qur'ānic language, therefore, scholars have preferred to put this style under the distinct heading of the “Qur'ānic *saj*.”⁴³ Given such a radical nature of the message and innovativeness of style in that it found acceptance as an independent genre among the Arab audiences *ab initio*, the transition turned out to be a revolutionary feat. The *saj* of the *kāhin* was a vehicle to release magical powers, and so was the *rajaz*, “chivalric poetry,” of the *shā'ir*.⁴⁴ But the Qur'ānic revelation distanced itself from the concept of magical powers found associated with the words released through incantations and enchantments, as was an established practice in the pre-Islamic period of *jāhiliyyah*, “ignorance.”⁴⁵ “In the Qur'an,” says Izutsu, “many of the old pre-Islamic words and concepts are used with entirely new connotations; they have been adjusted to an entirely new conceptual framework.”⁴⁶ The Qur'ānic use of this familiar linguistic structure—moral, political, and theological vocabulary—breathed a new spirit into the recipient community under a radically new concept of religious nature, which sealed the fate of paganism in Arabia and reshaped the whole socio-cultural fabric of the peninsula.⁴⁷ The Qur'ān, on the one hand, boasts of its linguistic and stylistic grandeur, but, simultaneously, it also lays emphasis on its quality of being a book in the language of the immediate audience, Arabic, which carries a message from the divine that is plain and requires only basic human intellect to understand.⁴⁸

The above historical picture shows that the Qur'ānic *Logos* comes in direct confrontation with the rival pagan institutions, which brings about a radically new context for the emergence of the doctrine of “Word of God.”⁴⁹ At this point, the Johannine *Logos* vanishes behind the curtain and the Qur'ān goes into

⁴¹ Allen, *Heritage*, 87.

⁴² A.F.L. Beeston et al., ed., *Arabic Literature to the End of the Umayyad Period* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 34.

⁴³ Devin J. Steward, “‘Saj’ in the Qur'an: Prosody and Structure,” *Journal of Arabic Literature*, No. 21, (1990), 102.

⁴⁴ Allen, *Heritage*, 108-109.

⁴⁵ Such things as ‘magic’ and ‘enchantments’ are an essential part of mythical systems and mystery cults. For more on the Qur'ān's spectrum on the manipulative supernatural powers, see Nasr, *Study Quran*, 925, footnote *Sūrah Shu'arā* 26:224-226.

⁴⁶ Izutsu, *God*, 198.

⁴⁷ Akhtar, *Quran and Secular Mind*, 160-161.

⁴⁸ The Qur'ān acknowledges and articulates the necessity of linguistic finitude in its text on several places. It directly implies a connection between the language and human reason, and insists that the message was made plain and clear for those who use reason. For instance, in *Sūrah Yūsuf* 12:2, it says: “Truly we sent it down as an Arabic Qur'ān, that haply you may understand.”

⁴⁹ Hoffmann, *Poetic Qur'an*, 17-18.

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contextual mode seeking a redefinition of the historical ideology of *Logos* in line with the perceptibility of its Arabic speaking audience.⁵⁰ To this end, therefore, the Qur'ān places both poet and soothsayer into the same fold of disillusioned classes of people. These two classes, the Qur'ān maintains, lay claims to supernatural revelation and inspiration and thus stray in evil led by their desires and blinded by the agency of Satan.⁵¹ Such a picture makes it natural for the Qur'ān to rebut their claims and not grant certification to the sources of either poet or soothsayer. The divine origin, which it associates with the unimpeachable *absolute* truth, is exclusively acclaimed for the prophetic revelation, whereas it is distinctly identified with the Word of God.

It is not the word of a poet (*shā'ir*): little it is ye believe! Nor is it the word of a soothsayer (*kāhin*): little admonition it is ye receive. (This is) a Message sent down from the Lord of the Worlds. (*Sūrah Ḥāqqah* 69:41-43)

Such a complete rejection of the poet and soothsayer's *inspiration* is, at large, an emphatic denial of a connection between their imagination and the Creator's ratification in Islam's ontological design. They are part of the spectrum of visions deluded and bedeviled leading to disastrous ends according to the theory of religious ethos the Qur'ān propounds.⁵²

In the third place is the recurrent term of the Qur'ān's revered scenario, *nabī*, which, in every respect, is an equivalent of the biblical Hebrew word נָבִיא (*nevi*), Greek word προφήτης (*prophetes*), and modern English word "prophet." *Nabī* is more commonly taken to mean "one who bubbles forth" among scholars, whereas the Arabic lexicon *Al-Qāmūs* puts it as the "exalted one."⁵³ The word *nabī* has occurred 75 times in the text of the Qur'ān, while the noun *nabuwwah*, "prophethood" or "office of prophecy," has made five appearances therein. In addition to these key terms of the Qur'ān's theological epistemology, the root verb for these words, *nabā'*, "to bring news," in all of its forms, occurs at least 160 times and constitutes a central part of the Qur'ān's message undergirding its layers of themes and subthemes.⁵⁴

The word *nabī*, philologically speaking, is neither originally an Arabic word nor an Arabian concept of indigenous roots; instead, the term in question is a loanword into Arabic language from the Jewish Aramaic along with the concept it bears.⁵⁵ A section of the Muslim scholarship, however, often attempts to defy such a philological and semantic connection of the word to a foreign language and thus refuses to acknowledge the foreign origin of the word *nabī*.⁵⁶ In spite of coordinated Islamic criticism, this resounding view of the Oriental scholarship does not appear entirely baseless, for the Jewish history of the word's usage strengthens the evidence for the aforesaid conclusion. What can, therefore, be considered in a critical study is the

⁵⁰ Rev. E.M. Wherry, *A Comprehensive Commentary on the Quran* (vol. IV, London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1896), 1.

⁵¹ "And as for the Poets, it is those straying in evil, who follow them: Seest thou not that they wander distracted in every valley? - And that they say what they practise not?" (*Sūrah Shu'arā* 26:224-226)

⁵² The Qur'ān expresses Islam's views on the influence wielded by sensational poets and soothsayers on the ethos of a culture in *Sūrah Ṭūr* 52:29. "So remind, for thou art not, by the Blessing of thy Lord, a soothsayer or one possessed. Or do they say, "A poet—let us await the vagaries of fate for him" Say, "Wait! For truly I am waiting along with you." (See Nasr, *Study Quran*, 925, footnote on *Sūrah Shu'arā* 26:224-226)

⁵³ Hughes, *Dictionary of Islam*, 475, art. "Prophet"

⁵⁴ 'Omar, *Dictionary of Qur'an*, 550.

⁵⁵ Arthur Jeffery, *The Foreign Vocabulary of the Qur'an* (New Delhi: Cosmo Publications, 2009), 276.

⁵⁶ נָבִיא (*nevi*) is the more commonplace form of the English word "prophet" in Hebrew. The word represents, in essence, an identical concept as Arabic *nabī*, which is pronounced slightly differently.

likelihood of the word having undergone a transition in its lexical function, theological designation, and social connotation after being adopted into Arabic.

The institution of prophecy, *nabuwwah*, is established in Islam as an unimpeachable spiritual station that plays vital role in shaping up religious ethos and lifestyle of the believers. It earns its *raison d'être* in that it is ordained by God to be as such and no corporeal power can undo the principal task of prophecy.⁵⁷ A principal code of conduct and ministerial qualification, *modus operandi*, for the class of prophets is outlined in the 3rd chapter of the Qur'ān.

It is not (possible) that a man, to whom is given the Book, and Wisdom, and the prophetic office, should say to people: "Be ye my worshippers rather than Allah's": on the contrary (He would say) "Be ye worshippers of Him Who is truly the Cherisher of all: For ye have taught the Book and ye have studied it earnestly. Nor would he instruct you to take angels and prophets for Lords and patrons. What! Would he bid you to unbelief after ye have bowed your will (to Allah in submission)? (Sūrah Āl 'Imrān 3:79-80)

After having proclaimed the ordination of the prophetic office and having outlined the anatomy of it, the Qur'ān makes it incumbent on the believers to profess faith in the true prophets of God that were sent to every inhabited landmass in the world.⁵⁸ According to a tradition found in a popular book of *Ḥadīth*, *Mishkāt al-Maṣābiḥ*, the prophets number around 124,000 with their ministries instituted all over the world, among all the nations, within the timeframe spanning the period between the historical persons of Adam and Muḥammad.⁵⁹

Say: "We believe in Allah, and in what has been revealed to us and what was revealed to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, and the Tribes, and in (the Revelation) given to Moses, Jesus, and the prophets, from their Lord: We make no distinction between one and another among them, and to Allah do we bow our will (in Islam)." (Sūrah Āl 'Imrān 3:84)

To the end of distinguishing a prophet from both poet and soothsayer, the Qur'ān takes a recourse back to the revelation—the *Logos* emanating from God. As above noted, the Qur'ānic challenge to pagans to produce a work of a similar style and nature is not only meant to establish the linguistic superiority of the "Book," but also the other premise behind the challenge is to grant legitimacy to the origin of a prophet. Failing to meet the challenge, therefore, disqualifies both the poet and the soothsayer for the elevated station of prophecy and discredits their claim of having access to a supernatural source. This challenge runs into the Qur'ān's rhetorical structure with an exceptional confidence that it has in its own source of revelation. It is, therefore, argued on the above premise that none but God alone can be the author of the Qur'ān.⁶⁰

The word prophet is, therefore, used as a model concept to illustrate the nature of truth in revelation—or more appropriately, true revelation—and build the hierarchy of its qualified recipients called in by

⁵⁷ Colin Turner, *Islam: The Basics* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2011), 119.

⁵⁸ Nasr, *Study Quran*, 664-665, footnote *Naḥl* 16:36.

⁵⁹ Hughes, *Dictionary of Islam*, 475, art. "Prophet."

⁶⁰ Richard Bell, *The Origin of Islam in Its Christian Environment* (London: Routledge, 2012), 51.

the Supreme Being. Such a huge number of occurrences of the words pertinent to revelation, in fact, manifest the importance of revelation as a medium as well as its substance in the religious contour described in the Qur'ān.

Another alternative, though more frequently occurring, term for a yet higher designation of divine emissaries is *rasūl*, “messenger,” “spokesman.” This particularly adopted appellation, *rasūl*, is an important word in the Qur'ānic terminology by the virtue of its usage in the same context of prophetic apostleship as it occurs in the Bible.⁶¹ On the contrary, however, the concept of apostle or messenger is also synonymous with that of the prophet with respect to the essential qualification and designated function in the Qur'ānic model. A *rasūl*, like a *nabī*, is one who answers the big questions of life and spiritually interprets the existential dilemmas.⁶² The job title for the office of a *rasūl* would be *risālah*, “message.” “All messengers are prophets,” notes Diane Morgan, “but not all prophets are messengers.”⁶³ It is to be noted that the Qur'ān does not recognize the category of false prophets or messengers, as one *Hananiah* in the biblical Book of Jeremiah (28:15-16) is called a false prophet, for it declares false prophethood as total anathema and renders it as a blasphemy against God.⁶⁴

A *rasūl* is, typically, raised with a new—technically a renewed—covenant and is handed down a handbook of the initiated covenant containing its ordination, application, and fulfillment. Islamic theology calls such a handbook a “scripture”—the special revelation.⁶⁵ *Mursalīn* (singular, *mursal*), “those who are sent,” or simply “messengers,” the Qur'ān declares, were sent to every major geography of the world where human population was of a considerable size and bore the potential to carve out a new or reform an existing civilization.⁶⁶ This position is made an integral part of the Qur'ānic template for a grand divine plan to emphasize that no part of humanity was left out in the communication and execution of the divine covenant.⁶⁷

In such a worldview as introduced by the Qur'ān, therefore, *risālah* appears to be the most revered station, which is entrusted with the responsibility of delivering God's Word to mankind.⁶⁸ Such a responsibility comes with its honorific magisterial authority that the recipient is obligated not only to acknowledge

⁶¹ Cohn-Sherbok, *Islam in a World*, 90.

⁶² Turner, *Islam*, 119.

⁶³ Morgan, *Essential Islam*, 38.

⁶⁴ Akhtar, *Quran and Secular Mind*, 182.

⁶⁵ Morgan, *Essential Islam*, 38.

⁶⁶ (a) *Sūrah Tawbah* 10:47; *Sūrah Naḥl* 16:36; *Sūrah Fāṭir* 35:23; *Sūrah Ghāfir* 40:78; *Sūrah Mulk* 67:9.

(b) It is a widely believed concept among Muslims that every nation receives guidance from God because he does not let a nation off in ignorance. Once guidance has come through a divinely ordained messenger, the recipients of the message are given the opportunity to make a choice between the truth and falsehood (see Nasr, *Study Qur'ān*, 664-665, footnote *Naḥl* 16:36).

⁶⁷ According to some reports found in the Islamic traditions, at least 104 scriptures were revealed to mankind and some 124,000 prophets were sent to every corner of the world (see Hughes, *Dictionary of Islam*, 475).

⁶⁸ *Risālah* lexically means a “message” and a *rasūl* is an individual who bears this message to transmit it to the fellow human beings. In this respect, therefore, the station of *risālah* is esoterically identifiable with the entity of the revealed Scripture—hence yet another word to describe the *Logos*.

but also to follow.⁶⁹ This term closely corresponds with the Greek term *apostolos* (Greek, ἀπόστολος), a “messenger” or “delegate,” which is the source of the English New Testament term, “apostle.”⁷⁰ Interestingly, the celebrated New Testament apostles of Christ are not spoken of as *mursalīn*, “the Apostles,” in the Qur'ān and are thus left altogether out of the Qur'ānic paradigm of God-man communication. They are, nonetheless, granted a unique title, *ḥawāriyyūn*, “the cloth whiteners,” which is exclusively employed for the apostles of Christ throughout the Islamic scripture.⁷¹

It is to be noted that the word *rasūl* is often interchanged—perhaps even confused—with the principal word *nabī* in its Qur'ānic usage. As it seems the case, it cannot be established with absolute certainty from the Qur'ān whether a *rasūl* is above a *nabī*, vice versa, or they are essentially equal. Muḥammad, for instance, is called both a prophet and a messenger of God in the Qur'ān (*Aḥzāb* 33:40; *Fath* 48:29), and it can be, therefore, conjectured that the two terms are rhetorically employed for the same purpose with identical connotation—though having adopted entirely different lexical routes.

Islamic exegetes, however, insist that a *rasūl* is superior to a *nabī* in every respect, for the word bears a character of higher responsibility also inferred from some obscure *Ḥadīth* accounts.⁷² Traditionally, it is believed that a *rasūl* has the special favor of being raised with a new covenant (Arabic, *shari'ah*), whereas a *nabī* is raised within the covenant-line of a previous *rasūl*.⁷³ This suggests that the former has the authority over the latter, whereas the former can also suspend or modify an already effective divine code in order to convict the people within their own cultural setting.⁷⁴ Since the Qur'ān does not elucidate the principal difference between the two in its text, it is likely that the exegesis of distinction has evolved over a period of time. On the timeline of history, in fact, this view falls within the narrow theological lines drawn in the 2nd and 3rd centuries of the Islamic calendar, the *Hijrah*.⁷⁵ A textual-semantic analysis can effectively help critical analysts to get another step closer to the original perception of the words as used in the 7th century Arabia.⁷⁶ The following verse, for instance, confirms the alternating use of the above two terms.

Muḥammad is not the father of [any] one of your men, but [he is] the Messenger of Allah and last of the prophets. And ever is Allah, of all things, Knowing. (*Sūrah Aḥzāb* 33:44)

⁶⁹ A prophet does not enjoy such an authority because it is believed that a prophet bears no new covenant and his position is only supplementary as well as complementary to that of a previously God-sent, covenant-bearing messenger.

⁷⁰ Gerald T. Elmore, *Islamic Sainthood in the Fullness of Time* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill Publishing, 1999), 161.

⁷¹ Classical commentators *Ṭabarī*, *Rāzī*, and *Ibn Kathīr* agree that this appellation implies the whiteness of hearth, meaning thereby the Apostles' hearts were chaste and faithful (see Asad, *Message*, 89, footnote *Sūrah* 3:42).

⁷² Morgan, *Essential Islam*, 38.

⁷³ Hughes, *Dictionary of Islam*, 427, 475.

⁷⁴ The Qur'ān recognizes only three of such messengers, Moses, Jesus, and Muḥammad, who were given the authority to modify an already existing covenant and were entrusted with a scriptural covenant each. See Morgan, *Essential Islam*, 37-38.

⁷⁵ *AH* is the abbreviated form of *After Hijrah*. *Hijrah* is the event of the Prophet Muḥammad's emigration to the city of Medina (originally *Yathrab*) from Mecca in the year 622 of the Common Era. Muslims date their calendar from the year of the Prophet's emigration. See Saeed, *Qur'an*, 9.

⁷⁶ Riaz Hassan, *Islam and Society: Sociological Explorations* (Melbourne, AU: Melbourne University Press, 2013), 7.

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Another verse addresses Muḥammad as a “messenger,” and outlines the fundamentals of his office of prophecy in the background setting of his native city.

It is He (God) Who has sent amongst the uncultured people a Messenger from among themselves, to rehearse to them His (Lordship's) Signs, to purify them, and to instruct them in the Scripture and Wisdom—although they had been, before, in manifest error. (*Sūrah Jumū'ah* 62:2)

The Qur'ān seems to bring its transcendental argument to the conclusion that the Prophet of Islam is the ultimate person to receive the divine *Logos* for his *universal* ministry. The *Logos*, preserved on a “heavenly tablet” (*Burūj* 85:22), is sent down to him in a series of personal revelations mediated by a revealing agency, *Rūḥ al-Quds*, “the Holy Spirit.”⁷⁷ In this particular case, the *Logos* is to take the form of a Scripture—*relegation* of the Word into a text. For this process of transformation, similar to *incarnation*, the analogy of *qalam*, “pen,” is employed in the Qur'ān.⁷⁸ The pen analogy completes the cycle of incarnation, from the *Logos* as an eternal entity to its descent to mankind and inscription and preservation as a written text in human language, *al-kitāb*.

The Islamic revelation brings its argument to fruition and makes it vocal enunciating that the Prophet Muḥammad is conferred with the honor of being the “seal of the prophets” raised for the entirety of mankind (*Aḥzāb* 33:40). Such an announcement encourages the Muslim community to see itself as the ultimate expression of God's will.⁷⁹ The Prophet Muḥammad's ministry, spanning a little over two decades, therefore, brings forth the message (*risālah*) that is known to the world as the scriptural manifestation of the Qur'ān—the event that the Muslims view as the act of the *Logos* having become the final Scripture—“Word made Book.”⁸⁰ The function of the Qur'ān in the Muslim community as such is that it strikes a balance between the role of Jesus as conceived in Christianity and that of its own in Islam, namely as a source of divine guidance, with its living persona and spiritual mystique.

It is He who sends down upon His Servant [Muḥammad] verses of clear evidence that He may bring you out from darkneses into the light. And indeed, Allah is to you Kind and Merciful... We have already sent Our messengers with clear evidences and sent down with them the Scripture and the balance that the people may maintain [their affairs] in justice. (*Sūrah Ḥadīd* 57:9, 25)

The above verses of the Qur'ān's 57th chapter, *Sūrah Ḥadīd*, expand the thesis further onto another level of intellectual plane and allows a reflection upon, and *eisegesis* into the three dimensional mechanism of the *special* revelation. The Qur'ānic view of special revelation covers the entire history of revelation accorded to mankind, which it treats as a self-consistent and monolithic phenomenon. This allows sufficient theological space for humans to see God interacting with mankind in time and space through such attributes as Christian systematic theology in particular would refer to as “communicable attributes.”⁸¹ The Qur'ān, on

⁷⁷ The total time span of the series of revelations received by the Prophet Muḥammad is 22 years and 5 months. See Saeed, *Qur'an*, 26, 42.

⁷⁸ The earliest revelation received by the Prophet Muḥammad contains the word “Pen” as the source of divine dictation of the Word, which connects the first divine command of “reading” with “knowledge” and “learning” (*Sūrah 'Alaq* 96:1-5).

⁷⁹ Nasr, *Study Quran*, 63-64, footnote 2:143.

⁸⁰ Singh, *Jesus and Incarnation*, 4.

⁸¹ Cottrell, *Faith*, 67.

the other hand, also recognizes the personal infiniteness of God and declares him being transcendent albeit recognizing the communicability of a set of the Creator's personal attributes (cf. *Isrā* 17:1).

Neo-Platonism, particularly the writings of Hellenistic philosopher Plotinus (CE 204-270), bears such a character that offers a partial resemblance with Islamic principle of interrelationship between God and the prophet through an agency, such as the Archangel Gabriel—a process called “simplification” by Plotinus.⁸² The neo-Platonists’ understanding of the *Logos* premises that it is a principle of mediation that exists as an interrelationship between the *hypostases* of the Godhead, which is, accidentally, similar to the concept of the *Logos* as theorized by Philo of Alexandria.⁸³ It would not, therefore, result in a theological quandary to consider the possibility of seeking the conceptual core of Islam’s revelation-agency within the essence of the Godhead. There is, hypothetically speaking, enough inferential evidence within the Qur’ān about the Holy Spirit, an entity identified with the Archangel Gabriel, being an all-powerful character linked with the divine essence. One such example is found in the following verses of chapter 19.

And mention in the Book (the story of) Mary, when she withdrew from her family to a place toward the east. And she took, in seclusion from them, a screen. Then we sent to her Our Angel, and he represented himself to her as a well-proportioned man. She said, “Indeed, I seek refuge in the Most Merciful from you, (so leave me) if you should be fearing Allah. He said, “I am only the Messenger of thy Lord to give you a pure boy.” (*Sūrah Maryam* 19:16-19)⁸⁴

The Qur’ān’s narration of the story of Mary in the above verses of the *sūrah* 19 also makes an allusion to the birth of Jesus in a discourse peculiar to the Qur’ānic prophecy-cliché. It is an important chapter for the case study of the Qur’ān’s adaptation of biblical discourse for its own rhetorical structure. The *messenger* sent to Mary to give her a “pure boy” is, for instance, spoken of as *rūḥanā* in the original Arabic text, which is an expression meaning “our spirit” rather than “our angel,” as found in the above translation. Such translations, as the one quoted above, are an example of semantic inadequacies found in the translation of the key Qur’ānic terminology, because they either do not employ the correct lexical threshold or simply aim at adapting such a measure of translation to an already worked out theological framework. Some translators of the Qur’ān, for instance, avoid the lexical meaning of the expression in question on grounds primarily theological and creedal. It is, perhaps, apprehended that the Christian *Trinitarian* doctrine will find a way (probably through *eisegesis*) into the reading of the Qur’ān at a philosophical level in the case of retaining lexical structure of the text. Critically speaking, little attention is paid within Islamic scholarship to the proper noun, *Jibrā’īl* or Gabriel, for the term in its normative use is almost always taken in a legalistic sense to mean an anthropomorphized angelic being, the archangel.⁸⁵ This exclusive approach may be rendered as an end rather than a means in the systematization of Islamic theology as far as the Arabic word *Jibrā’īl*, a proper noun, is concerned. Considering the said name in its lexical formation—since all names represent

⁸² Harris, *Neoplatonism*, 331.

⁸³ See John M. Rist, *Plotinus: The Road to Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 84-101.

⁸⁴ Saheeh International translation [*The Qur’ān: Arabic Text with Corresponding English Meaning*]

⁸⁵ This problem of angelic anthropomorphism is commonplace in the traditional Qur’ānic commentaries. For instance, see Muḥammad Saed 'Abul-Rahman, *The Meaning and Explanation of the Glorious Qur’an* (vol. 9; London: MSA Publication Limited, 2009), 345.

something—can potentially turn the entire hermeneutics around and unlock the mystery of the Word and Godhead.⁸⁶

The Archangel Gabriel emerges as an indispensable character in the Qur'ān that represents the power and glory of God and is characteristically—as well as attributively—identified with the New Testament Holy Spirit minus divinity.⁸⁷ Such a presentation of an important character in the Islamic scripture leaves, at least, some space for investing a little insight into the possibility of exploring the *Logos* beyond the interrelationship slash mediation assigned to Gabriel in terms of bringing divinity and humanity in contact in the metaphysics of the Qur'ān. This particular dimension of looking into the study of Gabriel/Holy Spirit in the Qur'ān will bring up a historically more accurate recognition of the *Logos* motif on the trajectory of the Qur'ān in distinction from its general reception and orthopraxis among Muslims on the timeline of religious history.

The self-consciousness of the Qur'ān is rooted into its view of the *heavenly* book that is entrusted with carrying the Word of God, which in the peculiar Qur'ānic discourse gets addressed as the “heavenly tablet” (*Burūj* 85:22). Some metaphysicians, such as the ninth century Mu'tazilite theologian *Ibrāhīm al-Nazzām*, for instance, argue that the heavenly tablet mentioned in the Qur'ān was created as a receptacle of the divine *Logos* that was in the mind of God and was metamorphosed—and hence incarnated in the Johannine language—into the terrestrial frame of human speech, which is to say that God dressed his Word in material clothes of a text that was to be revealed in human language and thereby would only figuratively be styled as the *literal* Word of God.⁸⁸ The Qur'ān, in essence, treats itself as both *Logos* and *Logion* in the likeness of the Hebrew *Torah* and *Tanakh* together that which, per Jewish understanding, bear a heavenly origin and are therefore of supra-historical and supra-rational character in the true essence before a manifestation in a terrestrial form.⁸⁹

All other possibilities of tracing the *Logos* motif in the Qur'ān, as described in the above pages, only assume a secondary, and perhaps supplementary, role against the fundamental self-image of the Qur'ān, *sacrum textum*, as the *eternal* Word of God preserved on a stylus.

⁸⁶ *Jibrā'il* is a compound name consisting of two words contracted into one, which is similar in characteristics to those compound Hebrew names, such as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Yeshua, Samuel, etc. A rather more suitable example of a Hebrew name that wields considerable influence on Christian theology is Immanuel (Isaiah 7:14), which has been received in the lexical function rather than as a proper noun over centuries—an approach diametrically opposed to the Islamic take on the name Gabriel.

⁸⁷ The Qur'ān recognizes this angelic being with the biblical character of Archangel Gabriel and mentions the name *Jibrīl* on three occasions in its text (*Sūrah Baqarah* 2:97, 98; *Sūrah Tahrīm* 66:4). There is, however, no direct reference in the Qur'ān in which the Archangel Gabriel is identified with the Holy Spirit. The role determined for both the Holy Spirit and Archangel Gabriel, derived through inference by the exegetes for the most part, is nevertheless identically the same: revelation and inspiration. It may be inferred from the reading of various Qur'ānic verses together that the general acceptance of the Holy Spirit in Islam is merged with the entity of Gabriel. Such a conclusion is further confirmed in those *ḥadīth* accounts that narrate the story of the Prophet Muḥammad's initial revelations and the so-called *Ḥadīth-i-Jibrīl*. See Hughes, *Dictionary of Islam*, 133.

⁸⁸ Rein Fernhout, *Canonical Texts*, trans. Henry Jansen & Lucy Jansen-Hofland (Atlanta, GA: Current of Encounter, 1994), 130-132.

⁸⁹ Philo of Alexandria, a celebrated first century Jewish philosopher, distinguishes between the heavenly Torah as the 'divine Logos, second only to God in the celestial hierarchy,' and the earthly Torah given to Moses on the Sinai being a reflection the reof. See Abraham Joshua Heschel, *Heavenly Torah: As Refracted through the Generations*, ed. and trans. Gordon Tucker and Leonard Levin (New York, NY: The Continuum International Publishing Group Inc., 2006), 327.

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