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FROM THE EDITORS

Greetings,

Ten years past since we launched the first issue of *Ilahiyat Studies* with a vision to become an internationally accredited academic platform to disseminate knowledge accumulated by researchers in different fields of *ilahiyat* and religious studies. It has become one and established a secure place not only in the Turkish academia but also in the international academic community. As a team, we make the utmost effort not to compromise its quality as shown by the numbers below.

During the past ten years, we received works from thirty-seven different countries, from the USA and Canada to Australia, from Botswana to China. Of all the manuscripts submitted to our journal, including review essays, book reviews, and research articles, 33% are from Turkey, 32% are from Asia, 21% are from the Middle East, 8% are from Africa, 2% from America, 4% from Europe, and less than 1% are from the Pacific region. Of all the articles published in the journal, 45% are from Turkey, 21% are from Western Europe, 19% are from America, 8% are from the Middle East, 3% are from Eastern Europe, 3% are from Asia, and 2% are from Africa. Research coming from Turkey, which make up 45% of the published articles, belong to authors working in twenty-five different institutions. The rate of admission to the publication from the articles that come to our journal is 0.18 on average. As of 2019, this rate is 0.07. In other words, we can publish only 7 out of 100 articles submitted to us.

We also tried our best to publish only well-qualified works in a wide range of areas regardless of country, title, and institution of their authors. Although we published the works of numerous scholars who are known to be experts in Islamic and religious studies, we,

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nonetheless, did not hesitate to publish the works of newly graduated researchers that successfully passed the review process in our journal.

The publication process of *Ilahiyat Studies* has always been a fulfilling experience for us, we hope that reading the articles will also be fulfilling for our readers.

This issue of *IS* features four articles and three book reviews. The first article, "The Green Man: What Reading Khiḍr as Trickster Evinces about the Canon," by Jibril Latif, presents a detailed account of an enigmatic figure commonly known as the Green Man. The article pursues its argument by asking certain seemingly "mundane" questions relevant to our contemporary situation first, and then goes on to delve into the depths of the subject matter by asking serious questions, carefully analyzing the accounts in the Qurʾān and comparing them with other folkloric, literary, philosophical, and religious canonical works.

The second article by Ahmet Dağ, "Losing Our Space/Madīnah: From the Madīnah of Reality to A Simulation City," presents a critical analysis of the so-called modern architecture prevalent not only in Europe but also in the Muslim world from a Baudrillardian interpretive framework. The author argues that there is a dialectical relationship between the city and human beings who build them. In other words, while human beings build quarters (*mahallah*s), these *mahallah*s in the due process also "build" human beings, for quarters function not only as physical structures but also have an administrative, social, and cultural nature. The article argues that the Western positivistic worldview did not only have an impact on our ways of thinking but also the way we create our cities.

İbrahim Aslan's article "Meta-Entity (*al-Ghayr*) and Its Value Metaphysics in al-Māturīdī" aims to understand and explain the nature of the unity between being (entity), knowledge, and value in al-Māturīdī's theological system. This is important, argues the author, for despite its importance for the Islamic theological tradition and thought, it has been overlooked by scholars, who, instead, focused upon the problem of being and knowledge. In pursuing the subject matter, the author analyzes the concept of the "meta-entity" that al-Māturīdī coined in the tradition of Islamic theology.

The final article by Şener Şahin, "Theme and Lyricism: Two Considerations in the Islamic Writing Tradition Motivating Muslim

Authors in Naming Their Works," aims to present a comprehensive examination of the theme and form of book titles from various disciplines, particularly in the Arabic language and literature as well as tafsīr, ḥadīth, history of religions, Sufism, philosophy, botany, zoography, zoology, mineralogy, astrology, astronomy, and numismatics, created by the *sajʿ* style (rhymed prose). The article investigates the titles of works written between the 3rd and 10th centuries AH to follow the evolution and witness the ongoing vivacity of the *sajʿ* style.

As always, we thank our readers, authors, and anonymous referees for their invaluable contributions.

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ARTICLES

THE GREEN MAN: WHAT READING AL-KHIḌR AS TRICKSTER EVINCES ABOUT THE CANON

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Abstract

The Green Man is a deictic trans-historical figure and motif shared by both interconnected canons and folklores, as well as those seemingly disparate. Revered in varying capacities in mythology, literature, and architecture, the figure's analogs and accretions have manifold associations to religiously significant personalities like St. George, Elijah, Gilgamesh, Buddha, Christ, and Melchizedek. Often bridging the sacred and profane, the figure's literary function is unusually polyvalent and associative readings flexibly range from prophetic guide and reconciler of paradoxes, to boundary-crossing and subverting trickster. However, the trickster figure archetypally imparts moral lessons by upsetting conventions and norms; he can teach his lessons through terror, but he can also beguile. If this is the case only because his telos redounds to a pantheon of polytheism, how do these features obtain when bound by monotheistic-based canons? The enigmatic character in the Qurʾān, dubbed al-Khiḍr and revered in canonical contexts, similarly has a didactic trickster-like encounter with Moses, whom he guides on a journey of paradoxes and

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reconciliations. As they manifest in other contexts, various permutations are only reconciled if a division is based on telos because the character's abundantly operative meaning is predicated on the realism of established canonical boundaries, which evinces why nominalist ontology struggles to cohere with various folkloric interpretations. Consequently, despite the recent pushback against canons, making such a compulsory distinction for a boundary-crossing character argues for affirming the continued relevance of such boundaries.

Key Words: Al-Khiḍr, Green Man, trickster, Sufism, canon, folklore

I. Introduction to the Green Man Motif

Why do modern cultural appropriations like Yoda, the wise green leader of the Jedi, continue to resonate with audiences?[1] Is there something archetypal or essential about such figures? Surely, the Green Man motif is found throughout the world as a syncretized figure that is bound by attributes oft-associated to fertility, the color green, water, mystical rebirth, spiritual guidance, and companionship. However, abounding Green Man artwork, literature, and lore all display equivalences among canonical and folkloric traditions. The legend of Elijah, for instance, associates a venerated biblical prophet of the wilderness to the unifying water springs of Bethany.[2] Often, the Green Man becomes a militant hero, as is the case with St. George more so than others, but St. Elias (Elijah), St. Behnam, and St. Sergius do as well. The immortal figure has also been linked to the *Wandering Jew* legend that spread across Europe in the 13th century, and there is ample Green Man architecture found across Europe and Asia linked to various fertility gods. A parallel also exists with *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, the Arthurian Middle

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1 Despite George Lucas repudiating that Yoda is anything other than "a totally normal guy," the amalgamation of characteristics borrows from the motif. See George Lucas, "Yoda Is Supposed to be just a Normal Guy," https://www.clickhole.com/yoda-is-supposed-to-be-just-a-normal-guy-1829478120, accessed October 11, 2019.

2 Mark Amaru Pinkham, *Guardians of the Holy Grail: The Knights Templar, John the Baptist, and the Water of Life* (Kempton, IL: Adventures Unlimited Press, 2004), 90.

English chivalric romance poem.[3] The essential question I would pose to prospective readers is: what binds these seemingly disparate characters and their multifarious attributes that admits them to be identified as one and the same in numerous cases? In exploring this question further, this paper traces Islam's connection to the motif as introduced in the Qurʾān's 18th chapter (*sūrah*) titled *The Cave* in positing that intriguing cross-canonical functions and manifestations are bound in a way insufficiently explored.

In the 19th century, Orientalists began studying Syriac texts in search of what they deemed to be the Qurʾān's source material. E. A. Wallis Budge edited narrations about Alexander the Great in 1889, which was later dubbed the *Alexander Legend* (*Neṣḥānâ*). Building upon the work of G. J. Reinink and others, Kevin van Bladel theorizes that different traces of the Akkadian *Epic of Gilgamesh* can be found in the story about Moses that takes place between verses (*āyāt*) 60-83 and posits that regarding the Syriac and Qurʾānic texts "there can be no doubt whatsoever of the affiliation."[4] Like Moses, Gilgamesh's travel destination is a mystical water source, and Gabriel Said Reynolds has more recently followed up these links with an examination of point-by-point parallels in a huge variety of extra-biblical texts extant during late antiquity.[5] While these pursuits are significant, classical Qurʾān commentators like al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1505) and al-Rāzī (d. 606/1210) preceded the impetus of this modern inquiry by acknowledging links between Elijah, Gilgamesh, Alexander, and the story of Dhū l-qarnayn (Q 18:83-102). While more research is needed into discerning the significance of such links, it is in the didactic episode sequentially preceding the Qurʾānic story linked to Alexander (Q 18:60-83) that an intriguing figure teaches

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3 Ḥusayn Wāʿiẓ Kāshifī Sabzawārī, *The Royal Book of Spiritual Chivalry (Futūwat nāmah-yi sulṭānī)*, trans. Jay R. Crook (Chicago: Great Books of the Islamic World, 2000), 1-3.

4 Kevin van Bladel, "The *Alexander Legend* in the Qur'ān 18:83–102," in *The Qurʾān and its Historical Context*, ed. Gabriel Said Reynolds (London & New York: Routledge, 2008), 183.

5 Gabriel Said Reynolds, *The Qurʾān and the Bible: Text and Commentary*, Qurʾān trans. Ali Quli Qarai (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2018).

Moses about reconciling paradoxes using an alternative type of logic.[6] Popularly dubbed al-Khiḍr, he is a character who initially seems to share many of the motif's characteristics. Whether the name al-Khiḍr is a title or an epithet is a point for debate.[7] But in a ḥadīth the Prophet Muḥammad says, "He was named al-Khiḍr because he sat upon barren land and when he did, it became green with vegetation."[8] In Arabic, al-Khiḍr, *Verdant* or *Green One*, implies a possessor of greening, renewing effects on places, people, spirits, and souls. Theorized by some as Alexander's vizier who fortuitously stumbled upon the fountain, (while Alexander in contrast did not), he is introduced in the Qurʾān simply as God's "servant."[9]

> (60) And when Moses said unto his servant, "I shall continue on till I reach the junction of the two seas, even if I journey for a long time." (61) Then when they reached the junction of the two, they forgot their fish, and it made its way to the sea, burrowing away. (62) Then when they had passed beyond he said to his servant, "Bring us our meal. We have certainly met with weariness on this journey of ours." (63) He said, "Didst thou see? When we took refuge at the rock, indeed I forgot the fish-and naught made me neglect to mention it, save Satan-and it made its way to the sea in a wondrous manner!" (64) He said, "That is what we were seeking!" So they turned back, retracing their steps. (65) There they found a servant from among Our servants whom We had granted a mercy from Us and whom We had taught knowledge from Our Presence. (66) Moses said unto him, "Shall I follow thee, that thou mightest teach me some of that which thou hast been taught of sound judgment?" (67) He said, "Truly thou wilt not be able to bear patiently with me. (68) And how canst thou

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6 The word *āyah* (pl. *āyāt*) linguistically means "a sign" to be pondered and is used herein to equate "verse."

7 Arent Jan Wensinck, "al-Khaḍir (al-Khiḍr)," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, third impression, ed. P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C. E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W. P. Heinrichs (Leiden: Brill, 1997), IV, 904-905.

8 The *ḥadīth* (pl. *aḥādīth*) collections are rigorously authenticated statements, actions, and approved norms attributed to the Prophet Muḥammad that formulate a comprehensive understanding of his normative practice.

9 All Qurʾānic quotes utilize translations from Seyyed Hossein Nasr et al, eds., *The Study Quran: A New Translation and Commentary* (New York, NY: HarperOne, an Imprint of HarperCollins Publishers, 2017), 750.

bear patiently that which thou dost not encompass in awareness? (69) He said, "Thou wilt find me patient, if God wills, and I shall not disobey these in any matter." (70) He said, "If thou wouldst follow me, then question me not about anything, till I make mention of it to thee." (71) So they went on till, when they had embarked upon a ship, he made a hole therein. He said, "Didst thou make a hole in it in order to drown its people? Thou hast done a monstrous thing!" (72) He said, "Did I not say unto thee that thou wouldst not be able to bear patiently with me?" (73) He said, "Take me not to task for having forgotten, nor make me suffer much hardship on account of what I have done." (74) So they went on till they met a young boy, and he slew him. He said, "Didst thou slay a pure soul who had slain no other soul? Thou hast certainly done a terrible thing!" (75) He said, "Did I not say unto thee that thou wouldst not be able to bear patiently with me?" (76) He said, "If I question thee concerning aught after this, then keep my company no more. Thou has attained sufficient excuse from me." (77) So they went on till they came upon the people of a town and sought food from them. But they refused to show them any hospitality. Then they found therein a wall that was about to fall down; so he set it up straight. He said, "Hadst thou willed, thou couldst have taken a wage for it." (78) He said, "This is the parting between thee and me. I shall inform thee of the meaning of that which thou couldst not bear patiently: (79) As for the ship, it belonged to indigent people who worked the sea. I desired to damage it, for just beyond them was a king who was seizing every ship by force. (80) And as for the young boy, his parents were believers and we feared that he would make them suffer much through rebellion and disbelief. (81) So we desired that their Lord give them in exchange one who is better than him in purity, and nearer to mercy. (82) And as for the wall, it belonged to two orphan boys in the city, and beneath it was a treasure belonging to them. Their father was righteous, and thy Lord desired that they should reach their maturity and extract their treasure, as a mercy from thy Lord. And I did not do this upon my own command. This is the meaning of that which thou couldst not bear patiently."[10]

In this episode al-Khiḍr is simultaneously the teacher's sage and perceivably an antinomian; while seemingly breaking the sacred law,

[10] Nasr et al., *The Study Quran*, 743.

his lessons teach about contemplation and reconciling opposites. The Prophet Muḥammad recommended the recitation of *The Cave* every Friday and it is thus oft read. However, considering that a singular motif plausibly links multiple doctrines, al-Khiḍr is highly undertheorized. His characterization as enigmatic and mysterious may factor in this neglect, but if posited links hold up to more discerning scrutiny it is plausible that he foundationally connects several of the world's great traditions in ways hitherto unexhausted. One underexplored association is to that of Melchizedek, King of Salem, a biblical contemporary of Abraham whom Abraham praises and blesses in *The Book of Genesis* (14: 18-20). Another link is to one of the readings of the Buddha. The *Three Baskets* (*Tripitaka*) comprises the essential canon of Buddhists entailing works directly and indirectly ascribed in authorship to the Buddha, and through analysis of this early narrative literature Sarah McClintock envisages Buddha as a paradox, an unconditioned yet compassionate trickster who uses deceptions in helping people experience their limitations along the path to transformation.[11] In the polymath Muḥammad al-Shahrastānī's (d. 548/1153) early systematic study of religion, *Religions and Sects*, Buddha is linked to al-Khiḍr at the end of a passage on Buddhists, which ends abruptly and offers no further elucidation.[12] Bruce Lawrence questions whether al-Shahrastānī's comparison is original or if it stems from an irrecoverable earlier source because while the link is tantalizingly suggestive in its "implicitly attesting to the high spiritual quality of Buddhism" Lawrence argues that the case rests too squarely on a Muslim reading of sources.[13] In contrast, Hamza Yusuf's essay "Buddha in the Qurʾān?" probes the same association, noting that numerous classical exegetes corroborate al-Shahrastānī's claim. He opines that the Prophet Muḥammad's explicit statements about al-Khiḍr could easily

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11 Sara L. McClintock, "Compassionate Trickster: The Buddha as a Literary Character in the Narratives of Early Indian Buddhism," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 79, no. 1 (2011), 90-91, https://doi.org/10.1093/jaarel/lfq061.

12 "... *wa-laysa yushbihu l-budd ʿalá mā waṣafūhu, in ṣaddaqū fa-dhālika illā bi-l-Khiḍr alladhī yuthbituhū ahl al-Islām*." Abū l-Fatḥ Tāj al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Shahrastānī, *al-Milal wa-l-niḥal*, ed. Amīr ʿAlī Mahnā and ʿAlī Ḥasan Fāʿūr, 3rd ed. (Beirut: Dār al-Maʿrifah, 1993), II, 604.

13 Bruce B. Lawrence, *Shahrastani on the Indian Religions* (The Hague: Mouton, 1976), 114, https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110800999.

be ascribed to Gautama Buddha, and that reading them in such light bolsters the link because they substantiate al-Khiḍr's symbolic connection to the color green, the large white lotus flower, and background, as one *ḥadīth* states "He was the son of a king who desired that his son inherit his throne, but he refused and fled to a secluded island place where they could not find him."[14] However, in another *ḥadīth*, al-Khiḍr is named a noble of the tribe of Israel. Therefore, in attempting to reconcile the perceived chronological, geographical, and conceptual discrepancies between linking the characters, Yusuf notes:

> ... [a] widespread belief among Muslims is that al-Khadir does not die until the end of time. Hence, al-Shahrastānī would not have been troubled by this historical discrepancy – between the recorded historical dates of Moses and the Buddha is a distance of approximately 700 years – since he would have most likely held the belief that al-Khadir was a transhistorical character. It is also possible to interpret the figure of al-Khadir as a supra-historical archetype, or a particular mode of spiritual guidance –antinomian and enigmatic, radically transcending human modes of comprehension, and even "normal" modes of prophetic guidance. Thus, rather than simply seeking to establish a historical connection or identification between al-Khadir and the Buddha, one might also see the Buddha as one manifestation of the spiritual archetype articulated by the Qur'anic figure al-Khadir.[15]

A spiritual archetype is something quite enigmatic and difficult to delineate, which is how this link seems to bind characters ranging from sage to antinomian. Another way the phenomenon has been categorized is as part of *mundus imaginalis*, Henry Corbin's term for describing the imaginal realm that pertains to the world of images in the cosmology of Islamic mysticism; thus, al-Khiḍr can simultaneously be perceived as a conduit for communicating the religious, the cultural, and the inner experience of divine presence.[16]

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[14] Shaykh Hamza Yusuf, "Buddha in the Qurʾān?," in *Common Ground Between Islam & Buddhism* by Reza Shah Kazemi (Louisville, KY: Fons Vitae, 2010), 120-121.

[15] Yusuf, "Buddha in the Qurʾān?," 119-120.

[16] Irfan A. Omar, "Reflecting Divine Light: *al-Khidr* as an Embodiment of God's Mercy (*rahma*)," in *Gotteserlebnis und Gotteslehre: Christliche und islamische*

Although the bulk of canonical commentary on al-Khiḍr confers meaning onto him independent of characterizations of the Green Man in other traditions, Muslim exegetes historically acknowledge a wide range of associations, including his connection to Elijah, Gilgamesh, and Alexander. However, beyond the Islamic canon where his role as God's servant does not maintain its primacy, the character's functions expand and incline towards a different telos. Intimating the reservations of many devotional Islamic scholars, Irfan Omar opines for a reading of the figure from within a monotheistic cosmology as God's mercy in concert with the "light" of spiritual illumination, and he argues against pliant archetypal analysis, "If, taking the standpoint of analytical psychology, we speak of Khiḍr as an archetype, he will seem to lose his reality and become a figment of the imagination, if not of the intellect."[17] This is a general argument about such appropriation although this reference is made specifically in regards to Carl Jung's identification of al-Khiḍr as one of the four archetypes that he used to teach his clients about reconciling paradox.[18] In literary analysis, al-Khiḍr seems able to more or less maintain his thrust as a religious hero. John Renard notes, for instance, that he can maintain reverence while simultaneously having "the ability of the picaresque trickster hero to get away with a variety of deeds that would land anyone else in serious trouble."[19] It is to these overlaps in claims that the following sections address. Yusuf, Omar, and Renard all make valid assertions; al-Khiḍr is mutually an archetypal, canonical, and literary figure because the Qurʾān is, not primarily, but among other things, a literary text. But can al-Khiḍr's function in the Qurʾān as a reconciler of paradox fit the characteristics of a quintessential *trickster*? And if so, what are the implications? As follows, the remainder of this study explores al-Khiḍr as the trickster, and while it cannot exhaust his rich place within the canon nor the connections between all these entities, it briefly examines the Qurʾānic episode as contextualized by both canonical and folkloric

Mystik im Orient, ed. Martin Tamcke (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2010), 169.

17 Omar, "Khiḍr in the Islamic Tradition," *The Muslim World* 83, no. 3-4 (1993), 283, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1478-1913.1993.tb03580.x.

18 Carl Gustav Jung, *Four Archetypes* (Boston, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992).

19 John Renard, *Islam and the Heroic Image: Themes in Literature and the Visual Arts* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1999), 102.

sources. It then explores a few of al-Khiḍr's historical functions for their trickster-like similitudes, primary of which are his role as initiator, point of contact, and sacralizer of profane spaces. Lastly, in what may appear to be an excursus, it tries to draw a conclusion about contextual necessity by reviewing the canons he operates within, examining their changing historical norms, and more critically, how anti-realist contentions eclipse the operative meaning that ultimately gives him import in the classical context.

II. Reading al-Khiḍr as the Trickster

The *trickster* is a term that begins to circulate in analysis of global folklore in the late 19th century. The figure typically imparts some moral lesson by upsetting conventions and norms.[20] He can teach his lessons through terror, but he can also beguile. Since he is deictic and syncretic, he is assigned meaning within folkloric contexts, often polytheistic. Thus, at the onset, it is easy to dismiss al-Khiḍr as fitting the mold because of his avowal, "*I did not do this upon my own command*" (Q 18:82), which redounds all perceived antinomianism to God alone. Therefore, in framing al-Khiḍr as a picaresque trickster hero while examining the Qurʾānic episode as a segment of literature, epistemic implications arise because the trickster does not typically redound to God, whereas in the Qurʾānic perspective all agency is ultimately granted by God's permission. But in probing beyond these minimalisms, the God of the Qurʾān is self-described by attributes like The Merciful and The Loving, yet simultaneously as The Avenger and "*The great doer of whatever He wills*" (Q 85:16). Therefore, a convergence point may exist where the Qurʾānic episode lends itself to literary analysis, and where folkloric accretions begin to subsume trickster-like aspects. Writing about the phenomenon of "The Qurʾān as Literature" Mustansir Mir argues that the theological and literary aspects of the Qurʾān are linked, although not integrally because of the Qurʾān's claim of inimitability (Q 2:23; 11:13). Therefore, while several classical exegetes treat the Qurʾān as literature, their orientations – being theological and legalistic – do not

[20] George P. Hansen, *The Trickster and the Paranormal* (Philadelphia, PA: Xlibris, 2001).

methodologically use literary continuity as a primary heuristic.[21] Academics have, though, examined the book in that manner. For instance, with an emphasis on method, Rosalind Gwynne finds that the Qurʾān yields over thirty varieties of "explicit and implicit argument, elements of argument, techniques, and demonstrations."[22] Yet despite its textual intricacy, the believer commonly treats the text like a dithyramb or Gregorian chant, reciting it mellifluously as devotion to God, not as an exclusively literary text. Recitation itself becomes an experience of the heart whereby the state of a listener can also be impacted by mellifluous recitation, which at below fifteen hertz assists the beta state in morphing into the alpha state (within nine and fourteen hertz), a mode aiding relaxation and creativity. Thus, to insist that an exclusively literary approach should not consider these aforementioned functional dimensions of the Qurʾān, and to focus solely on figures of speech, satire, irony, and the employment of narrative techniques cannot close the convergence gap in studying characters that admittedly "appear as embodiments of abstract traits."[23] Mir furthermore concedes that the text provides "sparse personal detail" about such figures.[24] Therefore, although the Qurʾān simply cannot be reduced to literature, the link he moderates remains integral to analysis.

Context for the Khiḍr episodic narrative begins textually outside of the Qurʾān, in instructive narrations (*aḥādīth*). The Islamic canon reports that the Quraysh sent principle adversaries of Islam, al-Naḍr ibn al-Ḥārith and ʿUqbah ibn Abī Muʿayṭ, to some Jewish scholars of Medina during the late Meccan period in order to inquire about Muḥammad's claims to prophethood; upon receiving the delegates the Jewish religious scholars advised them to ask the Prophet of three matters: (1) the inhabitants of the cave, linked to the Sleepers of Ephesus; (2) the man who had journeyed to the extents of the east and west, linked (by some) to Alexander the Great; (3) and the Spirit (*al-rūḥ*). If unable to answer, by virtue they would deem him a false

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21 Mustansir Mir, "The Qur'an as Literature," *Religion & Literature* 20, no. 1 (1988), 51.

22 Rosalind Ward Gwynne, *Logic, Rhetoric and Legal Reasoning in the Qurʾān: God's Arguments* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004), ix-x.

23 *Ibid*., 62.

24 *Ibid*., 52.

prophet. When they questioned the Prophet, he promised an answer the next day, but after fifteen days the revelation had not come, and when it finally did the verses (Q 18:23-24) rebuked the Prophet for making a promise without acknowledging that all matters depend on God's will. However, in response to the three questions, the Qurʾān offers three narratives in the *sūrah* all unified by a theme of travel: the companions of the cave flee their home, Dhū l-Qarnayn (possessor of two horns/Alexander) travels from east to west in order to establish his dominion, and Moses travels to seek an illuminating guide. Further context is provided in a separate narration wherein a congregant asks Moses who the most knowledgeable person in the world is. When Moses ascribes that very rank to himself, God admonishes him for not ascribing all knowledge unto Him alone.[25] God then subsequently alerts Moses to where he may find a "servant" in possession of greater knowledge than he.[26]

It is in this context that the Qurʾānic episode begins at 18:60 with Moses declaring he shall continue until he reaches the junction of the two seas. The junction can denote the temporal state between death and judgment (*barzakh*), whereas geographically it may relate to the meeting between the Tigris and the Euphrates around the biblical Ur, signifying the retracing of steps to where revelation began, and perhaps to where it also began to go lost. In many commentaries the in between state or junction is interpreted allegorically to indicate where saltwater and freshwater meet, where knowledge of the exoteric and the esoteric amalgamate, and to where morality perhaps conforms to a different type of understanding that can reconcile paradox. The journey necessitates a travel episode and a border crossing, and this is where Moses can find his teacher. Similarly, contemporary folklorists envisage trickster as a border-crossing archetype. Lewis Hyde compiles both generally accepted descriptive and idyllic features, arguing that "outside such traditional contexts there are no modern tricksters because trickster only comes to life in the complex terrain of polytheism" since "if the spiritual world is dominated by a single high god opposed by a single embodiment of

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25 Muslim, "al-Faḍāʾil," 170.

26 Nasr et al., *The Study Quran*, 728-729.

evil, then the ancient trickster disappears."[27] Although acknowledging this Manichean oversimplification, he later makes a germinal concession that situates a place where "the practice of art and this myth collide."[28]

> Trickster belongs to polytheism or, lacking that, he needs at least a relationship to other powers, to people and institutions and traditions that can manage the odd double attitude of both insisting that their boundaries be respected and recognizing that in the long run their liveliness depends on having those boundaries regularly disturbed.[29]

The servant makes the first personal acknowledgment of error in the episode; he is widely considered to be Joshua (Yūshaʿ ibn Nūn) by commentators such as al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923), al-Qurṭubī (d. 671/1273), and al-Rāzī. The symbolic significance of being the son of Nūn, which can mean "fish," representing secular knowledge (or perhaps revelation), is the subject of much commentary. Episodic themes revolve around intermediate realms between life and death, exoteric adherence to the law versus esoteric knowledge, and scripture versus reason. Moses actively pursues such mysterious knowledge at a boundary crossing. Moses and Joshua then continue until realizing they have lost their "fish" (61-64). Classical commentaries like al-Zamakhsharī's direct the focus to the symbolism of discipleship and spiritual mastery; Moses directs his servant to literally retrace their steps back to the meeting place, eventually becoming the disciple to al-Khiḍr, the non-literalist.[30] In classical commentaries, freshwater represents rivers with their linear and directional nature, which are constitutive of rational thought in the most basic allegorical meaning. In contrast, a saltwater sea, with its unpredictable currents and vastness, symbolizes inner all-encompassing knowledge. Since neither servant nor master could recognize this intersection, they forgot their fish, which came back to life at that location. Therefore, al-Khiḍr may symbolize life that transcends the effects of time that a lens fixated on law and temporality cannot immediately grasp. In that tradition tends to

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[27] Lewis Hyde, *Trickster Makes this World: Mischief, Myth, and Art* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2010), 28.

[28] *Ibid*., 38.

[29] *Ibid*., 35-36.

[30] Nasr et al., *The Study Quran*, 749-750.

ossify, revival is often jolting, and there may be a correspondence in Atwood's review of Hyde in which she affirms that a function of tricksters is often to be "those who come along when a tradition has become too set in its ways, too orderly, too Apollonian, and shake it out of its rut."[31] To the specificity of that meeting place, al-Qurṭubī and other commentators mention that the place where the fish comes back to life is the spring of life, whereas if read as a symbolic narrative, Moses retracing his steps can represent the journey of the soul back to God and to primordial nature after the human fall.[32] The episode continues (Q 67-71) and Moses agrees not to question the methods of the instructor: "*If thou wouldst follow me, then question me not about anything, till I make mention of it to thee*." (71)

Al-Rāzī points out that Moses's humility is representative of how students – even prophets – should display deference towards their teachers. From this al-Qushayrī (d. 465/1072) opines for permitting teachers to determine the parameters of journeys towards knowledge and enlightenment.[33] Ibn Kathīr (d. 774/1373) mentions that Moses is initially appalled at how they board the ship without charge due to the owner recognizing al-Khiḍr (70-74), who then quickly shifts into sabotaging the ship, nearly sinking it. If the ship is representative of the body that carries the soul through material existence, it may perhaps need to be broken by certain ascetic spiritual exercises.[34] Lewis Hyde's description of the function of trickster provides more parallels:

> It is at well-guarded barriers that these figures are especially tricksters, for here they must be masters of deceit if they are to proceed ... We constantly distinguish – right and wrong, sacred and profane, clean and dirty, male and female, young and old, living and dead – and in every case trickster will cross the line and confuse the distinction ... Where someone's sense of honorable behavior has left him unable to act, trickster will appear to suggest an amoral action, something right/wrong that will get life going again. Trickster is a mythic body of

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31 Margaret Atwood, review of *Trickster Makes This World*, by Lewis Hyde, *Los Angeles Times* (1998), 3.

32 Nasr et al., *The Study Quran*, 752.

33 *Ibid*., 752-3.

34 *Ibid*., 753.

ambiguity and ambivalence, doubleness and duplicity, contradiction and paradox.[35]

Of prime importance in allegorical interpretation is the tripartite division of the self, found with Ancient Greeks like Plato and in the Islamic literature which inherited the Peripatetic school.[36] The tripartite division stands between the inciting self (*al-nafs al-ammārah*), the self-accusing self (*al-nafs al-lawwāmah*), and the self at peace (*al-nafs al-muṭmaʾinnah*). If the spiritual goal of mysticism is to subdue the lower two base forms of the self, al-Khiḍr's actions can be reunited with an understanding that reason can grasp. Winifred Morgan adds that tricksters can similarly "astonish with their ability to achieve creative breakthroughs" by embodying a "shadow side" of human nature and engaging in taboo behavior.[37] Al-Khiḍr, thus, offers interpretations of his behaviors before departing. Poking a hole in the ship, while undesirable, was the better of two temporal options. However, more attention is often paid to his alarming killing of the boy. Some commentary claims the boy has murdered and escaped prosecution; other commentary says he was on that path and mercifully taken out before the age of culpability, whereas mystical readings take slaying to connote annihilating the part of one's soul that inclines towards evil, anger, and passion. Similarly, temporary restoration of the wall would dissuade the town's selfish inhabitants from discovering the treasure themselves. Representational of classical commentary, Ibn Kathīr claims that although the treasure appears to be material, it is truly some form of knowledge. The repaired wall thus represents a soul at peace, which can only be retrieved once the other two components of the self are subdued.[38]

While there are conceivable crossover attributes, al-Khiḍr does not fit the typical picaresque trickster hero mold. He does not, for instance, display the lewdness, lust or hyperactive sexuality found in

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35 Hyde, *Trickster Makes This World: Mischief, Myth and Art* (New York: Farrar Straus & Giroux, 1988), 23-24.

36 Asghar Ali Engineer, "Iqbal's 'Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam': A Critical Appraisal," *Social Scientist* 8, no. 8 (1980), 52-63, https://doi.org/10.2307/3516692.

37 Winifred Morgan, *The Trickster Figure in American Literature* (New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2013), 5-6, https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137344724.

38 *Ibid*., 754-756.

many tricksters, although he shares traits with other boundary crossers. He crosses between worlds, often connected with water – and boundaries of morality. For example, Eshu the Afro-Caribbean trickster guards the "many doors and roads which make up the human journey through life" and is able to straddle them.[39] Likewise the Orcadian selkie (seal) stories of the Orkney archipelago narrate tales of seals that are able to seduce humans and go back and forth between land and sea. The selkie stories relate that such transformations happen every "seventh stream" or "ninth night" sustaining the folkloric acceptance that a mortal woman seeking selkie-man companionship must shed seven tears into sea at high tide.[40] Such symbolism in numbers and repetitions of actions is common whereby a certain number of repetitions reveal a previously inexplicable meaning. Another example is the Winnebago trickster figure, Coyote, whose behavior follows such patterns. Actions are typically repeated four times, like in the tales of Hare, which are either in configurations of three or four. Al-Khiḍr similarly repeats his actions three times before revealing their meaning. However, in the literature there is not always an evident higher telos at play, and sometimes the import seems petty. An instance of this is Jack's motive in *The Jack Tales* of the Appalachian Mountains who tricks his adversaries into allowing him to drown them in the river thereby leaving him the bequeathing owner of "a farm and a house and all them sheep, and nobody to bother him."[41]

With these comparisons, however, we reach a limit that hinges on authorial intentionality. Enumerating particular similarities between Br'er Rabbit, Jack, and the Winnebago trickster, Lewis Hyde argues that the trickster is not the devil, and that he is amoral, not immoral.[42] Nevertheless, the implications for what it would mean for comparative analysis if Hyde had come down on the other side are not clear because appropriations all change situational contexts. For

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[39] Susanne Iles, "Eshu, An Afro-Caribbean Divine Trickster," *Sacred Hoop* 29 (2000), 1.

[40] "Orkneyjar: The Heritage of the Orkney Islands," orkneyjar.com/folklore/selkiefolk/sulesk.htm, accessed February 11, 2019.

[41] Richard Chase, *The Jack Tales*, 17th ed. (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1943), 174.

[42] Hyde, *Trickster Makes this World*, 22.

instance, by the 15th century, when al-Suyūṭī examines Gilgamesh as Manicheans in the Middle East had appropriated him, he links him to a regional demon, serving as another example of how wide-ranging interpretations can become over time.[43] Trickster narratives generally end in a mea culpa, summation of behavior, or explanation of actions in order to reconcile the contradictions between behavior and morality. The Winnebago Hare cycle narrates, "Hare was sent by Earthmaker to teach the people on earth a better life."[44] Similarly, it is only after Moses fails to remain silent three times that al-Khiḍr explains to him the wisdom behind the outward appearance of his actions. Al-Khiḍr upsets the legal boundaries that have been set up in Moses's worldview, which is supposed to be one imbued by none other than God. But it is the same God who sends Moses a servant to disrupt that very worldview. Like Hermes and Apollo in the classical myth, Hermes steals the cattle in order to teach the audience a lesson on virtues, including regret and forgiveness, as both characters are enhanced in understanding, friendship, and newly attained musical instruments by the didactic episode.[45] In a similar tenor, the relationship between al-Khiḍr and Moses is necessary for the story to become didactic because Moses does not gain an understanding outside of the legal sphere without first seeing the law's subversion, and the evident tricks ultimately teach him to reconcile apparent contradictions.

III. Historical Functions of al-Khiḍr in Canonical and Folkloric Contexts

Before an examination of the figure's historical functions, a brief conversation about classical context can serve to underscore the extent of the canon's "omni" characteristics. In encountering the Peripatetic schools of Egypt, the Levant, and Persia, the Muslim world's canon similarly adopts Hellenistic rigor and a systematic method of inquiry, including the Aristotelian virtues. In this sense,

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[43] Andrew R. George, *The Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic: Introduction, Critical Edition and Cuneiform Texts, Volume 1* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 88.

[44] Paul Radin, Karl Kerényi, and Carl Gustav Jung, *The Trickster: A Study in American Indian Mythology* (New York: Schocken Books, 1988), 91.

[45] Hyde, *Trickster Makes this World*.

more appropriate than juxtaposing "Islam" and "the West" as canonical objects of comparison, an insurmountable task, is to view them within a binding and overarching framework of loose amalgamation and certain continuity. Nevertheless, in relation to identifying a few distinctive features of normativity, a few things can be acknowledged. Distinctive to Islam, the process of interpretation and hermeneutic consensus leads to a codification, rather than a canonization, as no ecumenical councils are convened to establish religious orthodoxy. Peter Adamson argues for a canonical semantic distinction of "philosophy in the Islamic world" because terminologically "Islamic philosophy" excludes the many non-Muslim writers, and "Arabic philosophy" discounts the indispensable writings in Persian and other languages.[46] Nevertheless, a foundational book coalesces an Arabic culture of orality with existing literary civilizations, and an envelopment of canonical knowledge takes place. It adopts *sophia* as a speculative science used to seek answers to the most fundamental questions, including those of existence, essence, and the immaterial. This science of metaphysics precedes method concerning all questions about being qua being: first principles, causation, and the contents of the human mind and its presuppositions. In the employ of a prima scriptura theology that recognizes the fallibility of the human mind, metaphysics is studied only after mastering the qualitative (trivium) and quantitative (quadrivium) liberal arts that aid in liberating the mind from the fetters of faulty thinking by creating a balance between faith and reason (*al-naql* and *al-ʿaql*). In this realist view, objective reality – as synthesis of mind and matter – can be known, the mind and body are synthesized, and all mysteries remain operative whether or not they ultimately obtain.[47] In this key departure Iblīs (Satan) is the original nominalist as he is unwilling to conceptualize the essence of the human, and he mistakenly deems himself superior on purely arbitrary and materialistic terms.

The early internal debate on the role of reason, whether Islam is a religion of the mind or the heart, reaches a modus vivendi that

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[46] Peter Adamson, *A History of Philosophy without Any Gaps, volume 3: Philosophy in the Islamic World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

[47] Hamza Yusuf, "Is the Matter of Metaphysics Material? Yes and No," *Renovatio: The Journal of Zaytuna College* 3, no. 2 (2017), 81-91.

culminates into scholastic, normative Islam entailing several dimensions. Similar pursuits of probing all of God's possible intents as an author lead to exhausting the possibilities of linguistic meaning. Thus, when al-Farāhīdī (d. 175/791) of Oman compiles the first Arabic dictionary and develops the science of prosody in the 8th century, the implicit driver is to minimize the philological stems of epistemic uncertainty. In the representative scholastic schools of ʿUmar al-Nasafī (d. 537/1142) and al-Taftāzānī (d. 792/1390), "normative" means a rational-based formal theology (*kalām*), underpinned by logic and sustained by an emphasis on reason (*al-ʿaql*) and legal theory (*al-fiqh*).[48] Without the formation of a synod or magisterium, the emphasis on a rationalist theology emerges organically from treating God's uncreated speech (*al-nuṭq* – trilateral root *n-ṭ-q*) as the grounds for formal logic (*al-manṭiq*). Words are interpreted as signs, vibrations and attributes imbued with a reality from God, "*And he taught Adam the names, all of them*" (Q 2:31), and they are to be interpreted through human reason, as humans are considered rational animals.[49] Additionally, exhaustive study of the Qurʾān gives birth to an inward-based spiritual practice of beautification (*iḥsān*), later dubbed Sufism (*taṣawwuf*). A spiritual science not extraneous to Islam, it is challenging to succinctly define and translate nonetheless because as a science with a mystical component it may be seen through a variety of lenses.[50] William Chittick categorizes the concept as an historical object and notes that its recent academic classification by Orientalists is due to their desire for "a term that would refer to various sides of Islamic civilization they found attractive and congenial and that would avoid the negative stereotypes associated with the religion of Islam – stereotypes that they themselves had often propagated."[51] Nevertheless, interpretations influenced by Sufism are normative and generally place a heavier emphasis on allegory. It is, ultimately, the interiorization of faith and the recognition of an essential reality that develops into an all-embracing attempt at the restoration of beauty in the human world, which when externalized can creatively manifest in various ways, from creating a mosaic, a hymn, or an architectural

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48 Eric Ormsby, *Ghazali: The Revival of Islam* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2008).

49 *Ibid*., 22.

50 Omar, "Reflecting Divine Light," 167, 173.

51 William Chittick, *Sufism: A Beginner's Guide* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2000), 4.

design. The emphasis on this inner dimension of the religion remains central up until the political and ideological contestations ushered in by the modern era, exacerbated by the effects of colonialism and globalization.[52] Thus, "religious" thought is not left unaffected by the forces of secularization and quantification, and several 20th century voices seek to deny al-Khiḍr of tradition in preference to reclassifying him as a chimera assigned to the realm of superstition. For instance, drivers of the politicization of Islam in the 20th century such as Sayyid Quṭb (d. 1966) reject all traditions related to al-Khiḍr; similarly, Abū l-Aʿlá al-Mawdūdī (d. 1979) reclassifies al-Khiḍr in order to eliminate what he views as hermeneutic problems related to his lawlessness and eternal life.[53]

Returning now to the specific functions of al-Khiḍr, we will see how these functions both coalesce with and challenge classical understandings, some of which bolster the reading as a trickster. Firstly, he has historically abided as an elusive figure of immortality and conveyer of intimate esoteric understanding, functioning also as a symbol of Muslim contact and conversion, often from Christianity, in the reformulation of medieval Islamic frontier zones wherein diverse populations mixed. Al-Khiḍr's characteristics of being able to traverse vast distances in a short time amplified the number of claims made about his visitation to numerous worship sites. He would be rumored to attend the five daily prayers at various services across the world, a claim that survives by those open to the possibilities of what shape and what form he takes. Thus, inscriptions dedicating sites to him or claiming his visitation would historically mark numerous mosques, tombs, dervish lodges, *khirqah*s and *zāwiyah*s. These inscriptions, found first in Iraq, and later in the Arabian Peninsula, Egypt, and the Levant, served to coalesce traumatic events such as the Crusader conquests and wars with Byzantium. New patrons of architecture became increasingly keen on inscribing al-Khiḍr on monuments because it was a way of highlighting local sanctity and

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[52] Abdal Hakim Murad, "Rethinking Islamic Education," lecture delivered February 6, 2016 at the International Islamic University, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bI8y3Q_FpD4, accessed December 10, 2019.

[53] Patrick Franke, *Begegnung mit Khidr: Quellenstudien zum Imaginären im traditionellen Islam* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2000), 369.

respecting pre-Islamic traditions while simultaneously drawing a direct link to the new Islamic order and its related shrines.[54] An apt anecdote is related by the well-known 12th century grammarian Ibn ʿAsākir (d. 571/1176) about the history of the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus, which was built upon a site that was initially a pagan sanctuary that housed a temple to Jupiter. After the Christian conquest, the site became The Cathedral of St. John. It is said that Umayyad Caliph al-Walīd had an epiphany after keeping vigil one night where he found al-Khiḍr praying near the Green Corner, which inspired him to preserve in its place the most sacred relic – John the Baptist's head – and to additionally construct an area dedicated to al-Khiḍr in the new mosque. Maintaining a mosque that encompassed two sites that Christians venerated underscored the link between the two faiths, and according to Ethel Wolper, "emphasized a discourse of conversion and continuity."[55] Thus, he became a way to fuse the old with the new in a civil manner, which coalesces with Hyde's statement that "in spite of all their disruptive behavior, tricksters are regularly honored as the creators of culture."[56]

Another one of the figure's common historical functions is transforming profane spaces into the sacred. This can relate to both physical space and the sacralization of being inside the heart whereby someone receives the light of the divine and journeys from inner darkness of ignorance to a station of gnosis. Commentators of this phenomenon often reference 24:35 of the Qurʾān:

> God is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The parable of His Light is a niche, wherein is a lamp. The lamp is in a glass. The glass is as a shining star kindled from a blessed olive tree, neither of the East nor of the West. Its oil would well-nigh shine forth, even if no fire had touched it. Light upon light. God guides unto his Light whomsoever

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[54] Ethel Sara Wolper, "Khiḍr and the Politics of Place: Creating Landscapes of Continuity," in *Muslims & Others in Sacred Space*, ed. Margaret Cormack (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 159, https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199925049.003.0006.

[55] Wolper, "Khiḍr and the Changing Frontiers of the Medieval World," *Medieval Encounters* 17, no. 1-2 (2011): 120-146, https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004221031_005.

[56] Hyde, *The Gift*, 25-26.

He will, and God sets forth parables for mankind, and God is Knower of all things.[57]

For Ibn al-ʿArabī (d. 638/1240) this light is synonymous with knowledge of God and the unity of existence and in explaining this he relays a personal anecdote of him seeing such a light while experiencing the loss of all sense of direction and spatial positioning. Many other mystics report this as an attainable station for a seeker. Al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111) similarly speaks of the veils of light and their separation of divine reality and the world of matter.[58] In this context, the function of the Khiḍr symbol has been to help seekers attain the station of light through spiritual transformation. Patrick Franke examines 173 stories of claimed encounters with al-Khiḍr from the 9th to 12th centuries and describes one of al-Khiḍr's functions as narrator of God's endorsement of holy spaces, places, and rulers.[59] Al-Khiḍr also functions as an initiate to the sacred, a guide on the path of the seeker (*sālik*), and al-Khiḍr sightings are the closest approximation to a theophany in the traditional Islamic worldview that one can document. The holy, or the experiential manifestation of sacred and numinous experience, is an approximation of the participatory aspect of sacred reality.[60] It is a spiritual aspect within canonical boundaries that mainstream Muslim schools have historically tolerated. There are many reports of Sufis claiming to have met al-Khiḍr, either in dreams or visions. Ibn al-ʿArabī, for instance, claims to have met him on three separate occasions. Irfan Omar views al-Khiḍr as a figure who functions as God's mercy in concert with the "light" of spiritual illumination and enables multitudes of the mystically inclined to gain spiritual statuses within their respective contexts, indiscriminately helping all, and not just the spiritual elite.[61] A common trope in Sufi love (*ʿishq*) poetry is when al-Khiḍr shows up in initiatory aspects of the spiritual quests of poets. For instance, Rūzbihān al-Baqlī of Shīrāz (d. 606/1209) claims an encounter signifying his entrance into a spiritual path towards sainthood. Al-Baqlī narrates that he was at that

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57 Nasr et al., *The Study Quran*, 878-880.

58 Omar, "Reflecting Divine Light," 175-176.

59 Franke, *Begegnung mit Khidr*, 1.

60 Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York, NY: Harcourt, 1959), 12.

61 Omar, "Reflecting Divine Light," 178.

time, "ignorant of the sciences and realities" and that al-Khiḍr told him to eat of an apple, "all of it" which he complies with in a scene in covenant with the Biblical Eden motif.[62]

However, in addition to his special multimodal status within normative Islamic Sufism, he also functions as the lemma of non-normative folkloric and new-age appropriations of Sufism. These borders are critical as the figure is often the inspiration behind architecture in the Muslim worlds where legends of chance meetings with al-Khiḍr abound, as do historical claims of his visitations at holy sites. The Khiḍr of folklore has a wide range, from helper of the wayfarer, to sometimes agent of subversion in moral systems. The expressions of al-Khiḍr made in folkloric contexts are not representative of Islamic practice per se, although there is sometimes an ambiguous overlap that is difficult to delineate; for this purpose Marshall Hodgson has dubbed phenomena of the fantastic that is neither devotional in nature nor couched in confessional terms *Islamicate*; the term refers to "the social and cultural complex historically associated with Islam and the Muslims, both among Muslims themselves and even when found among non-Muslims."[63] In new-age spirituality's appropriation of al-Khiḍr, it is still common to find him incorporated into cosmology as a patron saint of travelers.[64] A modern example of such appropriation is Idrīs Shāh's novel *The Way of the Sufi* wherein al-Khiḍr saves two drowning people by shape shifting into a log made in order to save them; with it they meander back to the shore safely as an onlooker witnesses this miraculous deed, and it is to the questioning of the onlooker that al-Khiḍr retorts that he assists people who have a future deed or service to fulfill.[65] Similarly, in al-Ṭayyib Ṣāliḥ's classic Arabic novel *The Wedding of Zein*, a story about an unattractive yet popular Sudanese man named Zein who falls in love, al-Khiḍr's impact on society is

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62 Carl W. Ernst, *Rūzbihān Baqlī: Mysticism and the Rhetoric of Sainthood in Persian Sufism* (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 1996), 52-53.

63 Marshall G. S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam: Conscience and History in a World Civilization, Vol. 1: The Classical Age of Islam* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1974), 59, https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226346861.001.0001.

64 Frederick William Hasluck, *Christianity and Islam under the Sultans*, ed. Margaret M. Hasluck (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1929).

65 Idries Shah, *The Way of the Sufi* (New York: Dutton, 1969), 161.

quite overt and his interaction with Moses is interpreted as a meta-parable about the act of interpretation. It proposes a re-reading of events surrounding Zein and his unexpected romance with Niʿmah that forces the reevaluation of love in society.[66] These *Islamicate* functional appropriations do not fall under the rubric of the classical or the canonical, and their discursive contexts seem to adapt to societal needs in a manner consistent with a Durkheimian sociological view of religion. Nevertheless, we see that they do not preclude the possibility of either reading.

IV. Can We Interpret al-Khiḍr When a Canon Loses Its Import?

Like the Islamic canon, the Western canon has gone through a transition inexplicably tied to its civilization being bound to empire. But the West's more recent imperial history of colonialism and the subsequent postmodern reassignment of meaning is something quite distinct and although the reassignment and eclipse of meaning in the Islamic canon occur in ways not entirely dissimilar, the West is in uncharted territory. This final section takes a step back from the close lens of examination to perhaps identify a blind spot of contemporary critical and close analysis. Manifestly, we can affirm that there is something essential and intriguing about the Green Man in that he personifies the inability to pin down meaning, and who – once defined – continues to slip free of the tethers of allegory, bucking simple interpretation where x stands in for y, eschewing the fixed reductive meaning for the more complicated one. But because this interpretive overlap straddles disparate canons and is claimed by so many different traditions, as an object of comparison (*tertium comparationis*) constituting attributes of distinction, placing a boundary around him is also problematic. The figure by its essence eschews measurable answers and interpretations and necessitates canonical contextualization.

The changing Western rubric for meaning is pertinent here because detached from transcendence and hinged on quality the quiddity of what exactly makes something authoritative, or definitively beautiful, becomes up for debate as aesthetic tastes differ.

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[66] Tayeb Salih, *The Wedding of Zein, and Other Stories* (London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1969).

However, differences that emerge over the necessity of a shared schema become quite pronounced and culminate into the canon wars, essentially precipitating the end of the Western canon. In literature, theories recognizing the limited field of vision appear, such as the inductive criticism of Richard Green Moulton – author of *The Literary Study of the Bible* – that embraces progress and simultaneously searches for universal truths. In debates on canonicity, simply making distinctions or boundaries becomes a subject of controversy. Moulton, for instance, criticizes lists of great books. This pushback makes it difficult to posit a traditional definition. Take beauty, for instance, eminently defined by Edmund Burke as "some quality in bodies acting mechanically upon the human mind by the intervention of the senses."[67] This realism transforms, however, and 20th century conservatism and traditionalism are appropriated by the likes of Russell Kirk and anti-relativists. Admitting that culture is one of the three hardest words to define in English because of the hostility it garners, Raymond Williams defines high culture as that which encompasses all cultural productions of aesthetic value societally esteemed as art, and is that which is in contrast to low art produced by plebeians and philistines.[68] However, simply positing such a definition with its tacit reliance upon binary opposites becomes something subject to scrutiny for alleged elitism. Nonetheless, patrimonial inheritance is necessary in shaping a societal paradigm for discussion, since without which a culture descends into chaotic relativism.

As it is connected to the contentious history of canonicity, the concept of religion is in need of much disaggregation. Tomoko Masuzawa contends that to even use this protean term as a rubric necessitates acknowledging that – as a category – the academy has left religion "unhistoricized" and "essentialized" in a manner tacitly retaining Eurocentric pluralist assumptions, such as the binary of the

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67 Edmund Burke, *The Works of Edmund Burke, vol. 1: A Vindication of Natural Society. An Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful: Political Miscellanies* (London: George Bell & Sons, 1909), 131.

68 Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, revised ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 92.

sacred and the profane.[69] For by opposites, things are known; however, when the canonical loses its import and deconstruction challenges its foundational binaries, the change in norms can be devastating to meaning. This is not a reference to a particular rift between modern scholars, (for instance, Foucault and Derrida), but rather a wider acknowledgement of the result of pushing back against hierarchies of traditional authority in favor of individual interpretive sovereignty. That humans learn by contrast, like the combination of a positive and negative theology (*via negativa*), is a traditional notion that necessitates binaries. Critical theorist Jonathan Culler likewise affirms that meaning in literature is (structurally) possible because of preexisting conventions, or that "Meaning is context bound, but context is boundless."[70] Particularly discernable in confessional Western examinations of non-Western heuristics and aesthetics, however, is that deconstruction utilized as the destabilization of meaning is primarily and distinctly a Western phenomenon. For instance, Thomas Kasulis comes to acknowledge that Zen ontological hierarchy asserts equality among creation, which requires a pursuit of truth (*satori*) from a non-positional and noetic attitude in order for one to imbibe haiku.[71] Similarly, Eugen Herrigel observes that Zen archery has an *it* factor that eludes him despite his struggles to engage it for five persistent years.[72] When Roland Barthes similarly ventures to Japan seeking for a universal transcendent signifier, he observes there that less meaning is imbued into signifiers by the bourgeois culture. Thereafter, naturally retained significance for him comes to conceptually yield a rejection of the claim that we can cognize the intentionality of an author. Again, we witness that at the end of a canon hierarchy loses its import. The Truth (with a capital T) is downgraded to another truth among competing truths. Amidst emerging relativism, the author thereby suffers a figurative

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[69] Tomoko Masuzawa, *The Invention of World Religions: or, How European Universalism was Preserved in the Language of Pluralism* (Chicago, Ill.: The University of Chicago Press, 2005), 1-2.

[70] Jonathan Culler, *Literary Theory* (New York: Sterling Publishing Company, 2009), 91.

[71] Thomas P. Kasulis, *Zen Action/Zen Person* (Honolulu: The University Press of Hawaii, 1981), 73.

[72] Eugen Herrigel, *Zen in the Art of Archery* (New York: Pantheon Books Inc., 1993).

death because to acknowledge the authority of the author is interpreted by some as a type of tyranny.

But if power is on the mind, and part and parcel of a heuristic, one might see it everywhere. Hence, included among the many traditional notions that have been interrogated in recent years are the conceptions of canonicity and normativity, affecting the very definition of what constitutes literature, which according to Terry Eagleton can no longer be objectively defined because a work's meaning and delineation are subject to the reception and negotiations of its audience.[73] Nevertheless, a formalist assumption still shared in literary criticism – and theology – is that a discourse must contain coherence to be treated as a subject of comparison.[74] The canonical figure obliges the canon to remain operative more so than the motif in literature. Yet all objects of comparison require identification, which is ultimately reliant upon interpretation; hermeneutics is thereby unavoidably interlocked with authority, the ability to exact what is and what is not inside an official boundary. The etymology of the word canon derives from Latin to denote "a (carpenter's) rule" and includes any text, music or art that shapes culture. In its general usage as a weapon with the power to destroy, is a sign. Thus, a canon is tied to authority of religious, political, and economic institutions of knowledge.

This entire departure is to establish that in order to contextualize al-Khiḍr as a figure something must be noted about these wider contexts and their changing norms. However, to adequately analyze what is distinctive about multifarious entities like the "Western" or "Islamic" canons is an inescapably subjective practice and perhaps obliges consultation beyond the academy, with mystics or percipients who are perhaps able to gauge figurative pulses of ethea. To be sure, although it is an abstruse task, some conspicuous assumptions and defining principles underpinning the path of credo and normativity are generally discernable. Unarguably, the Western canon is inseparable from the influence of the Bible. Then again, the Christian

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[73] Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983), 8.

[74] Volkhard Krech, "Religious Contacts in Past and Present Times: Aspects of a Research Programme," *Religion* 42, no. 2 (2012), 193, https://doi.org/10.1080/0048721X.2012.642572.

influence happens in medias res to an established Greco-Roman narrative, which arguably starts with Homer making an invocation to the Muse, although Hesiod claims that Muses can lie, which means, therefore, that aspects of the truth and reliability of Homer's sources – and hence all authority – are put into question at their very root.[75] Angst about the reliability of epistemological certitude is a thematic canonical reoccurrence, especially in regards to the essence of language as an ambiguous, unreliable, yet miraculous vehicle of transmission. Early church fathers affirm that people learn by signs. St. Augustine in the 5th century, for instance, differentiates between a thing (*res*) and a sign (*signum*). Bifurcated they become conventional (*signa naturalia*), like smoke rising from a fire, or given by intention, like one using a fire to make smoke signals (*signa data*), but both usages form a sign that communicates from one mind to another and "causes us to think of something beyond the impression made."[76] This traditional espousal of language, (inherited from earlier theories and later challenged by Wittgenstein and others), deems words objects of sense-perception that name objects and sentences as combinations thereof. It posits that belief (*credere*), the proper subject of knowing (*scire*), is the reality lying behind the signs, requiring a familiarity with authorial intent and an explanation for the inscrutable relationship between the senses and the mind.[77]

However, if we consider all aforementioned notions and then look for one of the Green Man motif's manifestations in the Old Testament, an examination of the passages treating Melchizedek in Genesis unaided by scholastic commentary allows for conceptual ambiguity regarding his nature. *Psalms* (110) says, "You are a priest *forever* by my order Melchizedek." James Kugel deduces the implication from several related commentaries that the title "priest"

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75 Barbara Graziosi, *Inventing Homer: The Early Reception of Epic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 251.

76 Andrew Louth, "Augustine on Language," *Journal of Literature & Theology* 3, no. 2 (1989), 151, https://doi.org/10.1093/litthe/3.2.151.

77 Gerard Watson, "St. Augustine's Theory of Language," *The Maynooth Review* 6, no. 2 (1982), 4.

means a type of permanence.[78] Some of the abstruseness stems from interpreting his name, likely theophoric, to mean *Melek̲i-ṣedeq* (My God [*El Elyon*] is Righteousness). As a compound of two elements "king" (*melekh*) and righteous (*tsedeq*) there are philological debates about whether it should be understood as a divine name or epithet (such as "the king or righteousness," or alternatively "my king"). Other questions arise regarding his origin. In *Hebrews* 7:3, coinciding with the archetypal nature of al-Khiḍr, Melchizedek is "Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life." Conversely, in early works of Hierax and a text associated to St. Augustine, a theory is raised that identifies him with the Holy Spirit.[79] Consorting apocryphal works can widen the literary possibilities even more. For instance, in *The Cave of Treasures* Melchizedek assists Seth in exhuming and reburying Adam's body at Golgotha.[80] Whereas in the gnostic perspective, Melchizedek lives, preaches, dies, and is resurrected, which is chronicled in the *Nag Hamadi* scripts that conflate him with Christ (which brings us back to one of the initial comparisons). Ultimately, his sudden textual appearance in the Bible without explanation leads to hermeneutical disagreement about why Abraham recognizes a Canaanite priest-king as a co-religionist but many have found it significant that after Abraham and 318 men recover his imprisoned nephew Lot, he pays homage to Melchizedek and then refuses to take any of the plunder for himself. Tremper Longman acknowledges that many stumped scholars have assigned Melchizedek meaning as a Christophany because of his enigmatic nature and status as the ultimate priest (surpassing even Aaron), a view bolstered by Martin Luther and often maintained within Protestantism, but Longman argues that the author of Hebrews "exploits the ambiguity of the story (*Gen* 14 & *Psalm* 110) in order to make important theological claims about Jesus." Thus,

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78 James Lewis Kugel, *Traditions of the Bible: A Guide to the Bible as it was at the Start of the Common Era* (Cambridge, Mass. & London: Harvard University Press, 1998), 278.

79 Fred L. Horton, *The Melchizedek Tradition: a critical examination of the sources to the fifth century A.D. and in the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 108.

80 E. A. Wallis Budge, *The Book of the Cave of Treasures: A History of the Patriarchs and the Kings, Their Successors, from the Creation to the Crucifixion of Christ* (London: The Religious Tract Society, 1927).

despite the lack of an intra-canonical consensus, there are various established norms in aiding approaches at contextualization.[81]

To return to epistemological fault lines, the Baconian shift, intent on putting nature *on the rack* to be tortured for its secrets, sets the canon on an epistemic departure for later inheritors like Locke, Hume, and Kant. The manifold skepticism of empiricists and *sola scriptura* advocates extends to customs and contextualizing texts. For instance, John Milton's understanding of covenant still situates Melchizedek in the mediatorial office of priest and is a view that also affirms language by its very nature as ambiguous. Although as it is the very mechanism that God has chosen to communicate with mankind, Milton hesitates to deride the vehicle of transmission despite maintaining a justified skepticism of language and the transmission of truth through institutions.[82] However, because the Hebrew language was left unpreserved without a prosodic dictionary for centuries, its sacerdotal status as the vessel of the Masoretic scripture raises doubts about the soundness of its transmission as words without diacritical marks or voweling points, raising questions about what can be definitively known about the text's authors, their states or their intentions. Furthermore, the science of translation is acknowledged as imprecise, and numerous theological interpretations of scripture and diverse exegetical opinions declare sundry misgivings about the unassailability of authoritative meaning. Nonetheless, Milton's expressed trepidation is not along the lines of linguistic prescriptivism; his chief contentions are rather against the reliance on customary practices that ossify and hinder the pursuit of truth. To Milton, such structures erected by custom are dangerous signifiers of obfuscation that become idolatrous transcendent commands. Satan of *Paradise Lost* is intentionally nuanced, metaphorical, and sophisticated in an attempt to prove that readers are generally fit and able to distinguish the truth from arguments.[83] Great books of any

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[81] Tremper Longman, *How to Read Genesis* (Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Academic, 2005), 172.

[82] John T. Shawcross, *John Milton: The Self and the World* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1993), 137.

[83] Victoria Khan, "The Metaphorical Contract in Milton's *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*," in *Milton and Republicanism*, ed. David Armitage, Armand Himy,

canon contain problematic ideas and although the idea interminably wins out that readers should be granted agency, not all agree; for instance, Thomas Hobbes's weariness of *paradiastole* – how words in scripture can be misconstrued to invert morality – influences his conclusion that all interpretive power should be delegated to a sovereign since evaluative terms may "redescribe a given action" and lead to doubt and antinomianism.[84]

Al-Khiḍr, the figure more specifically in question here, continuously escapes reductive meaning; thus, we must be weary of inherited civilizational epistemic blind spots and at the same time appreciate meritorious attributes of the "West" such as institutional backing for the seeking of redress fostered by vibrant civic debate and a robust legal tradition. As a defense mechanism for the tendency of freedom of speech to become freedom to offend in Western jurisprudence, a dueling culture evolves into a litigious one. The resultant freedoms provided thereby inculcate a specific research friendly environment. However, as naturalism and nominalism become part of regnant beliefs, the matter of shared essence becomes nil. This issue, despite some of the problems ameliorated by humanism, causes a greater challenge in defining the essence of humanity, no longer significant in history, and thus not a steadfast deterrent to the move towards transhumanism. While an appreciation for a legal theory informed by natural law was once a shared normativity, the arguments of legal positivists like John Austin delink morality and law. Classical theory thereafter loses its import in the West in ways incommensurate to any other cultures. In this way, a certain cosmology becomes discernible as influenced by the reeling embrace of an ideological position of scientism that reduces mysteries to matter and the framing of consciousness as a material epiphenomenon in the brain.[85] There is an underpinning affirmation of progress. For despite an initial resistance to the decimal system, the West's mastery of numeracy enabling measurement of factors like

and Quentin Skinner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 91, https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511598456.006.

84 Quentin Skinner, "Thomas Hobbes: Rhetoric and the Construction of Morality," in *Proceedings of the British Academy, volume 76: 1990 Lectures and Memoirs* (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 1-61.

85 Rare exceptions to this constitute issues in quantum physics like non-locality.

height, speed, size, and temperature hold its secret to temporal power, but these things also speak to a certain degeneracy in virtue where at times *episteme* and *techne* overtake *sophia*.[86] Mysteries cannot all be aggregated, however. Arguably no other civilization could have produced the aerial nuclear bomb except the West, unparalleled in its precision of warfare.[87] Furthermore, the sheer amount of energy allocated towards all things quantitative to the dereliction of the humanities, the death throes of which are hard to ignore, evince signs as to why modern Western culture – now global – experiences a felt flatness. Charles Taylor notes the pervasiveness of the sense that "with the eclipse of the transcendent, something may have been lost" whereby sacred rituals have been replaced by solemnizing crucial life moments with yet more and more material consumption.[88] The Qurʾān (22:74) in relation to this says "*They did not measure God with His true measure*." Therefore, with certain admirable advances, blind spots widen in other areas and the danger of celebrating the fine-tuning of this, expeditiously advancing, quantifying lens in relation to the figure in question here who is an extension of God's light and mercy is that, like God, as a paradox he cannot be pinned down quantitatively.

V. Conclusion

Criticism for the propensity of *dead white males* to dominate the canon prods reflections on the appropriate retributive responses to a history of repressive male Anglo hegemony. On the other hand, critiques like Alan Bloom's unnervingly rail against the experimental solution of cultural relativism that props up equality at the expense of quality.[89] Fredrick Douglass makes quite a strong case that, as a slave in early 19th century America, simply accessing progymnasmata like

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86 Adam Parfitt, David Price, and Marcus Weeks, *A Measure of Everything: An Illustrated Guide to the Science of Measurement*, ed. Christopher Joseph (Buffalo, NY: Firefly Books, 2005), 1.

87 Sven Lindqvist, *A History of Bombing*, trans. Linda Haverty Rugg (New York: New Press, 2003), 351.

88 Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, Mass. & London: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007), 307, https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvxrpz54.

89 Allan Bloom, *The Closing of the American Mind* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987).

"The Columbian Orator" is what ultimately aids him in his literacy, oration, and prose, providing him with the tools necessary to fight and abolish slavery. As follows, the reason why Ed Hirsch and Harold Bloom compiled lists of necessarily canonical knowledge is because while it is true that all cultures are ultimately creole, or "omni" in the words of Albert Murray, to remain a neophyte in a civilization's shared schema is disempowering because to be conservative with language, that is to look back at the past with conservation, is to be powerful. The converse is cultural illiteracy and the reliance on free association, which is consequently disempowering. Furthermore, whether via the tropological vision of covenant theology or via postmodern nihilism influenced by the uncertainty principle, theories continue to elevate the reader's sovereignty in interpreting signs, while simultaneously maintaining incredulity towards the general unreliability of all observers. However, the simple acknowledgment of antinomianism is a tacit recognition of an established border; crossing an established border is a breach of sacred or social boundaries that requires redress.

To conclude, conceptual problems remain when the Green Man is removed from a canon because he shares a controversial space ranging from a revered Biblical, Buddhist or Qurʾānic figure to sharing likenesses with the folkloric trickster who embodies characteristics antinomian and perhaps satanic. And what do we do with this wide range? We have understood that divine knowledge may be received in the form of Moses's legal understanding, or as al-Khiḍr's intuitive knowledge, and that these understandings are complementary, and not necessarily in competition. Therefore, the stronger the case is made for a Khiḍr of archetypal origins the less appropriate the motif becomes for more parochial and regional engagement confined within a comparison between Islam and Judeo-Christianity or the West. The universal is in contention with a mode of engagement that is submerged in narrower Muslim polemic. Inheritors of sequential research — in the chain of Western studies of Islam and Orientalism — draw our attention to the way these two traditions are intimately linked, and how the *sūrah* of *The Cave* directly responds to conversations that take place in earlier sources

like *The Alexander Romance* and prior religious dispensations.[90] However, in folkloric and religious contexts, intentionality is what ultimately provides real import to a character. Even though there is multimodality within the canon, when norms significantly change and a canon ends, meaning is reassigned and a figure's entire significance breaks down. If we rely on the unquestioned assumptions of the age, that things which are not proven empirically or by the verification principle are meaningless, how can we probe the reality of a character that belongs to categories of theology and metaphysics that are rendered entirely insignificant? In the examination of the Qurʾānic episode, enough identifiable similarities exist to establish more than a conceptually unilateral link to other traditions. And that is enough to substantiate the inclusion of the final excursus. Furthermore, upon examination of the figure's historical functions as a point of contact and sacralizer of profane spaces, there is much to probe in making further connections. But in sharing analogous characteristics, and in some cases function and telos, one can conceptualize al-Khiḍr as the Green Man who is able to straddle both canonical and non-canonical discourses as well as spaces of the sacred and the profane. In doing so, he can be simultaneously identified as an interreligious and an intrareligious figure with the ability to reconcile paradoxes and moral contradictions with a different type of logic. However, what is still challenging is to conceptually reconcile his saliently calling to moral behavior while simultaneously committing disturbing trickster-like acts without being couched in a canonical context because the hierarchy of monotheism in some ways extends less literary license than the polytheistic operations of folklore. Thus, at the teleological level some of the analogous literary features break down. Buddha is framed as a compassionate trickster from a literary perspective for reasons ultimately dependent on the norms provided by normative Buddhism. Likewise, this analysis reveals that to posit features about al-Khiḍr, (or any other canonical figure for that matter), necessarily requires consultation with the scholastic interlocutors of the figure's respective context.

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[90] Reynolds, *The Qurʾān and the Bible: Text and Commentary* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018).

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"Now I understand: the question which you would have me consider is, not only how a State, but how a luxurious State is created … If you wish also to see a State at fever heat … The original healthy State is no longer sufficient. Now will the city have to fill and swell with a multitude of callings which are not required by any natural want." Republic, Book II.

LOSING OUR SPACE/MADĪNAH: FROM THE MADĪNAH OF REALITY TO A SIMULATION CITY

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Abstract

Architecture or building a madīnah corresponds not only to constructing what is physical but also to building people and a community. Humans construct the madīnah just as the madīnahs build the people. Quarters (*maḥallah*s) or madīnahs present not only physical structures but also have an administrative, social, and cultural nature. People who have lost their space have also lost themselves. Indeed, civilizations have been built on madīnahs. The industrialization that started during the 18th century and gained speed during the 19th century brought with it the concept of urbanization. Europe lost its concept of the medieval city and built cities parallel to the positivist, secular, and materialistic approaches of its traditions of thinking. The high-tech process that took place during the 1970s following industrialization transformed the material universe and

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order into a simulative order. The present study focuses on how space and the city — and hence reality — have been lost by breaking away from the Islamic *ḥaḍārah* (*tamaddun*) by way of the Baudrillardian simulation concept.

Key Words: Space-Humans, Madīnah-Community, Reality-Simulation

Introduction

The process of making law or science started with the rationalist-empiricist synthesis of the 17th century during the Enlightenment (18th century) that replaced tradition and religion after Bacon, who aimed to dominate nature and society with the discourse of "knowledge is power." According to Baudrillard who had a critical approach to the roots of Enlightenment in the West intersecting with the Baconian approach, Cartesian mathematics, and Newtonian physics, nature in Western thought is nothing but a concept of a dominated essence that is claimed to replaced and reproduced by science and technology.[1]

"Naturalistic" ideological understanding presents itself in the construction of the city. Nature has been perceived all over the world as a social model since its emergence as a concept resembling décor or a structure model. Everything from a building to a small spoon or a city as a whole has been called an "object" following the emergence of an object-based approach in urban architecture based on the "naturalist" understanding. Asserting that the "naturalist" ideology has gained an objective, universal, and functional meaning in architecture thanks to Bauhaus, Baudrillard states that we are living in a universe where everything carries the qualification of a function and a sign. There is an unsystematic revolution devoid of a unique status based on objects and a rational goal (functionality).[2]

A new realization has emerged with the addition of Cartesian philosophy to Newton's "naturalistic" understanding of the universe. This new realization has resulted in industrialization and the

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1 Jean Baudrillard, *The Mirror of Production*, trans. Mark Poster (St. Louis, MO: Telos Press, 1975), 55.

2 Baudrillard, *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign*, trans. Charles Levin (St. Louis, MO: Telos Press, 1981), 197, 186.

construction of the industrial city. The industrial city was shaped, arranged, and disciplined subject to human will during the 19th century as the set of individual bodies established clear distinctions between the mind and the body. Urban space is related to the idea of a prosthetic extension of the human body, a diffuse and interconnected realm of human interaction founded on the blurring of boundaries rather than their delineation.[3] Nature has been rediscovered and produced via science and technique. In the small spaces of natural parks and green areas reduced to a sample surrounded by the vast urban texture, the "rediscovery" of nature is actually the re-enclosing of nature.[4]

The scientific and technological advancement of the 18th century took form in flesh and bone during the 19th century by way of industrialization. The birth of factories and industrial zones followed by the popularity of communication tools such as newspapers, telephones, and telegraphs resulted in the emergence of cities and metropolises. Technological developments occurred following mechanical development. The process of urbanization-industrialization-technologization gave birth to different forms of public life and service areas. Coupled with these developments, improvements in banking, shopping centers and the transportation sector resulted in changes in the characteristics and spirit of space and the individual. Industrialized cities and metropolises emerged that are spaces of artificiality, morbidity, and captivity dominated by different lifestyles, such as eating-drinking, fashion, and entertainment.[5] These concentric, isomorphic, synchronic cities are singular and different from rural space, with a permanent revolution and intense circulation; one feels as if one is living in the same city

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3 Wendy Steele et al. "The Cyborg City: Re-Thinking Urban Resilience Through Mobile Communications," *in Proceedings of the SOAC 7 - State of Australian Cities Conference (SOAC 2015)*, ed. Paul Burton and Heather Shearer (Southport: Griffith University, 2016), 2.

4 Ahmet Dağ, *Ölümcül Şiddet : Baudrillard'ın Düşüncesi* (Istanbul: Külliyat Yayınları, 2011), 192.

5 Henri Lefebvre, *Everyday Life in the Modern World*, trans. Sacha Rabinovitch (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1971), 122.

regardless of which city one visits in the modern world.[6]

The passion and struggle for "bread" and "entertainment" started to dominate in the gradually expanding world of petrified cities, bringing about the start of a new period against the countryman. The world-city that formed against the countryman built cosmopolitanism in place of "home." Civilization, which is the state of advanced humanity, is an external and artificial state. Those living in such a world-city do not make up a community but a crowd. In this case, they are death following life, rigidity following expansion, the intellectual age and the stone-built, petrifying world-cities following Mother Earth and the spiritual childhood of the Doric and Gothic.[7] Cities are the constructs of civilization, whereas madīnahs are the constructs of *ḥaḍārah*. Western cities carry the attributes of civilization, whereas Islamic cities carry the attributes of *ḥaḍārah*. While the European city design or Weber's city has a class "encounter," there is a corporate structure at the center of the community in the Islamic madīnah "equalizing" the people.[8] The land on which the population is increasing becomes the property of mankind, petrifying over time into a city. During this process, urbanization, or petrification, is indispensable, and the humans belonging to the city they own become a part of it and are thereby being affected by its character. According to Baudrillard, it is not space but time that determines whether an individual belongs to the city.[9] Indeed, it was time and not space that was indicative during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

The spirit of the times (zeitgeist) affected and identified the people living during those times. While time identified the people, they in turn determined the madīnah of the time they lived in together with space. In this context, the 19th- and 20th-century-city was the perfection of modern space. It was the space of rationality and of industry, liberalism, and advancement. New architecture created a

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6 Baudrillard, *Cool Anılar I-II: 1980-1990*, trans. Yaşar Avunç (Istanbul: Ayrıntı Yayınları, 2002), 86.

7 Oswald Spengler, *The Decline of the West Vol. I: Form and Actuality*, trans. Charles Francis Atkinson (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1929), 31-33.

8 Lütfi Bergen, *Kenti Durduran Şehir* (Ankara: MGV Yayınları, 2016), 389, 401.

9 Jean Baudrillard and Jean Nouvel, *The Singular Objects of Architecture*, trans. Robert Bononno (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), 47.

new community independent of the social, aesthetic, and philosophical accumulation of the 20th century. Modern madīnahs that are generally located at the center of large empires have resulted in a contrast between the madīnah and village, the urban and rural, and the modern and passé.[10] Attempts were made to depict and understand these contrasts, paradoxes, and rootlessnesses during the beginning of the 20th century by C. Baudelaire and G. Simmel and towards the end of the century by J. Baudrillard.

To observe modern space, Baudelaire uses the *flâneur*, the city stroller, a modern person who does not participate in the city but is an ambivalent observer. The *flâneur* perceives the metropolis as a charming world of dreams, a cradle of modern living culture that is the center of sparkling night life.[11] The modern man and *flâneur* of Baudelaire and Baudrillard are different from one another. Baudrillard's *flâneur* is glued to the seat in front of the TV screen; the leisurely wanderer is strolling no more. Now it is the TV images, advertorials, commodities, and various pleasures that stroll and wander opposite the hypnotized viewer. Baudelaire's leisurely wanderer has transformed into Baudrillard's viewer.[12] In his article entitled "The Metropolis and Mental Life" (1903), Simmel presents various snapshots of life in the metropolis. The subject is the modern metropolitan individual with an intensified emotional life subject to rapid and ever-changing internal and external stimuli. Similar to Simmel, Baudrillard focused on the McDonaldization and Disneyfication of time in his book *Simulations* (1983) and proposed a whole new perspective on modern life in the metropolis with the concept of hyper-reality.[13]

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10 Richard J. Lane, *Jean Baudrillard* (London: Routledge, 2000), 43, 104, https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446262313.

11 Charles Baudelaire, *Modern Hayatın Ressamı*, trans. Ali Berktay (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2004), 196.

12 Dağ, *Ölümcül Şiddet*, 54.

13 "Living in the Hyperreal Post-modern City," https://www.designingbuildings.co.uk/wiki/Living_in_the_hyperreal_post-modern_city, accessed January 30, 2020.

I. The Madīnah Conception in Islamic Civilization (*Tamaddun*)

The "madīnah" belongs to religion and tradition, whereas the "city" belongs to industrialization and modernity and thus to the West. The city is a setup built by the financial successes of people (factories, shopping centers, stadiums, etc.), whereas the madīnah is a constructed grid that protects the limits prescribed by Allah (*ḥudūd Allāh*) concerning the realm of nature as well as that of the invisible (*al-ghayb*/*al-malakūt*), which transcends nature. The city has enslaved its dwellers by way of cars and residences, numbing them through their subjection to its own functioning.[14] Modernist structures settle down in traditional madīnah architectures much like *tumors*, transforming what is natural and humane into a virtual and bestial city. In a sense, this is the replacement of the perception and construction of the madīnah by the ancients (*al-qudamāʾ*) with the metaphysical sentiment of a modern radical and purely rational way of thinking. Cities based on pragmatic engineering that is beyond measure are constructed in place of the madīnah, which is based on deep, rigorous metaphysical principles that require significant effort. The madīnah is now being rectified with its metaphysical architecture, which requires a long and arduous effort with a purely mathematical (disproportionate) approach. Virtual technology is pragmatically and radically eliminating the madīnah and its architectures, with their historical, intensely moral, and philosophical culture. Islamic madīnah architecture is also affected by the rationalization, pragmatism, practicality, and individuality of the construction of the city. The Islamic architecture based on being and the identity of the eternal encompasses the association of part-whole, and individuality loses its significance. The parts are continuously in motion to reach unity. Unity (*al-tawḥīd*), which is the basic principal of Islam, also has reflections in Islamic architecture, embodying and responding to problems as a whole.[15] Order (*al-ʿadālah*/*al-niẓām*; putting everything in its appropriate place) is attempted to be established in Islamic madīnah architecture. Architecture occurs at the material, biosocial, psychological, and spiritual/mental planes and

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[14] Bergen, *Kenti Durduran Şehir*, 89, 98.

[15] Turgut Cansever, "İslam Mimarîsi Üzerine Düşünceler," *Divan: İlmî Araştırmalar* 1, no. 1 (1996), 127.

encompasses all areas of being. Rather than being a field of technology, architecture is the product of the subjects of morals and religion and embodies the considerations of being. According to Cansever, the Western world tried to overcome philosophical problems by a narrow, limited, and dualist conception of being, concentrating its attention only on the material and spiritual planes. The concept of *tawḥīd* in Islam surpasses these flaws, stipulating the efforts of grasping the unity of being.[16]

This *tawḥīd* approach is reflected in the construction of the madīnah. Administrative and economic units manifest themselves as "house-*maḥallah*-madīnah," constructing a *tamaddun*.[17] Dwellings with courtyards inside them are surrounded by tall and windowless walls. This "home" structuring provides privacy and security. The courtyard also provides a green environment where children are free from dangers, and life in the courtyard passes with production.[18] The house that takes shape in Islamic architecture, generally around a courtyard that separates it from the outside world, is composed of two sections: *ḥaram* (the private domain) and *selamlık* (a room set apart for guests/visitors/outsiders) in Turkish. People are not allowed to sit on the street in an Islamic madīnah since there are other places (masjids and homes) for sitting and gathering. Streets are described by homes. Homes, which are the representation of mortality, are constructed using short-lived materials such as wood or adobe brick; thus, meeting the need for transformation in the madīnah is simplified. The order of the homes is an indication of mutual respect.[19] Irregular streets (dead ends or winding streets) and the closure of streets to pedestrians serve the functions of privacy and security.[20] Irregular road patterns and courtyard-centered homes are ever-present in the ancient East. The division of the city into living spaces and the marketplace as the central business area is a

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16 Ibid., 120.

17 Bergen, *Şehir Sünnettir* (Ankara: Hitabevi Yayınları, 2016), 213.

18 Bergen, *Evlerimizi Kaybediyoruz: Yerlilik Meselemiz* (Ankara: MGV Yayınları, 2016), 235.

19 Cansever, "İslam Mimarîsi Üzerine Düşünceler," 130.

20 Yılmaz Can, "H.I-III./M.VII-IX. Y.Y. İslâm Şehri," *Ondokuz Mayıs Üniversitesi İlâhiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 6 (1992), 115.

distinctive criterion for the Near Eastern madīnah, considered the cultural heritage of Islam.[21]

The courtyards for privacy, known as "Hayat (Life)," are abandoned for "balconies" that enter the privacy of others who expose their own privacy. Cansever states that the privacy of a home and the conception of home as a secluded and private space are interrelated expressions. Social unity and solidarity, security, individuality, and privacy are important elements for Islamic home architecture.[22] Quarters, as social spaces that find life through select people with equivalent moral values, were locations with open marketplaces where women acted as mothers in addition to selling their own products.[23] These spaces were not hypermarket-style centers of trade that destroy the traditional, as proposed by Baudrillard, but places of an approach involving a modesty in income. Wide boulevards or streets have been built for modern society instead of quarters that involve such a sense of community.

Asserting that modern society renders the sense of community involving the concept of *maḥallah* impossible, Bergen states the following:

> *Maḥallah* is not a social element in the modern city. You cannot build a *maḥallah* from hundreds of apartment blocks placed side by side. You can only put forth a definition such as, "place of residence" or "İstiklal Street," "Yüksel Street." These locations cannot be an area of life or social identity. They can only be the gathering places for different individualities. It may perhaps represent a ghetto. That is, it comprises closed communities involving polarization and "marginalization" according to social identity, whereas "*maḥallah*s" are organizations where a group of people who are not homogeneous/of the same class gather without "marginalization," building a "superordinate identity."[24]

The Islamic madīnah does not represent a single type of

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21 André Raymond, "The Spatial Organization of the City," in *The City in the Islamic World*, ed. Salma K. Jayyusi et al., (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2008), 57, https://doi.org/10.1163/ej.9789004162402.i-1500.15.

22 Cansever, "İslam Mimarîsi Üzerine Düşünceler," 123.

23 Bergen, *Evlerimizi Kaybediyoruz*, 234.

24 Bergen, "Medeniyetin Cüzü: Mahalle," *İdeal Kent* 2 (2010), 144-145.

civilization like Greek or Roman city.[25] Lives for single people have been constructed in neighborhoods composed of 1+1 flats that destroy the *maḥallah* life. Therefore, the madīnah and the Ottoman-Islamic madīnah architecture that provide a unique architectural taste have been abandoned. It is not possible to catch a glimpse of the primeval joys and aesthetics of building madīnahs in cities established during the Republic Era (Kırıkkale, Karabük, Tunceli, Batman, Gölcük, Kapaklı, Çerkezköy). Whereas the madīnahs built by the Andalusians, Seljuqs, Ottomans, and even Ghaznawids have architecture with unique and traditional characteristics, the cities built during the Republic period with the aim of westernization are devoid of these architectural characteristics. It is not clear to which culture the constructed madīnah (excluding historical spaces) belongs.

In general, places of worship and marketplaces have an important impact on the process of madīnahzation. Specifically from an Ottoman perspective, they are described as "Cuma kılınur, bazar durur (Friday prayer is performed, bazaar settles down)" based on historical documents. Beamlike roads spread out from the mosque located at the center in many Islamic madīnahs. Marketplaces have also started to gather around the mosque community; therefore, the number of marketplaces has increased subject to the number of mosques.[26] The madīnah center, closed bazaar, or *bedesten* (a lockable, covered [usually domed] building where valuable goods were stored) is organized around the great/grand mosque.[27] Three elements that the Ottoman madīnah has acquired from Islam are the mosque, the marketplace, and the Turkish bath. The madīnah is structured around the mosque and the marketplace.[28] Indeed, the "Friday mosque" and "marketplace" were two important catalysts with regard to the construction of the madīnah for the Ottomans. Accordingly, it is understood that the "Friday mosque" and "marketplaces" set up on certain days of the week make up the essence of the madīnah. Indeed, mosques and almshouses (*imaret/ʿimārah*) are important with regard to madīnah construction and architecture in the Ottoman era. The old bazaars were

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25 Raymond, "The Spatial Organization of the City," 52.

26 Can, "H.I-III./M.VII-IX. Y.Y. İslâm Şehri," 116.

27 Raymond, "The Spatial Organization of the City," 59.

28 Bergen, *Kenti Durduran Şehir*, 47.

abandoned during the first years of the Republic, leaving in their places "statue"-centered marketplaces, whereas "hypermarket"-centered marketplaces started to be built during the 2000s.

Sociocultural, religious, and commercial elements such as the *imaret*, *bedesten*, caravanserai, marketplace, and Friday mosque (grand mosque) make up the texture of the madīnah. The Ottoman madīnah presents an integrity that brings to mind the concept of an Ottoman madīnah with its physical characteristics, economic development, and functional structure. Building *imaret*s, which are religious and social structures for developing the madīnah further, is one of the characteristics of the Ottoman madīnah and make it superior to other Islamic madīnahs. Order and respect have been taken as the basis for the construction of the houses in these madīnahs. Security, the Islamic belief system and thus privacy, respect, and modesty are the important factors that determine the locations of the homes with respect to each other. These sensibilities were lost over time subject to changes in the form of belief.

II. Madīnah as a Concept and Part of Architecture

The architecture that is a part of the madīnah is the means by which people rearrange their madīnahs for their existence. It is equivalent to considering the madīnah solely as a work of art and giving it an aesthetic form. In addition to architects, painters, sculptors, and ceramists, there is a need for madīnah designers with an artistic sensibility and new madīnah planners who are also aesthetes and thinkers. Contrary to the Middle Age and Renaissance periods, benefit and functionality have been considered as the basis during the era of rapid industrialization.[29] In this regard, Turgut Cansever considers architecture a noble act of people that "encompasses all areas of being while developing life at material, bio-social, psychological, and spiritual/intellectual levels encompassing all areas of being while also having complex relations with the problems brought about by life."[30]

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[29] İsmail Tunalı, *Tasarım Felsefesi: Tasarım Modelleri ve Endüstri Tasarımı*, 4th ed. (Istanbul: YEM Yayınları, 2012), 47.

[30] Cansever, *İslâm'da Şehir ve Mimari*, 11th ed. (Istanbul: Timaş Yayınları, 2016), 8.

Urban planning of the private sector and its understanding of development, order, and administration has taken the place of the madīnah in the feudal order. The city has been built in this framework, as a result of which the elite and middle class that make up urban colonialism emerged. Baudrillard examines this emerging postmodern city:

> The urban city is also a neutralized, homogenized space, a space where indifference, the segregation of urban ghettos, and the downgrading of districts, races, and certain age groups are on the increase. In short, it is the cut-up space of distinctive signs. Multiple codes assign a determinate space-time to every act and instant of everyday life. The racial ghettos on the outskirts or in the city center are only the limit expression of this urban configuration: an immense center for marshalling and enclosure where the system reproduces itself not only economically and spatially, but also in depth by the ramifications of signs and codes, by the symbolic destruction of social relations.[31]

The capitalized city is like an entity that is growing every day. People rush to these cities that are constructed on the mind-body duality. In the language of economics, it is almost as if an excessive amount of product/spirit is introduced to the market/society. Cities built by Cartesian thought are populated not only by bodies but also by excessive amounts of information, informatics, communication, and social networks. The city is a location people rush towards as a center of attraction. The city is the location of this increase and "chain reaction" approved by the holistic dictatorship of fashion. The intensive urbanization process of rural areas via rapid acculturation is irrecoverable and unstoppable. The discourses of the city (impulses, desires, stimulations, judgments, eroticization, information, stimulation of advertisements) are as determinant with regard to the fate of the society as is the population density of the city.[32]

J. Nouvel, who conducted an interview with Baudrillard stating that it is not possible to prevent the growth of the city and

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[31] Baudrillard, *Symbolic Exchange and Death*, trans. Iain Hamilton Grant (London: SAGE Publications, 2017), 97.

[32] Baudrillard, *The Consumer Society: Myths & Structures* (London: SAGE Publications, 1998), 65-66, https://doi.org/10.4135/9781526401502.

urbanization, claims that the rush towards cities leads to a sort of urban *big bang* by enabling the making of plans and the placing of rules; hence, ready recipes and architecture have now become futile, indicating that the system becomes absurd as soon as it is combined with a structural model.[33] Urbanization has brought about rapid modernization leading to the desertification of the country by dehumanizing villages and rural areas.[34] Speed and growth have resulted in an increase in the number of cities as well as urbanization. The discourses of the city have led to individuals focused on speed and desire and the fast cities built by these individuals. The term *fast cities* is used to define rapidly growing or, in other words, economically booming cities. Reference is made to their growth centered on trade and economy. Such cities characterized by innovation, entrepreneurship or fast economy and spatial growth express the success story of global neo-liberal urbanism.

The historical, social, and political abilities of intensive and fast city-region urbanizations vary subject to this success. The history of fast urbanizations leads to colonial and post-colonial social divisions with the rapid urbanization of the 21st century. Fast structuring is related to urbanization, migration, and climate change. Fast cities that give birth to post-colonial insecurities around modernity, development, and ownership can be considered the re-emergence of the post-colonial state desire, which is different and separate from classical colonialism. Fast cities are considered an extension of neo-liberal city development in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America. Various solutions are proposed against fast and growing madīnahs. As new towns, industrial cities, and satellite cities are built, the logic of metropolitanism or "bypass urbanization" for building new cities through the growth of already existing cities is supported. Mega cities emerge by channeling capital, resources, and services away from the already existing cities.[35]

The fast growth and post-colonialization of cities results in the *alienation* of the individual from his/her society. Baudrillard depicts

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33 Baudrillard and Nouvel, *The Singular Objects of Architecture*, 17.

34 Bergen, *Kenti Durduran Şehir*, 100.

35 Ayona Datta and Abdul Shaban, *Mega-Urbanization in the Global South Fast cities and new urban utopias of the postcolonial state* (London & New York: Routledge, 2017), 4-7.

this by telling the story of Ishi, the last member of an Indian tribe who was stupefied by the sight of the vast crowds in San Francisco. He could only think that the dead – all the previous generations – were also there among the living. This is what happens when the whole space is suffocated by our state of overpopulation, over-information, and over-communication, leading to the mass state where the living become strangers to one another and only the living dead remain.[36] According to Baudrillard, cities are large structures that are never left alone; there is always work going on — digging, demolition, construction, knocking down, and building up again with domestic luxury and suburban comfort.[37] New York, Chicago, Houston, Seattle, and Toronto have reached a dramatic state due to giant buildings built out of competition resulting in the birth of an object/city that ignores the benefits of society and the individual while insisting on its madness outside the control of architecture. The only thing that is equivalent to this object is the arrogance and challenge of Renaissance cities.[38]

Practical design has taken a place compatible with the theoretical concept of the environment and in accordance with the Newtonian understanding of "nature" as well as Cartesian philosophy. The functional sector with environmental balances during this process is the form of sending/receiving messages and space/time that is unique to communication. This means that a universe encompassing all applications and forms from daily life to architecture, speech to body language and politics has become self-ordained.[39]

The Renaissance aimed to revive the past and build paradise. Building paradise is one of the comfort-related goals of modern architecture. However, the practical counterpart of the desire for a lost paradise or taking refuge in the past is difficult. The *paradise place (!)* of industrialization and modernization, the city, has been transformed into an area of product manufacturing, industrial businesses, and intensification. Cities where the automation process takes place are places of the living dead where masses are physically

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[36] Baudrillard, *İmkânsız Takas*, trans. Ayşegül Sönmezay (Istanbul: Ayrıntı Yayınları, 2005), 18.

[37] Baudrillard, *Cool Anılar I-II*, 227.

[38] Baudrillard, *İmkânsız Takas*, 29.

[39] *Ibid*., 256.

close to each other but are spiritually miles apart. The city is the place where modern people are allowed to lead lives as the living dead.

Asserting that architecture operating by way of a piece of land/territory to take shelter in and to defend will always have a place for itself even when the forms of civilization change, Baudrillard suggests that architectural acts as sources of pleasure that are in relation with new data will always be present despite the assumption that the city has disappeared both physically and territorially.[40] As proposed by Baudrillard, the city and architecture will continue their presence for as long as there are people and lands. However, the city takes on a different form together with architecture. While the cities built during the 19th century had a mechanical characteristic, virtual-technological cities were built during the 20th century, and digital-smart-transhumanist cities were built during the 21st century. In particular, Western cities face different crises in every decade. Industrial pollution during the 19th century, excessive migration during the start of the 20th century, destruction caused by the Second World War during the second quarter, city riots during the 1960s, rapid increase of commercial spaces during the 1970-1980s, and security syndromes during the post-9/11 era can be given as examples. The growth of metropolises and humane issues has resulted in the emergence of various exemplary cities such as the "garden city" (E. Howard), "radiant city" (Le Corbusier), "sustainable city," "smart city," and "eco-city" as suggestions for solutions.

III. Hypermarkets as Mechanisms for Transforming the City and the People

There is the classical period with the copying of forms corresponding to the order of triple simulacras (nature-manufacturer-simulation simulacras), the industrialization age involving the production of form products, and the simulation age involving form simulation. Indicators of the age of industrialization are industrial systems, machines, and factories. There are automatons and robots in the simulation period dominated by technology that criticizes this period; this period corresponds to the communication revolution.[41]

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[40] Baudrillard and Nouvel, *The Singular Objects of Architecture*, 79.

[41] Dağ, *Ölümcül Şiddet*, 178-179.

According to Baudrillard, while industrial capitalism is the process of production, the modern world's morals that dominate the simulation order are consumption. The process has transformed from production as the basis to consumption as the basis. Factories were established at strategic locations in city centers during the onset of industrial capitalism and later shifted to locations outside the city centers. Shopping centers that symbolize consumption have taken the place of factories that symbolize production in the urban structuring that guides urban life and relations. It holds a central position in today's consumer society, urban life, and structuring. In the words of Baudrillard, who considers the hypermarket as exceeding the "consumption center," the new cities have become the satellites of hypermarkets. The hypermarket is an indication that rural areas have transformed into urban areas as well as the expression of a new way of life. The products here that symbolize social relations have been organized for viewing.[42] In this sense, the hypermarket with new modes of consumption is a postmodern space generating new geographical and experiential spaces that determine what is social rather than being an architectural construct.[43] According to Baudrillard, the city that has transformed itself into a metropolitan area cannot absorb the "negative satellites" that are the new areas of existence. Cities as spaces of trade, work, information, and free time have become seductive, dislocated, and indistinct.[44]

The structure of cities was damaged as they transformed into *satellites of* hypermarkets or *shopping centers* rather than primal modernization. Cities that transform into satellites are moved to hypermarkets, giving way to suburbs. A new form of structuring has emerged with nuclear and satellite attributes along with molecular characteristics resembling the genetic code and cybernetic characteristics resembling command scenarios. The hypermarket as a *nucleus* that even the modern city fails to absorb takes the suburbs, factories, and the university into its orbit. It is a space that has made the city its satellite by surpassing the factory of the 19th century, which

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42 Mehmet Anık, "Aykırı Bir Düşünür Olarak J. Baudrillard ve Gösteriş Amaçlı Tüketim," *Uluslararası Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi* 9, 47 (2016), 449, http://dx.doi.org/10.17719/jisr.2016.1391.

43 Lane, *Jean Baudrillard*, 24.

44 *Ibid*., 104.

does not disrupt the orbit of the city. The hypermarket, as a hyper-realistic model resembling a social synthesis disconnected from the city, is like a giant assembly line. The hierarchical work order is replaced by employees (patients) who come and go as they please to choose, buy, and gape. There is a well-programmed disciplinary order and an assembly line where prohibitions are hidden behind a false façade of tolerance, convenience, and hyper-reality. It cannot be taken into consideration separate from the city, resembling a functional screen that reflects the highways, parking, and all activities. Hypermarkets that exceed the spaces of capital are models that gather prospective social control and ways of life (work, leisure, food, hygiene, transportation, media, culture) under a single homogeneous roof (time/space). The hypermarket as the reinterpretation of all opposing movements in a closed circuit is the space where time-space is integrated and where social life and a functional simulation are in place.[45]

The philosopher who does not only claim that the hypermarket pulls the city into its field of attraction and orbit relates the world to the hypermarket that is a functional, continuous, and singular living thing. Decentered and deterritorialized hypermarkets have been modeled on traditional downtown shopping areas. They have transformed their zones not only architecturally but also with regard to the social way of life. They have developed a new mode of living and experiencing social spaces, even taking the place of organized religion in developed countries. Hypermarket shoppers have started to be screened with regard to the products they purchase.[46] According to Baudrillard, the hypermarket is one of the indicators of the simulation order that enable us to understand how modernity, which has a meaning beyond the consumption center, will end.

According to Baudrillard, the hypermarket as a model heralding the future acts as an orbit (especially in the USA) because it determines the distribution of the areas of settlement. Thus, the hypermarket that gives an order to all that takes place around it is the homogenizing boiling point where all differences melt and become

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45 Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, trans. Sheila Faria Glaser (Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press, 1994), 76-77.

46 Francesco Proto, "Architecture," in *The Baudrillard Dictionary*, ed. Richard G. Smith (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), 18.

one. Traditional marketplaces in downtown city centers paved the way for citizens and villagers to get together, whereas the hypermarket destroys the villager and the traditional.[47] Hypermarkets as spaces of pseudo-centralization that are neither centers nor peripheries shape a pseudo-area around them, transforming the city into a satellite. Hypermarkets that are indications not of urban integrity but decomposition, not of order but disorder, do not establish accordance with the city and its shopping relations; on the contrary, other-worldly objects overshadow the city like space vehicles that have managed to break through from a dark disaster. It seems for Baudrillard that there is no escape from this. What should be done is to allow the hypermarkets to come and go as the monsters they have become. Since hypermarkets as urban monsters are not monuments but monsters, it will be of no use to banish them from cities or districts.[48]

Hypermarkets, as immaculate examples of new and strange spaces replacing the marketplace with which they have ruptured their relationship, are nuclear plants with the power to dissuade, and their hidden function is dissuasion. Hypermarkets that have become simulation poles have regressed modernity by determining the actual elements (traditional transportation systems and factories) of the preceding city and pacifying them. The desire of the hypermarket that swallows the past and the present, allowing only the present moment to live, in turn results in new forms of depression or disaster.[49]

Baudrillard, who presented an ironic analysis of consumption, hypermarket, and hyper-product, bases his human-space analyses on culture and shopping centers such as Beaubourg and drugstores. According to him, Beaubourg, as a center of cultural exchange in addition to being a center of consumption, is the space of the simulation order, which indicates that Western culture is hyper-real.[50] Beaubourg's architecture is also in accordance with its cultural function, so it has been built in a sort of hyper-real fashion. When considered from the point of view of architecture, Beaubourg is one

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47 Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, 75-76.

48 Baudrillard, *Cool Anılar I-II*, 104-105.

49 Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, 77.

50 Dağ, *Ölümcül Şiddet*, 134.

of the first attempts to objectify the plug-in city concept[51] of Archigram.[52]

Beaubourg, which resembles a hypermarket with no memory and whose true output is not art and culture but only a form of the masses and the mass anti-culture, is the simulation of the homogeneous void of society. Taking the place of the factory, Beaubourg is a hyper realistic labyrinth as a space of division, entertainment, simulation, and implosion. Beaubourg provides the massive transformation of traditional culture with its power to homogenize. This architecture that is part of the simulation order is also a part of anti-culture. In the world of touch and manipulation, Beaubourg transforms humans into an entity that wants to capture everything, eat everything, and touch everything. Organizers have been alarmed by this uncontrollable impulse.[53]

Beaubourg is a center of culture resembling a mechanical science fiction creature spreading beams of light, a dead and frozen metabolism erected to commemorate a hyper-realistic culture that is completely disconnected from society. It disconnects the individual from time, teaching that social life is a space-time belonging to the operational simulation, that the goods are hyperreal, and that the hypermarket culture is hyper-realistic. Masses that enter Beaubourg do not obey the official culture, crush and eliminate the myth of the system, imitate and play with patterns, do not deal with the meanings of cultural objects, and know that meaning is not present but that simulation is.[54] Drugstores, as modern consumption centers, are locations instilled with a pint of intelligence and human warmth where culture and commodities are culturalized. The entire objective social life is glorified in this space where artificial climates and seasons are brought into existence. *Drugstores/pantheons,* considered modern centers of consumption corresponding to the pantheon of Ancient Rome, bring forth a unique and new culture and style that culturalizes people. As a new culture, *drugstores* comprise a

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51 Baudrillard and Nouvel, *The Singular Objects of Architecture*, 38.

52 A group of avant-garde architects during the 1960s started by P. Cook, W. Chalk, R. Herron, and D. Cromption.

53 Mike Gane, *Baudrillard's Bestiary: Baudrillard and Culture* (London & New York: Routledge, 2003), 144-145, https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203415856.

54 Dağ, *Ölümcül Şiddet*, 121.

new style involving human warmth and intelligence. Such shopping styles and consumption habits have shaped the dimensions of our communities and the morals of today's world.[55]

Asserting that even animals construct a lifestyle and relations based on accumulation, the philosopher states that animals put into action thermodynamic information exchange mechanisms to maintain their existence.[56] Whereas the hypermarket is the place of the simulation order, masses are the communities of the hypermarket. Baudelaire's urban wanderer has been replaced by Baudrillard's individuals wandering in shopping centers or drugstores. Excessive consumption is an indication of the presence of the individual in the consumer society. Baudrillard's market wanderers witness the night-time dreamlike scenes of shopping spaces. Keen on consuming, dressing up, and eating, the individual is an entity of consumption that appreciates himself/herself and has become an object of seduction.[57] Hypermarkets as spaces that detach the individual from reality and the natural environment are among the most important elements related to the formation of the virtual city.

IV. Virtual and Digital Cities Detached from Reality

Just as the "messianic hope" is based on apocalyptic reality, Baudrillard sees the end of humanity not as "actual" but as "virtual," claiming that individuals trapped in the virtual reality of the simulation will never have the right to enlightenment.[58] It is difficult to find reality in the simulation. Simulations and hyper-reality overloaded with images eliminate the borders between reality and representation. Hyper-reality or simulation is defined as the generation via models of a reality devoid of roots or actuality. There is no longer any territory before or after the map.[59] The disruption of the difference between reality and simulation reflects the characteristics of time and space. The territorial region no longer comes before the map, and it is the map that generates the territory.[60]

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55 Gane, *Baudrillard's Bestiary*, 18-21.

56 Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, 141.

57 Baudrillard, *The Consumer Society*, 103.

58 Datta and Shaban, *Mega-Urbanization in the Global South,* 61.

59 Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, 2-3.

60 "Living in the Hyperreal Post-modern City."

According to Baudrillard, the map no longer corresponds to an actual territory; rather, it comes first and indeed is the map that brings the territory into existence. The new territory that is almost the simulacra has been built on reality (terrain). Las Vegas, as the immaculate city of advertising with neon lights, bright streets, and radiance of advertising, is a simulacra city that puts the individual inside a surprising hyper-reality.[61]

According to the philosopher, who uses Disneyland, which he considers as the model of simulacras, to describe the construction of the virtual-simulation city by the clearing up of the traditional city through hypermarkets, the imaginariness in Disneyland is neither true nor false. Disneyland is a blanket hiding the fact that it is the real America. All of Los Angeles and America that surrounds Disneyland are no longer real but belong to the hyperreal order and to the order of simulation. In the section titled "The Hyperreal and the Imaginary" of his *Simulacra*, analyses of Disneyland, which represents the micro-world of the West, are presented as a simulation example. According to him, Disneyland is a perfect model of all the entangled orders of the simulacra with *the real and reference* systems, a play of illusions and phantasms, a deterrence machine set up to rejuvenate the fiction of the real, and a world where adults come to be childish. Disneyland, as the first great toxic excrement of a hyperreal civilization, is an ideological setup and universe enabling adults forced to believe that everything else is real to be childish and to make them believe that they are not actually children.[62]

G. Ritzer explains the transformation of society by McDonaldization, whereas Baudrillard describes the transformation of the city with the concept of Disneyfication. These two processes are connected through excessive stimulation and hyper-reality issues. The two processes active in the emergence of urban space – McDonaldization and Disneyfication – established this simulated cycle of space developed by entertainment developers in the attempt to capitalize on the mental image of a space. Disney World is a new

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61 Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, 90-91.

62 *Ibid*., 28-30.

model for creating a public space through spatial control and stimulated/simulated visual culture.[63]

The advancement of industrialization, technology, and cybernetics has brought about rational and economic institutions in modernizing communities, leading to differences and innovations. Primary relations have been replaced by artificial relations in communities with people living in smart buildings and smart cities. People have constructed comfortable residence blocks, shopping centers, cinemas, and brightly lit streets that will save them from the ordeals/realities of life. Modern cities have been built in the world of technology and cybernetics. It is almost as if the multitude of new smart building technologies, residence blocks, and offices detach the people from the natural world or, in other words, reality, constraining them to virtual spaces of "make believe" and thus leading them to live the virtual as the reality.

For Baudrillard, modern architecture presented virtually through technologies such as CAD[64] produce completely functional architectural objects. Risk and drama are completely "programmed" through modern architectural projects in the city devoid of threats and risks and thus its bizarre interests.[65] Spaces isolated from reality, distanced from pain and drama, have transformed people into the virtual or to the people in Plato's cave who take the shadows on the wall as reality. While those inside Plato's cave are the owners of the cave, those living in the city have given up on being the owners of the city only to perceive what takes place around them not within the framework of their own perceptions but through the images imposed upon them. Baudrillard claims that cities have been subject to miniaturization by an infinitesimal memory that forgets nothing and that belongs to no one. For him, the city is a simulation of an imminent, increasingly dense, irreversible order, one that is potentially saturated and that will never again witness the liberating explosion.[66] Aspects that enable the reduction of the city to smaller dimensions are communication networks and transportation connections. The shrinkage of the city transforms the nodes of the

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63 "Living in the Hyperreal Post-modern City."

64 CAD (computer aided design/computer aided manufacturing).

65 Datta and Shaban, *Mega-Urbanization in the Global South,* 26, 61.

66 Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, 73.

city (streets and hypermarkets) into economic centers of power. The transformation of cities into economic centers of power results in competition among them to attract global businesses, skilled workers, and eager consumers.[67]

The use in modern buildings (offices, residences, and hypermarkets) of iron and glass with advancing technology reduced these spaces almost to a state of steel and transparent cages. Iron and glass symbolize the power and obscenity of modern societies. Indeed, Las Vegas, which has created its own magic, is, as Baudrillard would suggest, the pride of capitalists and transsexuals. Cities composed of such spaces are indications of both seduction and virtuality. The city puts forth a unique reality of its own with illuminated and glass architectural structures. Similar to Beaubourg and Disneyland, Baudrillard perceives the Pompidou Center more as a space with a cultural function rather than a shopping and entertainment center. The interlocutors of this center that enable the circulation of these masses in the city beyond the carnival environment are not the radical groups of 1968 but rather the terminal citizens of the silent majority. This space provides its interlocutors an area where an artificial loneliness is secreted, transforming them almost into bubbles. The silent majority of cities, that is, the masses, live in a state of melancholy.[68]

The city (Los Angeles) resembles a fictional scenario and never-ending travel, much like electrical and nuclear reactors or cinema studios. Los Angeles needs a discredited old imaginariness comprising falsified phantasms like childish shadows, similar to a sympathetic nervous system. Centers like Beaubourg and Pompidou are unreal systems that are in continuous motion (movement of vehicles, humans, etc.) that utilize the energy of the metropolis (Los Angeles) devoid of space and dimension.[69] Continuous movement leads the individuals of masses in the city to be worn out. Not only the individual but also the city gets worn out in its entirety. Proposing New York as an example, the philosopher indicates that it is a *miracle* that the city starts afresh the next day after depleting all its

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[67] "Designing Smart Cities," accessed August 15, 2018, https://www.designingbuildings.co.uk/wiki/Designing_smart_cities.

[68] Datta and Shaban, *Mega-Urbanization in the Global South,* 61.

[69] Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, 13.

energy during the previous day. He ironically suggests that the city takes its energy from its noise, its wastes, and carbon gas. The expense in the city has transformed completely into a show and is supercharged by its own image.[70]

Modern architecture that needs territory no matter what not only destroys the space but also leads to a real fictional space by building sprawling, limitless cities. Just as humans, nature and history are not transcendent, the "savage mind" has no natural universe. There is an aspect in dance, cinema, novel, fiction, and architecture and especially all that is American that does not know of the radiance, pathos, rhetoric, and theatric characteristics of savage, Western bourgeois culture, which has not been adorned with the colors of cultural distinction.[71] According to Baudrillard, who states that the old madīnahs have a history, there is a savage sprawl in American cities characterized as real bombs disguised as cities with no concerns related to madīnahs.[72] These cities have acquired in fifty years the beauty that has taken centuries for madīnahs to acquire.[73]

While the city during the 19th century is a mechanical space with political-industrial aspects, it is a virtual space of indicators, tools of communication, and codes during the 20th century. However, cities take on a digital identity in the 21st century. The digital age, as the second industrial age after the age of industrialization, has completely changed the concepts of population, materialization, and the increase of knowledge, permanence, and transience. The emphasis on madīnahs transforms dramatically from concrete structures to more complex and flexible structures along with soft (digital and ecological) infrastructures.[74] It is now only a dream to revive the cities figuratively and content-wise that have been renewed in accordance with the *reproduction* scheme (restored after the Second World War) related to the scheme of a general production or revival. Cities can

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70 Baudrillard, *The Transparency of Evil: Essays on Extreme Phenomena*, trans. James Benedict (London: Verso Publications, 1995), 102, https://doi.org/10.2307/432045.

71 Baudrillard, *America*, trans. Chris Turner (London & New York, NY: Verso Publications, 1989), 101.

72 Baudrillard, *Cool Anılar I-II*, 239.

73 Baudrillard, *America*, 13.

74 "Living in the Hyperreal-Post-modern City."

now continuously repeat themselves over time by way of an accumulated cybernetic memory resembling a genetic code.[75]

Every age gives birth to madīnahs that are in line with the spirit of the time. Modern times have built new cities as their indicators. The urbanization ratio of rural towns increases, and accordingly, the city that is under threat due to increasing population, rising sea levels, climate changes, and diminishing resources should be a sustainable model. Governments of both developed and developing countries not only claim to improve social conditions but also wish to provide better economic conditions for their communities. For this purpose, there is a need for more flexible and environmental forms of madīnahs.[76] Baudrillard puts forth the following analyses intending sustainable architecture that designs flexible and environmental madīnah forms:

> Architecture is in fact a domain where the opposition ephemeral-durable is very evident to the imagination. For a certain architectural avant-garde, the truth of the dwelling of the future is in ephemeral construction, in detachable, variable, and mobile structures. A mobile society ought to have a mobile dwelling. And it is undoubtedly true that this is inscribed in the economic and social demands of modernity. It is true that the social deficit represented today (and increasingly in the future) by hard and durable lot construction is colossal: it contradicts the economic rationality and that of social exchanges, and the irreversible tendency toward more social mobility, flexibility of infrastructures, etc. But if for all these reasons ephemeral architecture must one day be the collective solution, for the moment it is the monopoly of a privileged fraction whose cultural and economic standing permits it to question the myth of durability.
>
> It is because generations of the bourgeoisie were able to enjoy the fixed secular decor of property that their heirs today can give themselves the luxury of renouncing uncut stone and exalting the ephemeral: this fashion belongs to them. By contrast, consider all the generations of lower classes [...][77]

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75 Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, 71.

76 "Designing Smart Cities."

77 Baudrillard, *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign*, 51-52.

The planning, design, and construction of new-generation cities have made an integrated approach necessary, leading to the concept of *The Living City* as an alternative terminology supported by technology. It has given birth to the techno-digital city within the context of the ideal city of our day in which we experience cybernetics and advanced technology. These cities that aim to adapt to changing conditions are dynamic rather than static and have techno-city characteristics rather than being mechanical. While the mechanical city is an expert and authority-centric city based on intensive planning and sudden changes, the living city is one based on trial and error, gradual change, and social networks.[78] In this context, the citizens of Tokyo, composed of networks, are sophisticated consumers as entities of a crowd. This sophisticated consumer is also in need of a space for accommodation as a working human being. They are individuals living in small 20 m² prefabricated 1/2 flats in city centers comprising a bathroom and a small dining/sitting room (Nagakin Capsule Tower style) with a ceiling height of 2.1 m (almost the height of a man) who continually eat from outside.[79] Baudrillard, as one of the philosophers adept in describing the simulative transformation process, puts forth as an example a man eating alone in the heart of central New York who no longer conceals himself as he eats leftovers in public, naming this urban and industrial poverty.[80] Baudrillard talks about "the desertified post-catastrophe world where thousands of lone men, each running to their own account, with no thought for others, with a stereophonic fluid in their heads that oozes through into their eyes where the natural universe is lost and where uncertainty and modern simulation reach their peak amidst a culture that is everything and nothing at the same time." According to him, there is a lack of dizzying excitement and character as much as a lack of architecture in modern constructed cities. Cities that belong to no one have transformed into satellites of *shopping centers*.[81] The death of the uniformist modern city has been through factories as negative satellites. The communal has been

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78 Andrew Price, "The Living City vs. The Mechanical City," accessed September 9, 2018, https://www.strongtowns.org/journal/2018/5/1/the-living-city-vs-the-mechanical-city.

79 "Living in the Hyperreal Post-modern City."

80 Baudrillard, The *Consumer Society*, 52.

81 Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, 77.

absorbed and engulfed in cities as the centers of capital, leaving no traces of mutual sensuality or responsibilities for the past and the future. There are only masses with deceptive physical appearances in cities where 9/10 of people are the virtual dead or ghosts.

According to Sorgner, technology can be actualized in various styles and appearances as genetic, morphologic (e.g., plastic surgery), pharmacologic or cyber-technologic (creating mechanical or digital cyborgs, through digital entity development, and by means of uploading the content of the mind of an individual to the computer).[82] It is almost as if cyborg people and cities render the dualist human understanding of Cartesian philosophy uniformist. The idea of cyborg urbanization supports the modern city as a style of body-technology conceptualization. In addition, it explores the privileges of digital or virtual reality on material spaces. In this regard, the evolution and advancement of the body-technology-space context is the political project of resistance and accumulation. The cyborg as a spatial concept is the experience of both the real and the virtual. Post-industrial growth and development extend to the cities. Urban infrastructure transforms into a system serving cybernetic investments as a hybrid/crossbreed of machines and organisms and as anthropic life support systems. Cyborg cities (relationships between bodies, technologies, and spaces) are shaped through advancements in wireless and mobile communication technologies.

Urban management professionals make use of novel communication systems (mobile phones, tablets, etc.) rather than computerization and simple tools of communication. Mobile compatible, or, in other words, the digitalizing city, is neither political-industrial nor corporate-imaginary; it is now a cyborg city where the digital and rational mind-space intersects and is objectified. A new style of political and social life has developed with the emergence of cyborg cities and cyborg citizens. Means of informatics, information, communication, and transportation have led to the emergence of new forms of communities with significant comfort and democratic participation. The new epistemology of knowing and understanding propound a political integrity with the cyborg city. Humans, as the conceptual explanation of ontological and

[82] Dağ, *Transhümanizm: İnsanın ve Dünyanın Dönüşümü* (Istanbul: Elis Yayınları, 2018), 149.

epistemological crossbreeds, examine the cyborg as a criticism of geography. Cyborg is a simultaneous being/becoming and knowing/seeing conduit. Cyborg human is a being that carries out the border wars between the natural and the virtual and that involves the combination of imagination and reality. The cyborg identified by Haraway as ready and waiting, invisible can be utopian and dystopian. Cyborg cities interact with bifurcated urban geographies thereby establishing interactions with social polarization and wider lands.[83]

While the living individual experiences the process of cyborgification through sophisticated and digital communication networks (smart phones, tablets, and social sharing websites), he/she will also transform the space in which he/she lives into a smart, digital or cyborg space. The city has required a settlement to be integrated with human systems equipped with technological and digital physical elements to ensure the compliance of its citizens with the technological and the digital world. Technology is used in the design and functioning of the infrastructure and design of smart buildings built in this context, designed to meet the current and future needs of their citizens. There should be more than just benefiting from technology in smart cities; governance and growth, urban development and infrastructure, environment and natural resources make it necessary to take into consideration society and its expectations. The smart city approach pays attention to infrastructure, transportation, governance, work, economy, and land use planning. It aims to solve, by way of digital installations, the problems of the city, from regional to individual projects. It creates more opportunities for efficiency by utilizing the benefits of technology.[84] New cities materialize as cyborg cities with their sociopolitical, technical, physical, and digital infrastructures. Cyborg discussions (smart networks, smart meters, public Wi-Fi, wide area connections, and big data) with changing human technology shape the relationship between time and space together with the mutual political and industrial common spaces along with the boundaries between the social and technical.[85]

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[83] Steele et al., "The Cyborg City," 2-5.

[84] "Designing Smart Cities."

[85] Steele et al., "The Cyborg City,"1.

Digital or smart cities built on the plane of technology-human-space encompass financial and political projects with regard to their potentials. Mechanical cities have been built during the industrialization period, whereas virtual cities (Dubai, Las Vegas) have been built in the age of advanced technology. Advancements of digital and cybernetic technology are interventions for building digital or smart cities. The Xiong'an New Area, which China considered building as the second capital, is one of the first examples of a blockchain city. China and India are working on sustainable cities, whereas Cambodia and Vietnam, considered 4th world economies, are working on building new complex construction. There are many Middle Eastern cities that emerge as the prototype of future global cities. Masdar, as an example of a sustainable city in the UAE, is ecologically the smart city of the future. The King Abdullah economic city in KSA (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia), the Qatar Knowledge City and Khabary Future in Qatar, and al-Irfan in Oman are among various examples for the urban age. Modderfontein in South Africa, Hope City in Accra, and Eko Atlantic in Nigeria are among the various examples of cities that emerge as the new face of Urban Africa.[86]

According to Baudrillard, the object that does not have a reality of its own is passive and may be the subject of design. This idea is not only at the theoretical level with designers, urban planners, and environmental organizers witnessing the objectivity that is dwindling day by day. It is becoming increasingly difficult to understand and explain the functions of shapes and objects.[87] In this context, Baudrillard indicates that large urban areas developing in an unplanned manner have been captured during the last two decades mostly by artists and the bourgeoisie, who have changed the life and appearance of neighborhoods. According to him, this situation leads to a negative-ironic question: "Now, is this rehabilitation or a mutation?" He suggests that we witness the changes in cities as entities that move in time, which in the end acquire some sort of singularity as well as the erosion of their character.[88]

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86 Ibid., 2.

87 Baudrillard, *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign*, 196.

88 Baudrillard, *The Singular Objects of Architecture*, 44-46.

Conclusion

The spaces that people live in are transformed subject to the period of time in which they live. More than half of the human population is living in cities following the rapid increase in the global population during the 21st century, and it is probable that the ratio of people living in cities will exceed 70% during the second half of this century. Technological developments, an increasing number of companies, climate change, and migrations have changed the position of madīnahs. Smart cities are being constructed in cities for a fast and comfortable way of life despite the population density and other adverse conditions. It does not seem possible to escape from the new digital technologies that are invading our madīnahs, homes, and workplaces. Technologies that transform human nature and the material environment may lead to the development of utopian and dystopian cities. The continuous sophistication of technology has led to uncertainties regarding whether it will drag humanity to the brink of salvation or disaster. Madīnahs have now become something other than madīnahs as a result of homogenization by way of mechanical and virtual processes, leading to the construction of cloned cities. Identical buildings, districts, and streets have been constructed as a result of this homogenization, repetition, and cloning. Liquidating the historical and symbolic madīnahs is putting an end to the madīnah. According to the philosopher who considers the unstoppable modern architecture as a monster, architecture acting in accordance with its economic structure has nothing to do. Efforts such as eco-communities or eco-architecture have increasingly led to an environment that resembles the hellish atmosphere of the Roman Empire.[89]

City administrators and governments are acting like diseases that spread all over the body, draining the organs one by one, directing the city they live in together with other people, their sceneries and even the anger they feel towards their enemies and all that belong to them towards themselves. Wiping out history and cultural heritage has transformed into an enjoyable discovery. There is an air of disregard towards the destruction of history and architectural heritage as well as insensibility related to the construction of structures affixed right next to these spaces.

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[89] Baudrillard, *America*, 17.

The mechanical-virtual-digital process that the madīnahs went through in the West is also affecting the Turkish-Islamic madīnahs. Of course, we are living a caricature version of these processes. While madīnahs such as Ankara, Istanbul and Izmir are urbanizing through slums during the industrialization process, virtualization also occurred during the 1990s with the construction of illuminated cities. It is uncertain what will become of these madīnahs during the digital process. The madīnahs that try to differentiate themselves and become a brand (!) through financial and bureaucratic expectations believe that transforming their physical appearance is the way to become centers of attraction. However, these efforts play on their own nature, transforming them into victims of an ever-changing aesthetic that is becoming increasingly inextricable for people. The madīnahs that once played a role in our *tamaddun* are transforming into centerless and rootless cities as they lose their very essence.

When the architectural and social structuring ongoing since the Republic period is examined, it can be observed that the architectural and social horizon of the Ottoman era has been lost. A transformation has taken place from the aesthetic and historical architecture of the mosques to "apartment mosque" architecture, from the *bedesten* and *imarethane*s to giant monstrosities of shopping centers that leave no space for people, from caravanserais as locations of service to hotels that objectify and sanctify luxury, from madrasahs uniting the land and the sky to prisonlike schools, from the privacy and spirituality of homes with their courtyards to giant residential blocks that give birth to loneliness. We have transformed from a generation building caravanserais to serve people into one that robs people, claiming to have them live in luxury and comfort and building madrasahs uniting the land and the sky to schools resembling prisons.

We have shifted from homes that give heed to privacy and spirituality to heaps of apartments that squeeze a neighborhood or even a village into a single block, from noble and modest estates to villas that objectify luxury and extravagance. In short, the current examples of zoning and construction can in no way be the horizon or extension of the original temeddun. The current architectural approach is in no way related to the consciousness of *temeddun* or social memory.

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META-ENTITY (*AL-GHAYR*) AND ITS VALUE METAPHYSICS IN AL-MĀTURĪDĪ

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Abstract

This paper addresses the problem of value, which, despite its importance in the thought of divinity (*al-ulūhiyyah*), is often overshadowed by the problem of being and knowledge. In particular, we will dwell on criticism by al-Māturīdī of Muʿtazilī conceptions of divinity based on intellectual and moral premises. The objective is to depict the establishment of unity between being/entity, knowledge and value in the system of al-Māturīdī. In this regard, this study analyzes the concept of the meta-entity (الغير), which was apparently used for the first time by al-Māturīdī in kalām thought and terminology. In addition, we conduct an epistemic interpretation of the unity ensured between being/entity, knowledge, and value on the basis of the meta-entity to clarify the epistemic metaphysics of value that defends the being in itself of divinity against the ethical metaphysics of value established by Muʿtazilah in such a manner as to harm the transcendence of divinity.

Key Words: Meta-entity (الغير), divinity, value, reasoning/*limmiyyah,* being in itself/*inniyyah*, al-Māturīdī

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Introduction

Within the context of prophethood, religion comprises two-sided relationality, namely, vertical and horizontal. The former defines the expositional quality, meaning, evidence, and limits of religion, whereas the latter expresses how the expositional content of religion becomes subject to human thought and the main reference of truth and the true path. The intersection of these two aspects of religion leads to a dialectic between the *depiction* of divine statement (*al-waḥy*) and the *conception* of human intellect (*al-ʿaql*). This context enables an intellectual experience in which religion attains its final limits for the exposition of the mediation of various approaches to being, knowledge, and value. Within this unity, the crucial aspect of religious thinking is the comprehension of divinity as a value.

This paper aims to analyze the metaphysics of the value of divinity from the perspective of al-Imām al-Māturīdī (d. 333/944) and his criticisms of Muʿtazilah within an environment where kalām studies are overwhelmed by discussions about being and knowledge. There are numerous issues to highlight in this framework, but two of them are particularly worth noting. The first is that field studies excessively concentrate on contrasts, inevitably nourishing generalization and reduction. The second is that the genuine quests of high synthetic quality within kalām become unimportant within the sphere of influence of dominant discourses. In consideration of these two grounds, one can easily assert that al-Māturīdī has been subject to generalization/screening of Ahl al-sunnah, particularly regarding his views about the metaphysics of value.

In this respect, this paper aims to use a descriptive and comparative approach to demonstrate the conception of value by al-Māturīdī, his reflections on divinity, and his criticisms about the essentialist and absolutist theory of the Muʿtazilah of Baghdad. In addition, this paper identifies his views that exceed the value conception of Ashʿarī discourse into which he is drawn due to theological standardization and homogenization. In this respect, it is fair to indicate in advance that this study is limited to al-Māturīdī and the intellectual spheres that he criticizes. Pursuant to this context, *Kitāb al-tawḥīd* identifies three notable spheres of metaphysics: Naturalists, Dualists, and the Muʿtazilah.

Accordingly, it will be useful to touch upon the essentials of the intellectual dialectic that thrives in three directions, namely, *progress,*

expansion, and *deepening* by means of revelation and which involves al-Māturīdī as well. This religious thinking, with the Qurʾān at its heart, can be analyzed pursuant to two fundamental aspects. *The first* is that Muslims have found themselves first side-by-side and then intertwined with an intellectual background that comprises various assertions of the region about religious and philosophical truth. *The second* is that this intellectual presence compels believers to conceive of the content of religion, described by the Qurʾān, regarding truth and the true path and an intellectual challenge. On the one hand, these two compelling conditions, which make each other meaningful, enabled the formation of theological, philosophical, and Sufi thought as different forms of conceptualization; on the other hand, they allowed for the expansion and diversification of three basic ways of thinking about Islamic metaphysics. As a result, a process of internal criticism emerged between each manner of thinking; these interacted, ensuring an equivalent process of synthesis/fermentation. This intellectual process, which was formed by advancing from simple to complex, inevitably accompanied the process of internal criticism since it includes *different perspectives* and *perceptions of importance*.[1] This process was systematized in Transoxiana; al-Māturīdī aimed at the Muʿtazilah school, which brought itself into being via external criticism.[2] Al-Māturīdī proposed his views through his criticisms about the allegations of Muḥammad ibn Shabīb (d. 3rd century AH / 9th

[1] The evolution of thought into internal criticism is historically based on practical issues that generate theological discourses as well as debates on truth and the true path triggered by them. Therefore, one may assert that the dynamics that propose the perspective of kalām are initially the first step in the transformation of religion into envisagement. Over time, they achieved an interaction resulting synthesis/fermentation primarily through philosophical endeavors and eventually through Sufi tendencies towards the abovementioned two factors, which were decisive in the formation conditions of the religion. Historical data that shed light on this era show that this experience of interaction between Islamic discourse and envisagement linked kalām, philosophy, and Sufism most commonly within Ashʿarī discourse of the 11th century. This new state of affairs evidently produced, in the broadest sense, discussions about being, knowledge, and value subject to common interest within religious thinking with divinity at the center.

[2] Ulrich Rudolph, *al-Māturīdī and the Development of Sunnī Theology in Samarqand*, trans. Rodrigo Adem (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2015), 148 ff., https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004261846.

century AD), who, despite being mentioned within the Basrah tradition, apparently broke away from the conventional approach of this school, as well as opinions of the contemporaneous thinker Abū l-Qāsim al-Balkhī (d. 319/931).[3] Presumably, this approach by al-Māturīdī was a necessity rather than a preference. Indeed, since he did not leave the Samarqand region and the surrounding intellectual sphere, he was deprived of the possibility of being familiar with the literature during the organization process of the Muʿtazilah. Nevertheless, making use of intellectual and theological possibilities provided by his region,[4] al-Māturīdī undertook an indirect theological

[3] In *Kitāb al-tawḥīd*, al-Māturīdī mentions Abū l-Qāsim al-Balkhī as "al-Kaʿbī," underlining that al-Balkhī is known among his followers as the "imām of everyone." According to *ṭabaqāt* literature, Muḥammad ibn Shabīb lived in the mid-3rd century; as a kalām scholar in the tradition of al-Naẓẓām, he was famous for his work on *tawḥīd*. On the other hand, al-Kaʿbī was criticized by his environment for his views in defense of pushing back of judgment (*al-irjāʾ*). He is considered among the seventh generation of the Muʿtazilah tradition. See Abū l-Qāsim ʿAbd Allāh ibn Aḥmad al-Balkhī, *Kitāb al-maqālāt wa-maʿahū ʿUyūn al-masāʾil wa-l-jawābāt*, ed. Hüseyin Hansu, Rājiḥ Kurdī, and ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd Kurdī (Istanbul: KURAMER, 2018), 201; Abū l-Ḥasan ʿAlī ibn Ismāʿīl al-Ashʿarī, *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn wa-khtilāf al-muṣallīn*, ed. Aḥmad Jād (Cairo: Dār al-Ḥadīth, 2009), 201; Abū Manṣūr ʿAbd al-Qāhir ibn Ṭāhir al-Baghdādī, *al-Farq bayna l-firaq wa-bayān al-firqah al-nājiyah minhum: ʿAqāʾid al-firaq al-Islāmiyyah wa-ārāʾ kibār aʿlāmihā*, ed. Muḥammad ʿUthmān al-Khusht (Cairo: Maktabat Ibn Sīnā, 1988), 25, 207; Abū l-Ḥasan al-Qāḍī ʿAbd al-Jabbār ibn Aḥmad al-Hamadānī, *Faḍl al-iʿtizāl wa-ṭabaqāt al-Muʿtazilah*, ed. Fuʾād Sayyid (in *Faḍl al-iʿtizāl wa-ṭabaqāt al-Muʿtazilah*, along with Abū l-Qāsim al-Balkhī's *(Bāb) Dhikr al-Muʿtazilah min Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn* and Ḥākim al-Jishumī's *al-Ṭabaqatān al-ḥādiyah ʿashrah wa-l-thāniyah ʿashrah min kitāb Sharḥ al-ʿuyūn*, Tunis: al-Dār al-Tūnisiyyah li-l-Nashr, 1974), 74, 279; Abū l-Fatḥ Tāj al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Shahrastānī, *al-Milal wa-l-niḥal*, ed. Aḥmad Fahmī Muḥammad (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, 1990), I, 86, 259, 267.

[4] Abū Manṣūr Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Maḥmūd al-Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-tawḥīd*, ed. Bekir Topaloğlu and Muhammed Aruçi (Beirut & Istanbul: Dār Ṣādir & İSAM Yayınları, 2007), 191-193, 202, 238. For instance, the author notes replies by Muḥammad ibn Shabīb to the Dahriyyah, Mulḥids, and Thanawiyyah to start a discussion.

confrontation with Muʿtazilī discourse.[5] Indeed, the content, intellectual texture, and pattern of *Kitāb al-tawḥīd* provides the strongest evidence of his approach. Within this context, al-Māturīdī becomes even more interesting since he established a relation of interaction and assimilation between views of internal and external respondents whom he targeted and criticized. His point of view can be considered as a two-way and *complementary* perspective that *moves from within to outside dialectics or from outside into it under equal circumstances.*

1. From Entity to Meta-Entity (الغير)[6]

Al-Māturīdī presents his approach to the metaphysics of value, addressing Muʿtazilah and the Muʿtazilī thought. This is closely related to the fact that the Muʿtazilah is the main theological movement that took the truth value and true path quality of religion to the realm of thought for the first time and criticized other

[5] In this regard, the content of *Kitāb al-tawḥīd* deserves analysis in both contexts. In terms of opposition to the Muʿtazilah, the fundamental matters of debate are mostly classical themes, such as the problem of *tawḥīd*, the essence and attributes of Allah, the problem of *nonexistence*, the questionability of the origin of elements related to creation, unbearable obligation (*taklīf mā lā yuṭāq*), the wisdom of order and negation, the wisdom behind the creation of harmful beings, divine decree and predestination (*al-qaḍāʾ wa-l-qadar*), will, the great sin, and discussions on faith. Moreover, *Kitāb al-tawḥīd* comprises a chapter where a satirical narrative that likens *qadariyyah*, one of the contexts that excessively crystalizes opposition against Muʿtazilah, to *Zoroastrianism.* This context, which serves disreputation among Ashʿarī and Salafī circles, is addressed in the work by al-Māturīdī as a theme of interaction through his detailed findings and analyses.

[6] I have two grounds for my English translation of the concept of *al-ghayr* (الغير), which has a central role in al-Māturīdī's thought about divinity. The first is that the author used this concept in explaining that the universe cannot be explained through and by itself; the second is his assertion that this concept is explicit intellectual evidence of the universe. When these two issues are considered together, the concept of *al-ghayr*, namely, meta-entity, corresponds to a kind of signification that is outside the universe that is categorically distinct to it. For me, "meta" is the best available word to stress this fact. Given its different associations and use by authors to identify a being outside and distinguished from the universe, I attempt to clarify the concept with the wording "meta-entity."

allegations of religion and truth. Accordingly, as the content of *Kitāb al-tawḥīd* shows, the approach by al-Māturīdī towards the metaphysics of value cannot be appropriately comprehended unless the Muʿtazilī approach is taken into account. Therefore, it would be useful to briefly touch upon the Muʿtazilī point of view.

As is known, the Muʿtazilah represents religious thinking that prioritizes intellect over divine statement (*al-waḥy*). This attitude, closely related to the perspective of knowledge and value, defends the *unity of truth* against naturalist, materialist and dualist allegations,[7] which are also criticized by al-Māturīdī. Within this methodology, religion turns into a thought in compliance with intellect and morality. For this approach, intellect is indispensable for being-truth, meaning, and validity in human thinking, whereas morality is the only reference that may ensure meaning and validity for the value and the binding quality of religion. In this respect, religion is nothing but putting the intellectual and moral to the mediation of divine statement (*al-waḥy*).[8]

Al-Māturīdī was a pioneer and sharer of anti-Muʿtazilah discourses, which tried to reinforce the authority of the divine against the *unity of truth*. Therefore, in the anti-Muʿtazilah approach, divinity underwent division in terms of existence, cognition, and value, and religion is taken to a ground that exceeds (or can exceed) the intelligible or

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7 I mean here Thanawī and Majūsī theological circles that are based on the thought of dualism. For this reason, I prefer to use the concept of *dualists* for both on the following pages.

8 Al-Qāḍī ʿAbd al-Jabbār considers intellect and morality as two nested principles of the legitimacy and intelligibility of religion; as he discusses the meaning and implication of the names attributed to Allah, he grounds this discussion on the principle that "meaning cannot vary depending on the visible (*al-shāhid*) and the unseen (*al-ghāʾib*)." In this respect, he criticizes the transcendentalist attitude that wants to attain differentiation of meaning and implication in both fields (al-Qāḍī ʿAbd al-Jabbār, *al-Mughnī fī abwāb al-tawḥīd wa-l-ʿadl*, V [*al-Firaq ghayr al-Islāmiyyah*], ed. Maḥmūd Muḥammad Qāsim [Cairo: al-Dār al-Miṣriyyah li-l-Taʾlīf wa-l-Tarjamah, n.d.], 184). He crystallizes this view in a strict manner with the statement, "The truth of qualities/predications/judgments can never change or differ depending on differentiation of apparent and unseen realms." *Ibid*., 205; cf. *al-Mughnī,* XIV (*al-Aṣlaḥ, istiḥqāq al-dhamm, al-tawbah*), ed. Muṣṭafá al-Saqqā (Cairo: al-Dār al-Miṣriyyah li-l-Taʾlīf wa-l-Tarjamah, 1965), 13.

ethical in an absolute or relative manner with its relation to divinity. Consequently, the *unity and transitivity of indication* between intellect, morals, and religion were subject to negative affection. In this regard, we may take a closer look at criticisms by al-Māturīdī about Muʿtazilī discourse, which unifies truth on the basis of intellect and ethics and thus unifies the divine and human realms in terms of indication and value. As we will explain in the following pages, al-Māturīdī divided his criticisms about the human and divine realms and explained this through the principle of being in itself/selfhood (*al-inniyyah*). It seems useful to emphasize the fundamental determinants of Muʿtazilī discourse for an appropriate and correct comprehension of al-Māturīdī's criticisms.

The Muʿtazilah is widely known as a school of thought that is almost completely grounded on intellect in its approach to being, knowledge, and value; nevertheless, this judgment/perception is principally groundless and incorrect. The writings of al-Qāḍī ʿAbd al-Jabbār (d. 415/1025), the strongest reference of extant Muʿtazilī literature, show that the mentioned discourse ascribes a value not only to intellect but also to ethics and language in an equivalent manner. The center of gravity of this three-value perspective of importance, which was particularly formed in the Muʿtazilah of Basrah, has varied depending on the characteristics of the relevant subject matter.[9] In this context, the Muʿtazilah is grounded on categorical ethical premises which, according to the Muʿtazilī claim, served as the origin of problems with regard to the value theory of

[9] The Muʿtazilī perspective adopts an attitude principally based on intellect and logic about the problem of nonexistence (*al-maʿdūm*), an attitude based on unity of comprehension (*al-idrāk*) and intellect (*al-ʿaql*) in discussions of the essence of the universe, and displays a pattern acting on the unity of *language*, *ethics*, and *intellect* pursuant to the nature of the problem in regard to the essence of the Qurʾān. The Muʿtazilī conception of knowledge explains the cognition of intellect as *universal* and qualitative and the cognition of divine statement (*al-waḥy*) as conditional/contextual (*al-tafṣīlī*). In addition, the Muʿtazilah wants to build the jurisprudent, binding aspect of the Qurʾān on ethical principles such as *good*, *evil*, *obligatory* (*al-wājib*), *benefit* (*al-maṣlaḥah*), and *harm* (*al-mafsadah*), which are also regulatory principles of the realm of activity. See İbrahim Aslan, *Kâdî Abdülcebbâr'a Göre Dinin Aklî ve Ahlâkî Savunusu* (Ankara: OTTO Yayınları, 2014), 293 ff.

divinity. The Muʿtazilah school was convinced that the good/evil within human reality should also be good/evil in the realm of divinity. Accordingly, the Muʿtazilī school tried to develop a universal theory of value to involve both human and divine realms, asserting that the change of realms of existence and knowledge will not alter the truth.

Pursuant to this point of view, the *ontological contrast* between the creator and the created cannot be made a justification and means of legitimacy for a theory of transcendent value. It is possible to think that there are two principle reasons for the distinction between the aspect of value and existential and epistemological aspects; these two reasons can be described as "the existential and epistemological aspects are related to the quiddity of divinity" and "the aspect of value is mostly about relationality with the other." Value cannot be constructed as a theory peculiar to the divine realm and the transcendent because of its aspect that includes *relationality* with *others* as much as itself. Otherwise, this would mean breaking off from the ground of legitimacy both the nature of Allah, which is treated as divine exposition, and the quality of religion that is binding on man (*al-sharīʿah*). In consideration of these two justifications, the Muʿtazilah argues that value has an internal, common, and involving unity in relation to the nature of the creator and the created and develops two different theories, one contextual and one absolutist. The contextual theory was defended by the Muʿtazilah of Basrah, whereas the absolutist theory was adopted by kalām scholars in the Baghdad region as an essentialist and perfectionist tendency. As a Muʿtazilī theologian and member of the Basrah tradition, ʿAbd al-Jabbār treats the theory of value at two levels, one as universal categories (*uṣūl al-adillah* and *jumlat*^{an}) applicable to all possibilities of realization within the human mind and the other as conditional/contextual (*tafṣīlī*) depending on the qualities of things as well as the possibility and consequences of their realization. Accordingly, categorical knowledge (*uṣūl al-adillah*) such as good, evil, justice, persecution, lie, righteousness, and absurdity take from

themselves (*innī*) the necessary, explicit validity/causality of value judgments that do not require causation (*taʿlīl*).[10]

Such categorical knowledge constitutes the theory of value not only for human reality but also for divinity. These objective and constant value judgments involve any becoming, situation, will, and act related to creation as well as any act, situation, and becoming based on human will. In this regard, this theory of value, which unites the divine and human realms and is essentially ethical, is thought to have a single condition. According to this condition, the true criterion of the value of a thing is the conditions of its realization and the consequences it causes. Pursuant to this attitude, the relation between value judgment and act/becoming and situation is based on the movement/dynamism of being or existence. Therefore, an act does not obtain its value judgment from divine will, as Ashʿarī discourse argues, or from divine knowledge, as will be explained in the following pages. In contrast, Muʿtazilah argues that value judgment should be sought in the self of a thing, which is related to judgment and the consequences that originate from such a thing. Therefore, in the realm of things, value is based on the *manner and consequences of realization*.[11] As one of the scholars to bring this ethical theory to perfection, ʿAbd al-Jabbār adhered to a positivist and dynamic attitude and asserted that the value judgment is dependent on the principle of movement and change of things. Thus, he criticized the Ashʿarī approach that associates the value with divine will as well as the Muʿtazilah of Baghdad for their absolutist and essentialist view.

The absolutist theory, in turn, was developed by Muʿtazilī kalām scholars raised within the Baghdad tradition. The theory, also known as *the best/optimum* (*al-aṣlaḥ*), is based on the principle of *perfection*

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[10] Al-Qāḍī ʿAbd al-Jabbār, *al-Mughnī*, XII (*al-Naẓar wa-l-maʿārif*), ed. Ibrāhīm Madkūr (Cairo: al-Muʾassasah al-Miṣriyyah al-ʿĀmmah li-l-Taʾlīf wa-l-Tarjamah wa-l-Ṭibāʿah wa-l-Nashr, n.d.), 138-139.

[11] Al-Qāḍī ʿAbd al-Jabbār, *al-Mughnī*, VI/1 (*al-Taʿdīl wa-l-tajwīr*), ed. Aḥmad Fuʾād al-Ahwānī (Cairo: al-Muʾassasah al-Miṣriyyah al-Āmmah li-l-Taʾlīf wa-l-Tarjamah wa-l-Ṭibāʿah wa-l-Nashr, 1962), 3, 41, 61, 66, 68; VII (*Khalq al-Qurʾān*), ed. Ibrāhīm al-Abyārī (Cairo: al-Sharīkah al-ʿArabiyyah li-l-Ṭibāʿah wa-l-Nashr, 1961), 10, 50; XI (*al-Taklīf*), ed. M. ʿAlī al-Najjār and ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm al-Najjār (Cairo: al-Dār al-Miṣriyyah li-l-Taʾlīf wa-l-Tarjamah, 1965), 4, 5, 84, 86.

through a deductive perspective. The definition of Allah as absolute, perfect, and the best being by nature produced a determinist approach to cosmology and ethics, as in Mashshāʾī philosophy. In this regard, the universe is laden with value and has the best form of existence. According to this theory, to be the best not only explains existence but also includes a claim of necessity, namely, Allah has to do what is best and cannot do evil.[12] Both of these views — this "absolutist, essentialist and determinist" theory of the Muʿtazilah of Baghdad and the theory of "aspects" (*wujūh*) by the Muʿtazilah of Basrah that imposes value judgments on things pursuant to the forms and consequences of their realization (*right-wrong, benefit-harm*) and that defines existence as dynamic in a conditional and contextual sense while defining value categories as universal — analyze human and divine acts within the same value system—more precisely, the ground of value judgments brought innately by the intellect.

In the face of the foregoing discourse, al-Māturīdī proposed his own approach to value. He started with the condition that the *unity between knowledge and value shall not be distorted* in the realm of divinity.[13] For him, ethics-based divinity is the most prominent thought that distorts such unity. Accordingly, he criticizes Muʿtazilī value theory that claims the truth cannot be consistent without *transitivity of indication* between intellect and religion and developed a genuine perspective that addresses divinity and value theory on an epistemological basis, namely, in relation to divine knowledge, *for the first time*[14] in kalām studies. Indeed, this attitude of al-Māturīdī differs not only from the causational (*taʿlīlī*) ethical approach of the Muʿtazilah but also from the Ashʿarī approach that explains divinity exclusively through divine will without attempting

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[12] Abū l-Ḥusayn ʿAbd al-Raḥīm ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿUthmān al-Khayyāṭ, *Kitāb al-intiṣār wa-l-radd ʿalá Ibn al-Rāwandī al-mulḥid mā qaṣada bi-hī min al-kadhib ʿalá-l-Muslimīn wa-l-ṭaʿn ʿalayhim*, ed. Samuel Nyberg (Cairo: Maṭbaʿat Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyyah, 1925), 17; Qāḍī ʿAbd al-Jabbār, *al-Mughnī*, XIV, 13.

[13] Aslan, "İmam Maturidî'nin Deist Eleştirilere Karşı Nübüvvet Savunusu," *Kelâm Araştırmaları* 12, no. 2 (2014), 9 ff., https://doi.org/10.18317/kader.03592.

[14] It is worth noting that I attained this conviction through chronological comparison of extant kalām literature and the structural development of debates on divinity. If we reverse the view, this approach by al-Māturīdī never came to the agenda of Salafī circles or Ashʿarī kalām scholars.

any causational judgment. Within this equation, al-Māturīdī initially tries to determine that there is not only a difference but also a contrast of quiddity between the universe, which involves man as well, and divinity.[15] Pursuant to his approach, value should change depending on being and its quiddity. Accordingly, for al-Māturīdī, it is impossible to advocate a common value theory for those whose quiddities are *different* and *opposite*. Indeed, opposition/contrast divides being, knowledge, and value; such dissociation considers being on two sides.

Grounded on this argument, al-Māturīdī asserts that one whose being and knowledge are transcendent should also be transcendent in terms of value, a view in agreement with the Muʿtazilah. He also argues that it is impossible for ethics to employ a metaphysics that includes divinity. Consequently, the motive that prevents ethics from exceeding the limits of physics is the existential, cognitive, and therefore value-related opposition between the realm of divinity and the universe.

Such opposition in compliance with the cognitive limits of man led to the division of being and made it intransitive in terms of value. Apparently, this division and intransitivity provided al-Māturīdī with a point of origin that draws a line[16] between physics and beyond and enables the determination of the essential, self-appellant quality of a thing. This situation surpasses ontological opposition and blocks the

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[15] The author articulates his point of view with the following eloquent statement: "The universe, whose nature is opposition (*al-tanāfur*), cannot be the reason for being of itself. Each thing is in reciprocal requirement of another thing. This is how it is extant and permanent. To be in itself means to have the quality of perpetuity itself; that is, to maintain presence without change under the same condition." See al-Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-tawḥīd*, 84. A similar argument is used by Ibrāhīm al-Naẓẓām, as seen from al-Khayyāṭ; cf. al-Khayyāṭ, *Kitāb al-intiṣār*, 44.

[16] The *line* or *limit* is expressed in the most explicit and powerful manner as follows: "… Each of our senses is created so as to grasp what it is meant to. Presumably because of insufficiency of its self-involvement, another sense intervenes in order to ensure involvement. The same applies for intellect. Indeed, even though intellect is the possibility to know if what is apparently good and regular is really evil and irregular, it is something created that does (can) not exceed limits stipulated for it." See al-Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-tawḥīd*, 183. Also see 221 and 235.

quest for a value theory that involves both realms. Accordingly, al-Māturīdī brings into question all assertions that corrode, expand, or restrict explicit limits of being, knowledge, and value. In this respect, al-Māturīdī aims for an ontological determination that enables criticism of both the Muʿtazilī discourse and dualist theology.

To describe the two sides of being, al-Māturīdī does not ground his argument on an approach that makes physics and metaphysics necessary components (*al-ʿillah wa-l-maʿlūl*) of one another, as in the theory of *emanation* by al-Fārābī (d. 339/950) and Ibn Sīnā (d. 428/1037), and he does not employ the typical *theory of the atom* used by the kalām tradition, although he is a shareholder of the latter. In fact, al-Māturīdī grounds his argument on a pair of concepts, universe/concrete (*al-ʿālam/al-aʿyān*) and meta-entity (*al-ghayr*) in regard to theology. The concept of *al-ghayr*, which we translate as meta-entity,[17] expresses a perspective opposite the perspective that explains nature and physical reality with itself and attributes pre-eternalness to it. In *Kitāb al-tawḥīd*, al-Māturīdī uses this concept to criticize philosophies and theologies that explain the universe by itself (*naturalists [Ṭabīʿiyyūn]*, *dualists* and *Dahriyyūn*) as well as the Muʿtazilī envisagement of the universe and theory of creation that considers divine will within actual attributes and ascribes thingness to the nonexistent. In both contexts, the meta-entity is explained through a realist and rationalist approach that addresses the universe on the basis of apprehension and aims to grasp it in relation to becoming, changes, similitudes, contrasts, and differences in its nature, contrary to philosophical comprehension, which attributes causality and necessity (pre-eternalness) to the nature of the universe via categories of intellect. Therefore, the point of origin of the concept and principle called the meta-entity is that the universe is not the subject of itself and cannot be explained by itself but has an ontological validity that cannot be considered otherwise. If it were thought otherwise, this would lead to a paradox regarding arbitration within the coming of the universe into existence and remove the

[17] This concept brings a meaning and definition that, semantically, both *appeals* and *absolves* something from things other than itself. The concept of *al-ghayr*, which establishes two mentioned points in a much more powerful manner than theological and philosophical circles, provides a genuine and significant indication in terms of not only being but also theory of knowledge and value.

ontological opposition and distance between the universe and the meta-entity that explains its coming into existence.

Al-Māturīdī grounds his argument on a series of conceptual schemes that characterize the universe, in other words, on existence (*al-kawn*, *al-mawjūd*) within the cognitive limits of man and not on the philosophical notion of the existent (*al-wujūd*) through an abstraction to include everything. According to al-Māturīdī, even though *al-ʿālam*/*al-aʿyān* is a unity/entity that includes contrasts, similitudes, and differences by nature, it is within a becoming (*al-kawn*/*al-ḥudūth*), change (*al-taghayyur*),[18] discontinuity (*al-fanāʾ*), transformation (*al-inqilāb*), and extinction (*al-zawāl*). Thanks to this manner of existence, the universe provides a foundation for a meta-entity (*al-ghayr*) that can be exclusively understood and explained by means of the evidential order of intellect. Indeed, as is explicitly grasped, the universe has a compound nature consisting of parts and pieces. The subsequence of these pieces that constitute the whole is experienced in a direct and explicit manner in relation to processes of development, extension, and growth within the human capacity to grasp. Everything in the universe has the same quiddity since most things are so. Indeed, one cannot attain a conclusion of infinity upon the unification of parts that are found to be finite by experience.[19] Moreover, infinity cannot be thought together with the manner of becoming/forming things. Contrasts such as clean-dirty, small-big, good-evil, and light-dark show the invalidity of such a claim. Therefore, the structure of the universe, which is based on *change*, cannot be thought together with the allegation that things can be explained by themselves. In contrast, this lays the foundation for extinction (*al-halāk*). Indeed, as experience shows, it points out unification (*al-ijtimāʿ*) and fragmentation (*al-nashr*) within things. Consequently, the assertion that "beings have a quiddity which

[18] Al-Māturīdī indicates that the change in being, which he sees as *taghayyur*, is expressed in reference to various terminologies and states that some circles express this change as *ʿaraḍ*, whereas others employ the concept of *ṣifah* for it. See *Kitāb al-tawḥīd*, 80.

[19] In his explanation of the finitude of the universe in this context, the author argues that it is impossible to approach the universe with evidence not based on comprehension; al-Māturīdī refuses the claim that "things persist in existence even if they go out of sight." See al-Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-tawḥīd*, 78.

cannot be perceived through senses and which does not blend with nihility" is groundless; therefore, it would be null and void to consider the universe with irrelevant concepts and evidence on non-intellectual grounds.[20]

Nothing in the universe exists by itself or unifies by itself (*ijtimāʿ*). This arbitration in the world of objects can only and exclusively be possible with the meta-entity. The intellect is the most explicit and powerful evidence of this.[21] Al-Māturīdī fortifies this view by means of his reply to the question of why things in the universe exist in a certain time in a certain condition and quality. Given all possibilities, the temporal, conditional, and qualitative changes show that being cannot be explained by itself. Therefore, the idea of bringing oneself to existence requires everything to bring itself into existence in the best-possible (*aḥsan*) condition with the best-possible quality and value. Such an intellectual conclusion means the existence of a universe that does not comply with the actual and where there is no evil or malignity.[22] In his criticism of the notion of bringing oneself into existence, the author argues that the thing is deprived of consciousness and awareness of itself. As proven by experience, the nonliving has no consciousness, and something devoid of consciousness cannot be the cause of its existence. The same applies to the living. Just like the nonliving, living things are in complete ignorance (*al-jahl*) at the beginning of their existence. Therefore, they are incapable of existing/constructing themselves or similar things or even of improving their irregular aspects, even when they are powerful and competent. The living existences are unable in any case. Such a becoming shows that a thing comes into existence and undergoes a process of becoming by means of something outside it and by means of the meta-entity. Indeed, the universe cannot come into existence or undergo different, similar, and opposite manners without the meta-entity.[23]

Establishing the relation between the universe and the *meta-entity* through a basically rational approach, al-Māturīdī explains the *perpetuity* (*al-baqāʾ*) of nonliving-living things in conditions such as

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20 al-Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-tawḥīd*, 78.

21 *Ibid*., 82-83.

22 *Ibid*., 83.

23 *Ibid*., 83-84.

movement and *stillness* through the benefit (*manāfiʿ al-ghayr*)[24] provided and the requirements (*ḥawāʾij al-ghayr*)[25] fulfilled by objects for one another. His manner of comprehension shows that al-Māturīdī agrees that the perpetuity within the *unity* of the universe cannot be considered pre-eternalness as well as the idea of a *non*-absolute perpetuity and ordinance in the universe.[26] According to the author, in the universe as a compound entity consisting of parts, everything follows each other (*al-taʿāqub*)[27] and generates benefit (*al-manāfiʿ*) for the living. Within this correlation and reciprocity, each thing gathers around a single meaning.[28]

The author uses the examples of sperm and man to criticize the ontology that explains change in the universe with the transition of things from *potential* to *actual*. In the process of existence, the relation between sperm and the actual man shows not that these two things are the same but that they are two successive phases of the process of "becoming." For al-Māturīdī, the same correlation applies for the connection between a seed and a tree.[29] Indeed, it is impossible that a thing emerges in itself *as potentiality*, emerges by folding in itself, or emerges through addition. Therefore, such potentiality/*quwwah* cannot be considered identical to the thing itself. The author clarifies his argument by means of correlation between sperm and man and seed and tree. For al-Māturīdī, both examples express the processes/states of becoming, development, and progress (*aḥwāl*) of a thing in itself from the first to the final

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[24] Al-Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-tawḥīd*, 78.

[25] *Ibid*., 79.

[26] *Ibid*., 79.

[27] *Ibid*., 193. On another occasion, al-Māturīdī writes as follows: "Even though intellect grasps effects (*al-ʿawāqib*), it cannot know those beyond the limits of intellect, namely, the origins without effects." *Ibid*., 235. Pursuant to this distinction, according to the author, even though intellect may know, through the mediation of *al-ʿawāqib*, the wisdom behind the creation of things that include harm-benefit, it cannot know the final wisdom behind the creation of the universe since it has no *ʿawāqib*.

[28] *Ibid*., 83, 88.

[29] *Ibid*., 79.

stage. In this regard, no phase within the development and change of a thing is identical with another phase.[30]

Al-Māturīdī often repeats his allegation of interaction and similitude between the Muʿtazilah and the circles that he criticizes for their discourse. According to him, the Muʿtazilī cosmology shares a common ground with a naturalist and materialist approach that sees the universe as the subject of itself. His assertion is grounded on the Muʿtazilī view of the problem of nonexistence, the attitude that attributes divine will and creation to the knowledge of Allah and does not provide Allah with a special position above the entire universe, as well as the perspective that considers divine will in the same quiddity as the universe as a divine attribute.[31] The (*transcendent*) attribute of will, which should be directly ascribed to Allah, is ascribed to the universe, whereupon Allah is no longer the author of the universe[32] and the allegations by other circles about the pre-eternity of the universe are indirectly approved.[33]

The foregoing discussions by al-Māturīdī about the universe confirm in a powerful manner the conviction that he cannot make way for his genuine perspective without criticizing the assertions of dualist philosophies and theologies that argue for the pre-eternity of the universe and the Muʿtazilī cosmology that attributes thingness to the nonexistent (*shayʾiyyat al-maʿdūm*). This awareness further deepens the process of the transportation of theological problems to a cosmological ground.

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30 Al-Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-tawḥīd*, 78.

31 As al-Māturīdī proposes, divine will is defined not as an attribute present in Allah but as an attribute within the created act. Cf. al-Balkhī, *Kitāb al-maqālāt*, 255-258; also see Taqī al-Dīn Mukhtār ibn Maḥmūd al-ʿUjālī al-Najrānī, *al-Kāmil fī l-istiqṣāʾ fīmā balaghanā min kalām al-qudamāʾ*, ed. Sayyid Muḥammad al-Shāhid (Cairo: Wizārat al-Awqāf, 1999), 285.

32 Al-Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-tawḥīd,* 187. The point here, which is given as the relation of will to the universe, is not used by the Muʿtazilah in the sense that universe is the willer of itself. What is criticized here is the Muʿtazilī consideration of the attribute of will among the category of the attributes of action. This category includes attributes that can be ascribed to Allah together with their opposite – to give/take life, to bestow/not bestow food, to have mercy/wrath, to speak/not to speak, to display/not display will, etc.

33 *Ibid*., 80.

For him, there is no affirmative connection between the nonexistent and thingness (*hastiyyah*).[34] Indeed, nonexistence means not to come (be brought) into existence yet. Even in temporal terms, it is impossible to describe as a "thing" what is "yet" to exist. Moreover, such a description cannot be considered together with the limit and distinction between the existent (*al-mawjūd*) and nonexistent (*al-maʿdūm*). Nonexistence here corresponds with nothingness regardless of whether it is used as the possible (*al-mumkināt*) or the impossible (*al-mustaḥīlāt*). Indeed, existence means to come from nothingness to being through creation. Therefore, the Muʿtazilī theory of nonexistence ambiguates attributions of existence such as time, space, relativity, substance, and accident and their respective limits of use. Consequently, al-Māturīdī asserts that the thesis of the thingness of nonexistence – which, for him, means to provide objects with truth value in pre-eternity –[35] contradicts the Qurʾānic approach that the "universe was taken from nothingness to existence through creation." On the other hand, the Muʿtazilah runs into a contradiction because of the view that attributes thingness to the nonexistent, similar to Thanawī/Majūsī traditions that explain the universe by itself.[36] Moreover, al-Māturīdī claims that the attribution of thingness to the nonexistent means accepting the pre-eternity of the universe and that this is because of ontological approaches that render divinity groundless.

According to al-Māturīdī, when considered together with this ontological approach, the Muʿtazilī argument that the universe provides an indication of divinity becomes entirely meaningless. Indeed, divine knowledge about what is not yet existent but will eventually come into existence cannot be a cause that enables coming into existence. The same applies to eternality (*al-qidam*).[37] In this respect, the theory of nonexistence apparently supports the defenders of the eternality of the universe. Indeed, according to the mentioned theory, the universe is supposed to be a self-creator (*al-khāliq*) even though it is created. In other words, the universe has come into existence without a meta-entity and its creation. This

[34] Al-Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-tawḥīd*, 171.

[35] *Ibid*., 151.

[36] *Ibid*., 151 ff.

[37] *Ibid*., 152.

presupposition paradoxically makes the universe the author of itself. Upon these determinations, al-Māturīdī proceeds to a dualist conception of the universe and makes certain comparisons. Accordingly, on the basis of the theory of attributes of actions, he states that the Muʿtazilī attitude reduces Allah to the level of a created being. Indeed, pursuant to this Muʿtazilī attitude, the category of attributes of actions cannot be ascribed to Allah as an attribute prior to actualization of the act. Once this view is approved, the ground for the becoming of the universe is the state of becoming that enables attaining the knowledge of becoming and comes after the indication of an act as dependent on it.[38]

Accordingly, in the eyes of al-Māturīdī, the argument adopted by the Muʿtazilī kalām scholar Muḥammad ibn Shabīb, namely, "being is created by Allah out of nothing," has no meaning at all when it is considered together with the view that the "thingness of beings exists by themselves and not by Allah." Indeed, Ibn Shabīb's view of nonexistence contradicts creation out of nothing. Pursuant to the mentioned theory, it is not Allah who actually creates things; instead, Allah only brought into existence the essence (*al-dhāt*) of things out of nothing. In fact, they were things, albeit in nonexistence. For the question of why beings are created, the reply, "Beings are created for their aspects of interest," seems odd to al-Māturīdī.[39] For him, it is unacceptable to think the mentioned objects are created for "interest/benefit" even though there is no being around to make use of them. Al-Māturīdī ironically says that this perspective befits the Muʿtazilah. Indeed, according to the Muʿtazilī approach, being is explained without direct reference to a meta-entity.[40]

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38 Al-Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-tawḥīd*, 153.

39 On one occasion, al-Māturīdī seems to support this oddness with the explicitness of wisdom: "Value accompanies creation. Blessings are explicit. Evidence of generosity are apparent. They comprise wisdom. The authority and proofs of will are certain. The sign of its power and traces of its knowledge are explicit. Therefore, it is useless to ask why. It is a peccable and improper question unacceptable to intellect." See al-Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-tawḥīd,* 235.

40 *Ibid*., 195.

2. From Meta-Entity to Meta-Value

Discussions about the metaphysics of value in kalām are based on perspectives of reasoning and being in itself.[41] These two concepts provide two opposite poles or references for legitimacy and validity within discussions of divinity. The first one considers and justifies being, knowledge, and value within a sequence of causes.[42] This leads to a methodology that explains, justifies, and founds divinity not in itself but through its correlation with something outside it (good, evil, necessity, will, cause, motive, etc.). The second, in turn, particularly comprehends the realm of divinity and the metaphysics of value as a realm of being *in itself*. Pursuant to this determination, divinity is an origin that makes everything exist independently of external correlations and is sufficient to explain it and the metaphysics of value by itself.[43]

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[41] One of the earliest mentions of the concept of "being in itself" (*al-inniyyah*) appears in one of the tracts by the Zaydī kalām scholar al-Qāsim ibn Ibrāhīm al-Rassī (AH 169-246). In this tract called *al-Dalīl al-kabīr*, he uses *al-inniyyah* as he defines the quiddity of nonexistence. Furthermore, in his tract called *Munāẓarah maʿa l-mulḥid*, the expression *inniyyat al-Ṣāniʿ* is employed in a criticism against him. Both terms are used in ontological context and do not share the context of value metaphysics as employed by al-Māturīdī. See Abū Muḥammad al-Qāsim ibn Ibrāhīm al-Rassī, *Majmūʿ kutub wa-rasāʾil al-Imām al-Qāsim ibn Ibrāhīm al-Rassī, 169-246 H*, ed. ʿAbd al-Karīm Aḥmad Jadbān (Ṣanʿāʾ: Dār al-Ḥikmah al-Yamaniyyah, 2001), 202, 294.

[42] Ibn Sīnā indicates that in metaphysics, the question why/what for (*li-ma*) should be conclusively grounded on essence (*al-dhāt*). This means that a thing is unconditional (*li-dhātihī*) for itself. See Abū ʿAlī al-Ḥusayn ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAlī Ibn Sīnā, *al-Shifāʾ: al-Ilāhiyyāt (2)*, ed. George Anawati and Saʿīd Zāyed (Cairo: al-Hayʾah al-ʿĀmmah li-Shuʾūn al-Maṭābiʿ al-Amīriyyah, 1960), 298. Such views by Ibn Sīnā and al-Māturīdī are also observable in *ʿIshrūn maqālah* by Dāwūd ibn Marwān al-Muqammaṣ, a prominent figure of Jewish theology in 9th-century Baghdad, about the problem of the unity of divinity. In the relevant chapter, al-Muqammaṣ emphasizes that the problem should be explained by means of *reasoning*. See Abū Sulaymān Dāwūd ibn Marwān al-Muqammaṣ, *Twenty Chapters*, ed. and trans. Sarah Stroumsa (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 2015), Article I/clause 11.

[43] In consideration of al-Māturīdī, the most appropriate abstract of this view is in *Taʿdīl al-ʿulūm* by the significant scholar Ṣadr al-sharīʿah, who reveals the

Pursuant to the first, divinity is justified within the reasonability of intellect and morality, whereas the second completely prohibits reasoning from divinity. This is a necessary judgment not only in terms of being but also in terms of value. This complete prohibition of reasoning from divinity is essentially based on the perfection and competency of this realm. In fact, these two opposite points of view have become a point of origin that characterizes religious thought and establishes comprehensions of value. In the final analysis, the discussion in Islamic jurisprudence (*al-fiqh*) about whether religious provisions can be subject to *taʿlīl*, as well as kalām-related discussions on the relation between being and value and binding provisions of religion, are based on these two opposite principles. In this regard, the notion of reasoning enables the development of the Muʿtazilī theory of divinity and value based on an ethical foundation,[44] whereas the notion of *al-inniyyah* transforms into a theory of divinity and value in two different manners, which are based on divine will and divine knowledge, respectively. Both forms of the notion of *al-inniyyah* have tilted to subjectivism because of the perception of transcendence-absoluteness; in both perspectives, the value is explained in reference to divine authority in the conclusive sense. Salafī and Ashʿarī circles have refrained from causation as much as they can in regard to divinity since they are based on divine will. The one that is based on divine knowledge considers divinity by itself. Al-Māturīdī can be seen as the pioneer of this approach. This view, which frees the legitimacy and rationality of religious premises from dogmatism, has mostly emerged as a justification of *al-inniyyah* against reasoning in the criticism of Muʿtazilah by al-Māturīdī.

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inniyyah-based approach as follows in his definition of the value metaphysics of divinity: '**لأنّه تعالى فاعل الخير، ولم يحصل من فعله صفة الكمال؛ بل حصل الفعل من صفة الكمال**' (The Almighty God is the author of all good. His attribute of perfection does not originate from his act. On the contrary, His act originates from his attribute of perfection)." See Ṣadr al-sharīʿah al-thānī ʿUbayd Allāh ibn Masʿūd ibn Tāj al-sharīʿah ʿUmar al-Maḥbūbī al-Ḥanafī, *Sharḥ Taʿdīl al-ʿulūm fī l-kalām* (MS Istanbul: Süleymaniye Library, Antalya Tekelioğlu, no.798), fol. 198[a].

[44] Despite significant differences arising from the distinction between Basrah and Baghdad, the Muʿtazilah agrees about the necessity of grounding on founding ethical judgments such as good, evil, necessity, justice, and absurdity, in the determination of the value content of divinity.

According to al-Māturīdī, the universe does not have a single meaning, such as harm, benefit, evil (*al-khabīth*), good (*al-ṭayyib*), blessing (*al-niʿmah*), or damnation (*al-balāʾ*). Therefore, each thing can have the quality of a value in one sense and another quality of value in another sense. In the universe, we cannot talk about benefit in any case or harm in any case.[45] This is proof that the different and opposite existence of things cannot be explained without a meta-entity (*al-ghayr*). In Māturīdī terminology, the *meta-entity* is a category that dismisses contrast and similitude. Any other possibility will both remove the otherness between things and put the *meta-entity* in the category of being of the universe, a category based on form, similitude, difference, and contrast.[46]

For al-Māturīdī, deprivation of an entity from value is absurd; he indicates that man is self-sufficient[47] in terms of intellectual capacity and value comprehension and cites divine commandments as a law of *incentive* and *refrainment* towards human nature in compliance with this capacity. Determining the content of value, he grounds his argument on principles of benefit-harm, like the Muʿtazilah of Basra,[48] but he differs from the Muʿtazilah of Baghdad by accepting the coexistence of benefit-harm in the universe as divine wisdom in compliance with the nature of man as a tried being.[49] Nevertheless, al-Māturīdī puts forth his meta-value approach by means of an

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45 Al-Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-tawḥīd*, 88.

46 *Ibid*., 89.

47 According to the author, this competence is divided into two in terms of the cognitive capacity of the intellect. The first is the unchanging knowledge of intellect – justice, persecution, gratitude, and lie. The second is judgments of intellect within the unity of consequence (*al-ʿāqibah*), beginning (*al-muqaddimah*), and state (*al-ḥāl*). See *ibid*., 272-274.

48 This view, which is expressed through the concepts of *al-taklīf, al-mashaqqah, al-kulfah* and *al-imtiḥān*, is also observable in al-Qāsim ibn Ibrāhīm al-Rassī, Abū l-Qāsim al-Balkhī, al-Qāḍī ʿAbd al-Jabbār, and al-Jāhiz. See al-Rassī, *Majmūʿ kutub wa-rasāʾil*, 310; al-Balkhī, *Kitāb al-maqālāt*, 213; al-Qāḍī ʿAbd al-Jabbār, *al-Mughnī*, XI, 294-295; Abū ʿUthmān ʿAmr ibn Baḥr al-Jāḥiẓ, *Kitāb al-ḥayawān*, ed. ʿAbd al-Salām Muḥammad Hārūn, 2nd ed. (Cairo: Maṭbaʿat Muṣṭafá al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1965), I, 204-207.

49 Al-Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-tawḥīd*, 167.

inniyyah-based approach[50] borrowed from philosophical terminology[51] in the wake of his abovementioned cosmological views. This context enables participation in debates about the purpose/cause of the creation of the universe, where man is a member as well; in fact, these debates bring al-Māturīdī even closer to a theory of value.

As emphasized above, al-Māturīdī presents his point of view through criticism of others. The first one is explicit, whereas the second is implicit. His explicit criticism is against the Muʿtazilī attitude that establishes divinity through an indication of intellect and morality; his implicit criticism is against the Salafī *ʿulamāʾ* and the Ashʿarī circles, who treat divinity on the basis of divine will and power. Apparently, al-Māturīdī tries to overcome the paradoxes arising from the divinity conceptions of these two attitudes by means of metaphysics of value and an approach based on being in itself.[52] For him, the Muʿtazilī approach clearly contradicts the transcendence

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[50] Two elements make al-Māturīdī's approach *inniyyah-based*. First, abandonment of wisdom renders Allah the possessor of ignorance; second, the same condition puts Allah into the status of a being with requirements (*al-ḥājah*) (p. 296). This point of view is observable in his following striking statements: "The attribution of wisdom, justice, virtue, and beneficence is necessary. Indeed, Allah is Who knows (all) and Who is perfect" (p. 297); "... Allah cannot be thought in need or ignorant. In such case, His lordship is shaken and His sovereignty disappears" (p. 299).

[51] According to Ibn Sīnā, Allah, Who is the First (*al-awwal*), is a being without parts, differentia, limits, evidence, cause (*al-ʿillah*), or why (*li-ma*) and *whose act has no why* (*li-ma*) (Ibn Sīnā, *al-Shifāʾ: al-Ilāhiyyāt (2)*, 348). Indeed, He is the origin of all things. He is the being Who is followed by nothing (*Ibid*., 354). He is the pure good. Good, in all aspects, is what everything wills for itself. Existence is *purely good* and *purely perfect* (*Ibid*., 355). Evil has no essence. Good is categorically willed by everything. It is what complements being. Evil means the absence of substance or its unrighteous situation (*Ibid*., 355). The perfection of being lies in the goodness of the being. Each perfection has a being. He is also the good that is not contaminated with evil and incompleteness in this regard (*Ibid*., 356).

[52] The point is the impossibility of thinking about absoluteness and transcendence together undergoing the determination (power) of another principle. Al-Māturīdī articulates this situation, which limits divinity, with the expression "stipulation in the sense of condition." See al-Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-tawḥīd*, 164.

of divinity; it is unacceptable since it attributes necessity to Allah and carries both intellect and morality beyond their respective ontological and epistemic limits, in other words, to the realm of transcendence. The Salafī *ʿulamāʾ* and the Ashʿarīs explained divinity exclusively through power and will. This explanation broke away the relation between Allah and value and made divinity arbitrary. Given this unity, al-Māturīdī initially aims at the Muʿtazilī approach that incorporates divinity within the realm of intellect and morality; for him, it is embarrassing to pose the question "why" to divinity and therefore to inquire why the universe is created in the beginning.[53] Such an explanation expresses a point of view that is grounded on the transcendence of divinity against the perspective of *reasoning* and that considers divinity as something beyond intellect and morality but not in opposition (irrational) to them.

In this regard, al-Māturīdī aims at the essentialist and absolutist ethical approach of the Muʿtazilah of Baghdad and asserts that each condition, foreseen for the best, can also be mentioned for depravity (*al-fasād*). As such, this perspective means refusing ontic comprehension of moral value judgments and the thesis that immobilizes the dynamic relation between existence and value. In addition, the author notes that the attitude that restricts divine will to the best is groundless. For him, whatever is foreseen for *the best* can also be mentioned for *al-fasād*. According to him, this arises from the fallacy that an "act without cause is unreasonable:"

> ... one who commits useless deeds is not considered to have acted on wisdom. Whoever acts without cause has busied himself with the unreasonable. Accordingly, some (of the Muʿtazilah of Baghdad) supposed that it is impossible for Allah to commit a deed which would harm anybody – under the conviction that it would remove wisdom. Therefore, they thought it was necessary for Allah to do the best in terms of religion and consequence for others. Indeed, He is free from any act that benefits or harms Himself. His acts can only be explained by

[53] According to al-Māturīdī, this question is equivalent to questions such as why Allah is potent or why He is Who knows. See *Kitāb al-tawḥīd*, 164.

providing others with benefit or dismissing harm from such persons. This is also the (essential) cause of His acts...[54]

As the foregoing quotation shows, al-Māturīdī noticed that the paradox arising from attributing cause to divinity is a consequence of constructing the value of divine creation and will on moral comprehension. This objection may have two motives: first, it is defined through something other than itself; second, the justification in definition can be employed for both positive and negative value. Pursuant to both perspectives, the author concludes that intellect and morality cannot apprehend divinity as grasping because of their limitedness and that they cannot employ their respective epistemes as references for this realm. Therefore, the relation between being and value can be exclusively explained on the basis of divine knowledge. Apparently, this was the point of departure for al-Māturīdī on his way to the principle of wisdom, the focal point of his thought. This is observable in his definition of wisdom as "flawless accuracy."[55] It is the involving and competent quality of divine knowledge that ensures flawless accuracy for being and existence. Therefore, value is not a quality in which being is imminent; instead, it is a wisdom of knowledge of Allah, a wisdom that is manifested in being. In other words, the act/will/creation of Allah bears the value of wisdom not because of an ethical reason but because His knowledge comprises perfection and absoluteness that does not allow for life and deficiency. Given this arbitrariness of divinity, we have no grounds to ask Him why.

Al-Māturīdī materializes his theoretical framework and aims at theory of *the best*.[56] For him, this theory cannot be considered

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[54] Al-Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-tawḥīd*, 295.

[55] Clarifying the relation between *wisdom* and *flawless accuracy*, al-Māturīdī describes wisdom as *to know* the nonempirical by means of comprehension, knowledge, and the known; thus, he determines knowledge as the essential quality required for wisdom. See al-Māturīdī, *Taʾwīlāt al-Qurʾān*, XI (al-Qaṣaṣ - Sabaʾ), ed. Ali Haydar Ulusoy (Istanbul: Dār al-Mīzān, 2008), 227; VIII (al-Ḥijr – al-Isrāʾ), ed. Halil İbrahim Kaçar (Istanbul: Dār al-Mīzān, 2006), 277. Also see Mahmut Ay, "Kelam'da *Adalet*, *Kudret ve Hikmet* Bağlamında Tanrı Tasavvurları," *Eskiyeni* 31 (2015), 43.

[56] Al-Balkhī, *Kitāb al-maqālāt*, 230, 325-326. In the pages to which we refer, al-Balkhī explains wisdom through fundamental ethical judgments such as good,

together with divinity. Indeed, intellect and ethics cannot comprehend metaphysics based on divine knowledge and wisdom and cannot be used as a reference to explain the beginning of creation since both intellect and ethics are limited. This theory contradicts the transcendence of divinity. In this context, the author asserts that the existence of things, which are negated in the theory of *the best* and which cause harm and deprivation to the living excluded from Allah, is grounded on two wisdoms. The *first* is that man is tried by the harm and benefit to emerge, even though intellect cannot grasp it.[57] The taste of *al-thawāb* for the appreciation of obedience to religion and the grief of punishment imposed for disobedience can only be possible on this equivalence based on trial. In the theory of the best, the negative situations leading to all harms and deprivations that are naturally excluded from the being and Allah seem to have attained, thanks to the approach of al-Māturīdī, a theological content that holds together benefit and harm in compliance with the possible acts and consequences of human nature.[58] The author tries to provide this content by means of the will of Allah to construct an envisagement within human consciousness of reward and punishment (*al-thawāb - al-ʿiqāb*) on the basis of the concrete (*al-aʿyān*). This attitude shares the Muʿtazilī concern as it ascribes to all living and nonliving things a content of value in compliance with the phenomenon of religion that is binding on man. According to al-Māturīdī, however, *the second wisdom* behind bringing into existence/creation of things that cause harm and deprivation is that they gain the capacity to bear difficulties in all their diversity. Such competence (*al-taḥammul*) can only be realized through rational inquiry/contemplation (*al-naẓar/al-tafakkur*), albeit at varying levels. Indeed, man does not gain any advantage in practice for using his intellect (*al-naẓar/al-fikr*). On the contrary, this use keeps him

evil, benefit, and harm. This is the very point al-Māturīdī contests. He associates wisdom with divine knowledge; therefore, he stands for transcendence and thus being in itself instead of ethics.

57 Al-Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-tawḥīd*, 176.

58 Al-Māturīdī explains the point as follows, aiming at the categorical distinction in Thanawī theology: "Allah created beings in two manners, namely, which do harm and which do good. He rendered each substance susceptible for grief and taste. This determination arises from its consequences. This manner makes man avoid one and head for the other." See *ibid*., 249.

away from taste and lust, whose value of interest is clear and strong. Even though it is hard to endure the difficulty of contemplation, which deprives man of interest, its negligence paves the way for dispute and discord. Once the difficulty in using the intellect is overcome, the avoidance of harm and orientation towards benefit, which are equivalent, attain an epistemological ground.[59] According to al-Māturīdī, this epistemological ground functions in such manner to facilitate repetition during childhood; it provides man with sufficient conditions of being subject to religion.[60]

Al-Māturīdī attributes all of existence to Allah without any separation between its aspects of harm and benefit. This approach is based on a teleological perspective that, in the final analysis, exceeds intellect and morality through divine knowledge and that does not see any differences between the qualities of value in things such as benefit-harm or good-evil. Indeed, each existence has wisdom pursuant to the flawlessly accurate quality of divine knowledge, regardless of the quality or consequence of things.[61] Therefore, all value judgments, including good and evil, provide proof of the unity, knowledge, and wisdom of Allah, like a single substance. This emphasis by al-Māturīdī can be understood as a response to the categorical distinction by dualist theology of the indication between both value judgments. Therefore, regardless of their value judgment, they provide the value of a common proof for the universe in terms of testimony and indication.[62] For him, the oppositions of benefit-harm and good-evil within things is a method to assure discipline for cruel persons who apply violence and power and to make them understand their actual powerlessness; in addition, these oppositions are proof of the power, perfection, and transcendence of the creator. Therefore, divine deeds with these qualities are exempt from *benefiting* and *being harmed* in themselves.[63] For al-Māturīdī, the value qualities of things, albeit opposite, are based on divine wisdom foreseen for man; therefore, he refuses the Muʿtazilī view that attributes only the good to Allah and exempts Him from any kind of

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59 Al-Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-tawḥīd*, 175.

60 *Ibid*., 176.

61 *Ibid*., 193.

62 *Ibid*., 176.

63 *Ibid.*

evil. Indeed, the opposition between benefit and harm and good and evil is equivalent in relation to divine knowledge that exceeds the limits of the indication of intellect. Therefore, it is impossible to make a distinction of comparison and exclusion on the basis of the opposition of benefit-harm and good-evil within the limits of intellect; moreover, this cannot be transformed into a theory of value for divination.

Al-Māturīdī criticizes the absolutist approach of the Muʿtazilah of Baghdad for determining the value quality of things in an essential manner; in this respect, he notes that a thing may be of a quiddity that can be described as both good and evil and that harmful things may coexist with benefits that cannot be appropriately comprehended.[64] For instance, water has a value that ensures life for every living thing but may also cause extinction of the living. Each thing with a quality of harm also comprises a benefit that constitutes a basis for an opposite assertion about it. Therefore, good and evil are not two distinct substances, as alleged by the Muʿtazilah of Baghdad. Instead, good and evil are those for which each substance may provide origin. Al-Māturīdī therefore indicates that the presence of two opposite aspects within things is one of the most sublime/greatest proofs of divinity.[65] For him, this situation is an indication of complete might on harm and benefit; it is also the origin of two aspects of astonishment, one positive and one negative, which lead man to be in hope and worry. Accordingly, al-Māturīdī concludes that the authority of commandment, which is binding on man, cannot be considered without the competence of Allah, Who allows the coexistence of two opposite-value qualities within things. Otherwise, we have to claim the incompetence of Allah. Moreover, in such cases, man would not have desire and concern, which would lead to human tendencies of commitment and avoidance. Therefore, in the eyes of al-Māturīdī, the formation of the *comprehension of object lessons* defined in the Qurʾān by means of the universe depends on the coexistence of the qualities of benefit and harm.[66]

Al-Māturīdī criticizes the method of Muḥammad ibn Shabīb, who replies to the question of why a thing does not come into existence at

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64 Al-Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-tawḥīd*, 176.

65 *Ibid*.

66 *Ibid*.

any time other than the time at which it does with the imminent situation of the thing and eliminates all other possibilities.[67] Accordingly, al-Māturīdī contests him asking why existence occurs by means of a cause not within but outside itself. In reply, Muḥammad ibn Shabīb apparently establishes the context also to be condemned by al-Māturīdī: since a thing comes into existence by means of what is outside it, such becoming must have an *interest* (*al-maṣlaḥah*) with regard to religion and world. This does not apply for the meta-entity (*al-ghayr*) and the existence of the nonexistent.[68] Al-Māturīdī apparently lays the foundation of debate through the reply by Muḥammad ibn Shabīb to Dahriyyah. The author constructs his argument on the anachronism caused by the principle of interest adopted by his respondent. The anachronism here is between the interest and the fact that the first created thing is an untried being (not subject to divine proposal). Otherwise, the realization of first creation by means of a different possibility will wipe away interest. According to al-Māturīdī, the words by Muḥammad ibn Shabīb in this context do not really mean much. Indeed, the question of why and the quest for causation in the realm of divinity contradict the being in itself and transcendence of divinity. Indeed, the realization of a deed under these circumstances renders the meta-entity subject to criticism.[69] Nevertheless, the meta-entity is a being whose deed/creation never goes out of wisdom.[70] The fact that it does/creates what is best for another living or nonliving thing does not mean evaluation of a deed in itself. On the contrary, this means asserting that the thing

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67 Al-Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-tawḥīd,* 191.

68 *Ibid.*

69 *Ibid*., 192.

70 The effort by al-Māturīdī to take divinity towards epistemic ground is clearly observable in Ibn Sīnā, who explains wisdom through knowledge in a similar manner. Wisdom, as al-Māturīdī says, is considered in an epistemic comprehension and defined as the utmost (*al-afḍal*) certainty and the maximum knowledge (on another occasion, Ibn Sīnā clarifies the maximum good [*al-afḍal*] by corresponding it with the concept of *certainty* [*al-yaqīn*]). In other words, wisdom is the most correct and most perfect knowledge (*al-maʿrifah*); it is the universal knowledge of the original causes. Calling it "the first philosophy," Ibn Sīnā describes this realm as absolute wisdom. For him, wisdom is the universal knowledge of final (*al-quṣwâ*) causes. See Ibn Sīnā, *al-Shifāʾ: al-Ilāhiyyāt (2)*, 5, 15.

done/created is necessary (*wājib*) for the meta-entity. However, it is impossible to talk about the emergence of any right/necessity[71] with regard to a meta-entity when there is nothing but it.

Conclusion

In terms of divinity, al-Māturīdī seems to acknowledge al-Muḥāsibī regarding the incompetence/inability of intellect; accordingly, al-Māturīdī admits that intellect, which is the origin of value judgments such as good-evil and justice, is a faculty that cannot surpass its limits (*maḥdūd*). In his eyes, limitedness has a strategic function to justify the argument that in terms of inability and incompetence, the intellect cannot be the founding principle of value in there (divinity) as in here (physics). This attitude enables al-Māturīdī to assert that moral judgments of intellect are competent within the limits of physics but that it is impossible to reach the realm of divinity (as the Muʿtazilah did) through the same judgments. In other words, the (ethical) value capacity of intellect does not/cannot precede the creator and the creation in the establishment of metaphysics of value. Such a limitation seems compliant within ontological and epistemological divisions that exist between humans and the divine and that arise from differences of quiddity. This perspective substantially differs from not only the Muʿtazilah but also the Salafīs and the Ashʿarīs, who stress power and will, since al-Māturīdī constructs his envisagement of divinity on divine knowledge and not on divine power and will. Even though it is based on an epistemic comprehension, this change of paradigm sides with a perspective that shares the purposes and concerns of ethics-based Muʿtazilī value theory and that avoids the arbitrariness of the legitimacy of divinity since it does not condition the latter on will and power. As a result, al-Māturīdī's principle of wisdom is a logical consequence of divine knowledge, which is flawless and perfect in everything and which, accordingly, requires flawless accuracy. This point of view not only deconstructs the Salafī and Ashʿarī envisagement of divinity but is also an effort to exceed

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[71] In this case, it is meaningless to say "Allah creates man for His interest and benefit." Indeed, it is impossible to talk about harm and decay about things not created for themselves (with regard to those yet to be created). Al-Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-tawḥīd*, 192.

the Muʿtazilī envisagement that weakens the transcendence of divinity on the grounds of a moral code of intellect.

This perspective is developed earlier than Ibn Sīnā's, who builds divinity on the principle of being in itself. Unlike other approaches to divinity, al-Māturīdī maintains the unity of realms of being, knowledge, and value. Thus, he is able to develop an epistemological perspective that does not ascribe necessity to Allah and does not contradict moral code. The distinguishing feature of his theory is that he understands the metaphysics of value in a manner that comprises two (intellectual and moral) modes from the realm of divinity down to human reality. Accordingly, intellect and morals, within their limitedness, mean two forms/possibilities of valuation for the realization of divine wisdom in the human realm as a value-related quality of divine knowledge. These two forms, which we call realization (*al-taḥaqquq*), are defined by al-Māturīdī as justice and virtue. Virtue cannot be considered limited given the transcendence and perfection of divinity; on the contrary, it incorporates endless possibilities with regard to Allah. Therefore, no best manner of virtue can be in question despite allegations of the theory of the best. In addition, within the scope of criticism about the doctrine of the best of the Muʿtazilah of Baghdad, *virtue* and *justice* cannot be considered necessary in any manner whatsoever because of the transcendence of divinity as well as moral comprehension. The same applies for justice. Justice is not constant or uniform and comprises an indication with various degrees. This is a result of the impossibility of thinking of transcendence and limitedness together. Therefore, pursuant to theory based on being in itself, the value bears a relationality from outside to inside — in other words, from the divine to the human. Divine knowledge in its transcendent, that is, unlimited, state is the point of origin for value and is based on wisdom that involves all value judgments before and after creation. In this context, wisdom has a function that does not reduce ontological contrast to absurdity and cannot ensure the transitivity of value between the creator and the created. Indeed, the created existence means the *realization of wisdom* as justice and virtue in line with its own ontology and limitedness. Two cognitive forms of wisdom limited to the universe, namely, justice and virtue, are not sufficient to move from here to the context where only the meta-entity exists. Indeed, since this context is based on divine knowledge, it includes endless possibilities beyond the limits of justice and virtue of the intellect.

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THEME AND LYRICISM: TWO CONSIDERATIONS IN THE ISLAMIC WRITING TRADITION MOTIVATING MUSLIM AUTHORS IN NAMING THEIR WORKS

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Abstract

The implementation of the *sajʿ* (rhymed prose) style for the denomination of works is a writing tradition among medieval Muslim intellectuals and a widespread artistic effort that is still extant today. Indeed, thematic restriction has played a role as a motivating factor in the creativity of authors in the classical era in terms of *sajʿ*. The objective of this paper is to present the distinctive solidarity between theme and *sajʿ* that stands out in the book titles of countless Islamic classics by means of a comprehensive examination of book names by Muslim authors between the 3rd and 10th centuries AH. This paper also attempts to identify why scholars could not renounce thematic restrictions and aesthetics based on ornamental sensibility when naming their scientific works.

Key Words: Islamic writing tradition, names of works, book title, onomastics, *sajʿ* (rhymed prose), aesthetics, embellished prose

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Introduction

Experts in onomastics,[1] a subdiscipline of linguistics, have often concentrated on the names of persons, places, and regions. Nevertheless, this discipline comprises a scope and flexibility that enables the examination of book titles put to paper in a certain language, region or culture. In particular, the significant amount of variable book titles created by Muslim scholars using a limited word staff as well as the striking artistic effort in the design of these titles are truly worth noting and deserve closer analysis.

Rhymed prose (نَثْر مُسَجَّع), which initially emerged in works in the *maqāmāt* genre as of the 3rd century AH and rapidly flourished, is a much examined artistic style. The objective of this study is a comprehensive examination of the theme and form of book titles from various disciplines, particularly in the Arabic language and literature as well as tafsīr, ḥadīth, history of religions, Sufism, philosophy, botany, zoography, zoology, mineralogy, astrology, astronomy, and numismatics, created by the *sajʿ* style. The scope of our study covers the titles of works written between the 3rd and 10th centuries AH to follow the evolution and witness the ongoing vivacity of the *sajʿ* style,[2] which became a writing tradition among medieval Muslim intellectuals.[3]

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1 It was Aristotle who identified this linguistic discipline for the first time. In the course of time, dozens of subdisciplines were formed in consideration of the relevant object or concept. Murat and Gülkanat, who describe onomastics as an extensive phenomenon with dynamic structure, indicate that it covers a vast scope, from the names of buses to flowers. See Mualla Murat and Gizem Gülkanat, "Onomastik Bilimi ve Eğitim," *Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 5, no. 28 (2018), 248, http://dx.doi.org/10.16990/SOBIDER.4485.

2 Geert Jan van Gelder, "Antidotes and Anecdotes: A Literary History of Medicine from 13th-Century Syria," in *Wit and Wisdom in Classical Arabic Literature: Leiden Lectures on Arabic Language and Culture*, Petra M. Sijpesteijn, James A. Montgomery, and Geert Jan van Gelder (Leiden: Leiden Publications, 2015), 58.

3 According to Devin J. Stewart, *sajʿ* in Arabic literature and Arab society dates back to the pre-Islamic period and maintained its importance until the 20th century AD. Indeed, almost all Arabic works made use of this method. See "*Sajʿ* in the Qurʾān: Prosody and Structure," *Journal of Arabic Literature* 21, no. 2 (1990), 101, https://doi.org/10.1163/157006490X00017. According to Shawqī

The content of this study excludes book titles that consist of a single word, such as اَلْبُخَلَاءُ (*The Avaricious*) by al-Jāḥiẓ (d. 255/869), that include no artistic or aesthetic aspect of pronunciation regarding the formation of wording regardless of the quality of their content, such as اَلْبَيَانُ وَالتَّبْيِينُ by the same author, or that have an extremely long name, such as

اَلْعِبَرُ وَدِيوَانُ الْمُبْتَدَأِ وَالْخَبَرِ فِي أَيَّامِ الْعَرَبِ وَالْعَجَمِ وَالْبَرْبَرِ وَمَنْ عَاصَرَهُمْ مِنْ ذَوِي السُّلْطَانِ الْأَكْبَرِ

by Ibn Khaldūn (d. 808/1406), which ultimately became known as *Muqaddimah*. Instead, we concentrate on relatively short or medium-length book titles that skillfully make use of certain techniques and practices of *sajʿ*, which is considered "wisdom *(al-ḥikmah)* composed in an expression (*al-lafẓ*)"[4] that comprise a lyrical air in pronunciation, consist of the same letters but different words to lead to occasional misreading, and prioritize form and meaning together. The works referred to in this study are interesting, compelling, and even, occasionally, laconic examples with humorous emphasis in terms of pronunciation or meaning.

Pursuant to our methodology, we evaluate book titles in categorical terms and include the name and date of death of the author; thus, we aim to demonstrate how rooted the tradition is. To highlight the theme within a book title, we often make use of bold characters and frames to identify lyrical elements.

Scholars from every discipline have exerted significant effort to create artistic book titles; however, the men of letters are particularly worth noting. While certain book titles are composed through a literary language, they express a certain thesis or assertion. For instance, تَنْوِيرُ الْغَبَشِ فِي فَضْلِ السُّودَانِ وَالْحَبَشِ *(Illuminating the Darkness: The Virtues of Blacks and Abyssinians)* by Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597/1201) underlines, on the one hand, the principle that "superiority should be sought in piety and not in color of skin," while on the other, it provides a significantly eloquent introduction to the content of the

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Ḍayf, the *sajʿ* style became a widespread literary taste and practice particularly as of the 10th century AD. Shawqī Ḍayf, *Tārīkh al-adab al-ʿArabī* (Cairo: Dār al-Maʿārif, 1995), IV (*al-ʿAṣr al-ʿAbbāsī al-awwal*), 573.

4 Dimitri Gutas, "Classical Arabic Wisdom Literature: Nature and Scope," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 101, no. 1 (1981), 63, https://doi.org/10.2307/602164.

work. Ibn al-Marzubān al-Muḥawwalī (d. 309/921), who complains about the moral degeneration of the men of his time and their disobedience to rules of friendship, uses the title فَضْلُ الْكِلَابِ عَلَى كَثِيرٍ مِمَّنْ لَبِسَ الثِّيَابَ *(The Book of the Superiority of Dogs Over Many of Those Who Wear Clothes).*

Some authors are even more successful in echoing the content of their work in their book titles. Al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1505), who is among these meticulous authors, calls his study about the permissibility of swimming اَلْبَاحَةُ فِي فَضْلِ السِّبَاحَةِ, his tract on the legitimacy of using spears اَلسِّمَاحُ فِي أَخْبَارِ الرِّمَاحِ, and his compilation of classical poetry and jokes about *kunafah* and *qaṭāʾif* مَنْهَلُ اللَّطَائِفِ فِي الْكُنَافَةِ وَالْقَطَائِفِ which managed to attract the attention of readers.

I. Possible Intentions behind the Denomination of Books

Muslim authors started the writing and registering movement as early as the 2nd century AH and attached particular importance to the names of their works. It was also a technical requirement to provide a work with a foolproof name. In his definition of the concept of a "book title (اَلْعُنْوَان)" among the eight essential elements within the opening pages of classical works, Kātib Chalabī (d. 1067/1657) writes as follows:

> اَلْعُنْوَانُ: اَلدَّالُّ بِالْإِجْمَالِ عَلَى مَا يَأْتِي تَفْصِيلُهُ وَهُوَ قَدْ يَكُونُ بِالتَّسْمِيَةِ وَقَدْ يَكُونُ بِأَلْفَاظٍ وَعِبَارَاتٍ تُسَمَّى بِبَرَاعَةِ الْاِسْتِهْلَالِ.
>
> The title is the thing or part that briefly expresses the issues to be eventually detailed. It may be an (ordinary) denomination or be applied through wordings and inscriptions called *good beginning*.[5]

By the abovementioned *good beginning*,[6] Kātib Chalabī understands not only meaning, but also the formal aesthetic ensured

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[5] Ḥājī Khalīfah Muṣṭafá ibn ʿAbd Allāh Kātib Chalabī, *Kashf al-ẓunūn ʿan asāmī l-kutub wa-l-funūn*, ed. M. Şerefeddin Yaltkaya and Kilisli Rifat Bilge (Baghdad: Maktabat al-Muthanná, 1941), I, 38.

[6] *Barāʿat al-istihlāl*, which is used in the sense of "good beginning" in verse or prose, is examined in classical references under the term *ḥusn al-ibtidāʾ*. This style, which ensures an impressive beginning to the qaṣīdah of a poet, the prose of a writer and the correspondences of a scribe, has been in use since earlier periods. See, for example, Abū l-ʿAbbās Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī al-

by *sajʿ*. Indeed, an attentive examination of bibliographical and biobibliographical works, particularly *Kashf al-ẓunūn*, reveals how Muslim authors made use of "denomination" as an effective instrument to attract readers' attention to the book because they would duly benefit from the work. In other words, the essential objectives of classical authors in the creation of the names of their works are *extraordinariness* to the degree of astonishment, *noticeability* to the degree of intensity, and *artistry* to the degree of confusion in terms of syntax.

In our opinion, there are understandable reasons why Muslim authors since the early days have given interesting names to their works. A laconic name that appropriately expresses the content and wish was an incontestable factor in providing the author with popularity. Accordingly, many authors tried to attach their nicknames and epithets to the names of their books in a phonetically aesthetic manner. For instance, the frequently referenced work by Abū l-Faraj al-Isfahānī (d. 420/1029) is often mentioned together with the name of its author and became known as "اَلْأَغَانِي لِلْإِصْفَهَانِي". The same applies for the names of three following works: "اَلْأَمَالِي لِأَبِي عَلِيٍّ الْقَالِي," "وَفَيَاتُ الْأَعْيَانِ لِابْنِ خَلِّكَان," and "مَنْ غَدَرَ وَخَانَ لِابْنِ الْمَرْزُبَانِ."

In addition to their noble goal of "disseminating knowledge," the authors also proved their mastery and experience in the Arabic language in the eyes of readers through the extraordinary names of their works. Furthermore, a successful "denomination" meant a higher number of qualified readers and therefore higher commercial "earnings."

The *sajʿ* style[7] has often been employed in the enigmatic expressions of soothsayers, oratories, moving counsels such as

Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-aʿshá fī ṣināʿat al-inshāʾ*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥusayn Shams al-Dīn (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-Ilmiyyah, 1987), I, 47; Abū l-Ḥasan ʿAlī ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī al-Sayyid al-Sharīf al-Jurjānī, *Kitāb al-taʿrīfāt*, ed. Ibrāhīm al-Abyārī (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-ʿArabī, 1985), 63; Abū l-Baqāʾ Ayyūb ibn Mūsá al-Ḥusaynī al-Kafawī, *Al-kulliyyāt: Muʿjam fī l-muṣṭalaḥāt wa-l-furūq al-lughawiyyah*, ed. ʿAdnān Darwīsh and Muḥammad al-Miṣrī, 2nd ed. (Beirut: Muʾassasat al-Risālah, 1998), 364.

7 Van Gelder, *Classical Arabic Literature: A Library of Arabic Literature Anthology* (New York & London: New York University Press, 2013), 110.

testaments, gnomical sayings, influential sayings such as maxims and parables, as well as religious ritual expressions since the Jāhiliyyah and early Islamic period. On some occasions, Muslim scholars benefited from *sajʿ* to ensure the formal attractiveness of their work. Indeed, as is still true today, a simple and unadorned title created pursuant to *sajʿ* in those days not only sounded nice but also raised notable curiosity about the content and moved the reader to access the inner pages. In addition, we should bear in mind that a rhymed phrase stylized by a calligrapher is pleasing to the eye. Indeed, book titles such as "سُلُوكُ الْمُلُوك ," "أَحَاسِنُ الْمَحَاسِنِ" ," and " رُمُوزُ الْكُنُوزِ " both sound and look nice.

Another reasonable ground for the use of puns in book titles is the aesthetic concern arising from the need to add an appropriate extension beginning with "... شَرْحُ ..." or "... فِي شَرْحِ ..." to the original title to name the studies within the age-long tradition of commentaries. The titles are created in this way and for this purpose in countless numbers of commentaries. The name given by al-Suyūṭī to his very well-known commentary of the ḥadīth collection جَمْعُ الجَوَامِعِ is an artistic example: هَمْعُ الْهَوَامِعِ شَرْحُ جَمْعِ الجَوَامِعِ.

In the Muslim world, almost all popular commentaries on *al-Ṣaḥīḥ* by the renowned ḥadīth scholar al-Bukhārī are named pursuant to the same method, and commentators have displayed praiseworthy endeavors to create puns with the name of al-Bukhārī. Here, we present some for clarification:

Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī (d. 852/1449)	فَتْحُ **الْبَارِي** بِشَرْحِ صَحِيحِ **الْبُخَارِيِّ**
Al-ʿAynī (d. 855/1451)	عُمْدَةُ **الْقَارِي** فِي شَرْحِ صَحِيحِ **الْبُخَارِيِّ**
Al-ʿAjlūnī (d. 1162/1749)	اَلْفَيْضُ **الْجَارِي** لِشَرْحِ صَحِيحِ **الْبُخَارِيِّ**
Ḥasan al-ʿIdwī al-Ḥamzāwī (d. 1303/1886)	اَلنُّورُ **السَّارِي** مِنْ فَيْضِ صَحِيحِ **الْبُخَارِيِّ**
Muḥammad al-Khiḍr al-Shinqīṭī (d.1354/1936)	كَوْثَرُ **الدَّرَارِي** فِي كَشْفِ خَبَايَا صَحِيحِ **الْبُخَارِيِّ**

In addition, we should note works that are written to summarize a voluminous book and that often rely on clichés such as "... اِخْتِصَارُ/فِي ... ... اخْتِصَارِ/مُخْتَصَرُ" or "... تَلْخِيصُ ..." or even those written in relation to a

certain work and expressed with terms such as "تَهْذِيب," "تَشْوِيح," "تَنْقِيح," "تَلْقِيح" "ذَيْل/تَذْيِيل," or "زُبْدَة".[8]

In addition to the foregoing, we should not overlook the influence of Arabic as the common cultural language of the medieval Islamic world. Accordingly, scholars preferred to name their works in Arabic since it was available for ornate prose, even if their work was in fact written in Ottoman Turkish or Persian. For example, the title of a book in Persian that was written and presented to Sultan Bāyezīd II in 895 (1490) by Ḥusayn al-Khaṭṭābī al-Jīlānī, a scholar known for his studies on medicine, astronomy, and mathematics, reads تُحْفَةُ الْحُسَّابِ فِي الْحِسَابِ. The same applies for a work written in Turkish (first 222 pages) and Persian and presented to Murād III (1574-1595) by al-Ḥazīnī (d. 1002/after 1594), who named it جَوَاهِرُ الْأَبْرَارِ مِنْ أَمْوَاجِ الْبِحَارِ. Interestingly, this work about Aḥmad Yasawī and the Yasawiyyah order bears the strong seal of the abovementioned writing tradition in its title even though it is not actually in Arabic. Another example is the Persian work called أَوْرَادُ الْأَحْبَابِ وَفُصُوصُ الْآدَابِ by Kubrawī shaykh Yaḥyá ibn Aḥmad al-Bākharzī (d. 736/1335) about mystical etiquette. We can even refer to the name of the Turkish work written in Mecca by the 11th-century (17th-century AD) Ottoman mathematician ʿAlī ibn Walī ibn Ḥamzah al-Jazāʾirī in 999 (1590), تُحْفَةُ الْأَعْدَادِ لِذَوِي الرُّشْدِ وَالسَّدَادِ.

Apparently, the Ottoman scholars followed the same method in their translations from Arabic into Turkish. For instance, a work on sexuality, similar to the Kama Sutra, called نُزْهَةُ الْأَلْبَابِ فِيمَا لَا يُوجَدُ فِي الْكِتَابِ (*Excursion of the Hearts in What Cannot Be Found in Any Book*)" by the Tunisian qāḍī and sex manual writer Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Tīfāshī (d. 651/1253), is translated in Turkish by the

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[8] See, for example,

Shumaym al-Ḥillī (d. 601/1205)	اللَّمَاسَة فِي شَرْحِ الْحَمَاسَة
Ismāʿīl Rusūkhī Anqarawī (d. 1041/1631)	اَلْحِكَمُ الْمُنْدَرِجَةُ فِي شَرْحِ الْمُنْفَرِجَة
Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī ibn Masʿūd (d. 8th/14th century)	مَلَاحُ الْأَلْوَاحِ فِي شَرْحِ مَرَاحِ الْأَرْوَاحِ
ʿAbd al-Raḥīm al-Mawṣilī (d. 1041/1631)	اَلتَّعْجِيزُ في احْتِصَارِ الْوَجِيز
Al-Zarkashī (d. 794/1392)	اَلتَّنْقِيحُ لِأَلْفَاظِ الْجَامِعِ الصَّحِيح
Mughalṭāy ibn Qılīj (d. 762/1361)	اَلتَّلْوِيحُ شَرْحُ الْجَامِعِ الصَّحِيح
Al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1505)	اَلتَّوْشِيحُ عَلَى الْجَامِعِ الصَّحِيح

Ottoman Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Kamāl, who preferred an even more fantastic Arabic name for the translation: رُجُوعُ الشَّيْخِ إِلَى صِبَاهِ فِي الْقُوَّةِ عَلَى الْبَاهِ (*The Return of the Old Man to His Youth*). Another sex manual, called اَلْأَلْفِيَّةُ وَالشَّلْفِيَّةُ by Abū Bakr ibn Ismāʿīl al-Azraqī, was translated by Deli Birader Meḥmed Ghazālī (d. 941/1535?) into Turkish with the following Arabic title: رَافِعُ الْهُمُومِ وَدَافِعُ الْغُمُومِ (*What Disperses Sorrow and Destroys Sadness*).

II. Diversity within Thematic Restriction

The most striking point in the book titles by Muslim authors is the impression of restriction with five to ten themes or terms. As shown by numerous examples below, our authors seem to have restricted themselves with a limited number of words, such as "تُحْفَة," "نُزْهَة," "رَوْضَة," "دُرَّة," and "عِقْد." However, adjectives, phrases, and singular or plural forms in the company of these terms created huge diversity and, in a way, revealed the true skill of the author. In other words, even though a medieval author apparently seemed to have constrained himself in a very limited frame, he both stood out and proved his artistry by setting his personal seal on the mentioned clichés. *Sajʿ* is the most common style for this purpose since it reflects the phonetic aesthetic in the best manner. Indeed, thematic restriction was the main motivation behind the creativity of classical authors in terms of *sajʿ*. Consequently, it is possible to talk about a clear solidarity between theme and *sajʿ* in the titles of countless Islamic classics.

Presumably, the most appropriate examples of this practice are book titles that consist of names of jewelry and precious stones. Indeed, the association of book titles with certain valuable objects, particularly jewelry, was a common tradition and style among Muslim authors to arouse interest. Pearl was the most prominent of such objects; accordingly, hundreds of famous works were crowned with the singular or plural form of this word, "دُرَّة plu. دُرٌّ/دُرَرٌ." In addition, "pearl" was employed together with numerous useful adjectives available for *sajʿ* techniques, such as "precious, exceptional, unique, well-protected, untouched/virgin, well-ordered/well-arranged, dispersed, chosen/select" or "flawless." Examples in the following list show how a limited theme can be diversified by means of additions to attain a phonetically artistic structure. The elements highlighting *sajʿ* are given in boxes:

Al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111)	اَلدُّرَّةُ الْفَاخِرَةُ فِي كشف عُلُومِ الْآخِرَةِ
Al-ʿAzfī (d. 633/1235-36)	اَلدُّرُّ الْمُنَظَّمُ فِي مَوْلِدِ النَّبِيِّ الْمُعَظَّمِ
Al-Ḥarīrī (d. 516/1122)	دُرَّةُ الْغَوَّاصِ فِي أَوْهَامِ الْخَوَاصِّ
Al-Ḥamawī (d. 1098/1687)	اَلدُّرَرُ الثَّمِينَةُ فِي حُكْمِ الصَّلَاةِ فِي السَّفِينَةِ.

In addition to pearl, many other gems or jewelry adorn the covers of books in their singular or plural forms, such as jewel (جَوْهَر plu. جَوَاهِر), gold (ذَهَب/عَسْجَد), ruby (يَاقُوت plu. يَوَاقِيت), collar (عِقْد plu. عُقُود), (قِلَادَة plu. قَلَائِد), (طَوْق plu. أَطْوَاق), necklace or line for pearl (سِمْط plu. سُمُوط), (سِلْك plu. أَسْلَاك), pearl beading (نَظْم), or gold bullion (سَبِيكَة plu. سَبَائِك). The list may be complemented with terms that recall adornment/ornament in the broader sense, such as "حُلَّة plu. حُلَل," "حِلْيَة plu. حِلَى," "دِيبَاجَة plu. دِيبَاج," fashion/model (طِرَاز), crown (تَاج plu.تِيجَان), imperial crown (إِكْلِيل plu. أَكَالِيل), and "خِزَانَة plu. خَزَائِن" "كَنْز plu. كُنُوز" in the sense of treasury.[9]

III. Use of Terminology that Emits Positive Connotations to the Reader

Authors opted for emotionally positive terminology, such as cheer, pleasure, happiness, and joy, to arouse interest among readers as well as terms of consolation to eliminate sadness and grief. In this context,

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[9] Here are some interesting examples of the abovementioned terms:

Abū Isḥāq al-Ḥuṣrī (d. 413/1022)	جَمْعُ الْجَوَاهِرِ فِي الْمُلَحِ وَ النَّوَادِرِ
Abū Manṣūr al-Thaʿālibī (d. 429/1038)	اَلْيَوَاقِيتُ فِي بَعْضِ الْمَوَاقِيتِ
Al-Zamakhsharī (d. 538/1144)	أَطْوَاقُ الذَّهَبِ فِي الْمَوَاعِظِ وَ الْخُطَبِ
Al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1505)	اَللَّآلِي الْمَصْنُوعَةُ فِي الْأَحَادِيثِ الْمَوْضُوعَةِ
Abū ʿUbayd al-Bakrī (d. 487/1094)	سِمْطُ اللَّآلِي فِي شَرْحِ أَمَالِي الْقَالِي
Ibrāhīm al-Ḥalabī (d. 956/1549)	عِقْدُ الْمَرْجَانِ فِيمَا يَتَعَلَّقُ بِالْجَانِّ
Fatḥ ibn Khāqān al-Qaysī (d. 529/1135)	قَلَائِدُ الْعِقْيَانِ فِي مَحَاسِنِ الْأَعْيَانِ
Taqī al-Dīn Abū Bakr al-Jarrāʿī (d. 833/1478)	حِلْيَةُ الطِّرَازِ فِي حَلِّ الْأَلْغَازِ
Ibn Ḥabīb al-Ḥalabī (d. 779/1377)	دُرَّةُ الْأَسْلَاكِ فِي دَوْلَةِ الْأَتْرَاكِ
Lisān al-Dīn Ibn al-Khaṭīb (d. 776/ 1375)	رَقْمُ الْحُلَلِ فِي نَظْمِ الدُّوَلِ
Abū ʿAbd Allāh al-Mawwāq (d. 897/1492)	الْإِكْلِيلُ وَالتَّاجُ فِي تَذْيِيلِ كِفَايَةِ الْمُحْتَاجِ

the first group comprises numerous words, and on each occasion, the book title is finalized with striking puns in line with these terms or concepts as their adjective or determinatum.[10] Popular expressions with positive associations include happiness (سُرُور), joy (بَهْجَة/مَبَاهِج), compassion (أُنْس), well-being (قُرَّةُ الْعَيْن), joyful trip (نُزْهَة), gift (تُحْفَة), and curio (طُرْفَة). For example, a work about provisions related to obligatory alms (*zakāh*) of gold and silver is called نُزْهَةُ الْعَيْنَيْنِ فِي زَكَاةِ الْمَعْدِنَيْنِ,[11] whereby the author makes an elegant implication as to the efficacy and privilege of the pleasant reading of his book. The same applies for a work on sexual themes and pornography by Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Tīfāshī, named نُزْهَةُ الْأَلْبَابِ فِيمَا لَا يُوجَدُ فِي الْكِتَابِ. On the other hand, *al-Ḥubūr wa-l-surūr fī waṣf al-khumūr*, which was written by al-Nawājī (d. 859/1455) and was subject to severe criticism due to the vulgar love poetry and obscene materials in its content but was supported by art patronage and eventually became a highly demanded work, brings together the words pleasure/joy and drink in its title. When the denomination caused a reaction, the author, by elusion, had to change the name of his work to *Ḥalbat al-Kumayt*.

In addition, the concept of "beauty" comes to the forefront as another emotional term with positive connotations. Numerous concepts with roughly the same meaning, such as "beauty (حُسْن)," "the

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[10] Some examples include the following:

Kamāl al-Dīn al-Anbārī (d. 577/1181) — نُزْهَةُ الْأَلِبَّاءِ فِي طَبَقَاتِ الْأُدَبَاءِ

Yaḥyá ibn Ḥusayn al-Ṣanʿānī (d. 1099/1687) — بَهْجَةُ الزَّمَنِ فِي حَوَادِثِ الْيَمَنِ

Jamāl al-Dīn al-Waṭwaṭ (d. 718/1318) — مَبَاهِجُ الْفِكَرِ وَمَنَاهِجُ الْعِبَرِ

al-Tijānī (d. 718/1318) — تُحْفَةُ الْعَرُوسِ وَنُزْهَةُ النُّفُوسِ

al-Kāfiyajī (d. 879/1474) — اَلْفَرَحُ وَالسُّرُورُ فِي بَيَانِ الْمَذَاهِبِ الْأَرْبَعَةِ فِي الْعُصُورِ

Zayn al-Dīn al-ʿIrāqī (d. 806/1404) — قُرَّةُ الْعَيْنِ بِالْمَسَرَّةِ بِوَفَاءِ الدَّيْنِ

[11] Other examples include the following:

Al-Malik al-Ashraf al-Rasūlī (d. 696/1296) — اَلْمَلَاحَةُ فِي مَعْرِفَةِ الْفِلَاحَةِ

Al-Muṭahhar ibn Ṭāhir al-Maqdisī (d. 381/991) — أَحْسَنُ التَّقَاسِيمِ فِي مَعْرِفَةِ الْأَقَالِيمِ

Ibn Aranbughā al-Zardakāsh (d. 867/1463) — اَلْأَنِيقُ فِي الْمَنْجَنِيقِ

Zayn al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb (d.?) — مَحَاسِنُ الْمَسَاعِي فِي مَنَاقِبِ الْإِمَامِ أَبِي عَمْرٍو اَلْأَوْزَاعِيِّ

Ibn Ẓafar al-Ṣiqillī (d. 565/1170) — سُلْوَانُ الْمُطَاعِ فِي عُدْوَانِ الْأَتْبَاعِ

most beautiful (أَحْسَن),” “beauties (مَحَاسِن),” “comeliness (مَلَاحَة),” and “handsome (أَنِيق),” have been used to render more aesthetic hundreds of book titles. On the other hand, there are a significant number of consoling expressions, such as “سُلْوَة,” “سُلْوَان”.

“Water” as the source of abundance is another concept with positive connotations employed by Muslim authors in book titles. Nourished by teachings of the Islamic revelation that descended in the Hejaz Desert, Muslim nations attached particular importance to water in their civilizations as the main source of life. Indeed, a Qurʾān verse declared the universal rule that “water is the source of life.”[12] In addition, depictions of Heaven often pointed out rivers as the primary feature of paradise. One of the shortest sūrahs in the Qurʾān was named كَوْثَر, meaning “gushing water.” These and similar factors provided a pragmatic theme for Muslims to highlight the importance of their work since they longed for Adam’s wine in their desert region. Accordingly, it is not surprising to see in the titles of hundreds of Islamic classics terms such as wellspring (مَنْبَع) , waterfront (مَوْرِد plu. مَوَارِدُ), (مَنْهَل plu. مَنَاهِل), river (نَهْر plu. أَنْهُر/أَنْهَار), sea (بَحْر plu. بُحُور/بِحَار), ocean (مُحِيط), headspring (يَنْبُوع), fountain (صِهْرِيج), rain (قَطْر), downpour (وَابِل), or sip (نُغْبَة).[13] Particularly after the conquest of al-Andalus, Muslims came across new fauna and flora that paved the way for the conceptual enrichment of book titles in parallel with floral and hunting themes in the literature. Accordingly, such themes came to the forefront in the titles of works by Andalusian scholars.

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12 Q 21:30.

13 For examples, see

Ibn ʿAjībah (d. 1224/1829) — **اَلْبَحْرُ** الْمَدِيدُ فِي تَفْسِيرِ الْقُرْآنِ الْمَجِيدِ

Ibn ʿAllān (d. 1057/1648) — **مَوْرِدُ** الصَّفَا فِي مَوْلِدِ الْمُصْطَفَى

Shaykhzādah (d. 1078/1667) — مَجْمَعُ الْأَنْهُرِ شَرْحُ مُلْتَقَى الْأَبْحُرِ

Ibn al-Majdī (d. 827/1424) — **اَلْمَنْهَلُ** الْعَذْبُ الزُّلَال فِي تَقْوِيمِ الْكَوَاكِبِ وَرُؤْيَةِ الْهِلَالِ

Al-Haythamī (d. 807/1405) — **مَوَارِدُ** الظَّمْآنِ إِلَى زَوَائِدِ ابْنِ حِبَّان

Al-Bulqīnī (d. 805/1403) — **قَطْرُ** السَّيْلِ فِي أَمْرِ الْخَيْلِ

Al-Fīrūzābādī (d. 817/1415) — **نُغْبَةُ** الرَّشَّافِ مِنْ خُطْبَةِ الْكَشَّافِ

Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (d. 751/1350) — **اَلْوَابِلُ** الصَّيِّبُ مِنَ الْكَلِمِ الطَّيِّبِ

Kamāl al-Dīn al-Khwārazmī (d. 836/1453) — **يَنْبُوعُ** الْأَسْرَارِ فِي نَصَايِحِ الْأَبْرَارِ

Evidently, Muslim authors, who decorated book titles with varying amounts and forms of water, were also interested in secondary concepts associated with it. Consequently, the titles of countless works include natural and pastoral concepts from Arabian and European flora.[14] One of the most common natural themes is the "garden" and its derivatives, such as "حَدِيقَة plu. حَدَائِق," "رَوْضَة plu. رِيَاض/رَوْض" "بُسْتَان plu. بَسَاتِين," "جَنَّة plu. جِنَان," and "أَيْكَة plu. أَيْك."[15]

In addition, terms related to a flower (زَهْرَة plu. زَهْر/زُهُور/أَزْهَار), fruit (ثَمَرَة plu. ثِمَار/أَثْمَار/ثَمَر), (فَاكِهَة plu. فَوَاكِه) and, in particular, directly or indirectly related to "scent" (نَفْح plu. نَفَحَات), (فَائِحَة plu. فَوَائِح), (عَرْف), amber (عَنْبَر), fragrant (مِعْطَار), spring (رَبِيع), and breeze (نَسَمَات) were also in use because they were *sine qua non* elements of the same theme.[16]

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[14] Gustave E. von Grunebaum conducts a comprehensive examination of prose examples reflecting the admiration among medieval Muslim intellectuals of nature in his paper called "The Response to Nature in Arabic Poetry." See *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 4, no. 3 (1945), 137-151, https://doi.org/10.1086/370750.

[15] For examples, see

ʿUmar ibn Khalaf al-Ṣiqillī (d. 501/1107) — **تَثْقِيفُ** اللِّسَانِ وَتَلْقِيحُ الْجِنَانِ

Al-Shahrazūrī (d. 687/1288) — **رَوْضَةُ** الْأَفْرَاحِ وَنُزْهَةُ الْأَرْوَاحِ

ʿAbd al-Bāsiṭ al-Malaṭī (d. 561/1166) — **اَلرَّوْضُ** الْبَاسِمُ فِي حَوَادِثِ الْعُمْرِ وَالنَّرَاجِمِ

Al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1505) — **اَلرَّوْضُ** الْأَنِيقُ فِي فَضْلِ الصِّدِّيقِ

Al-Malībārī (d. 991/1583) — **اَلرَّوْضُ** الْفَائِقُ فِي الْمَوَاعِظِ وَالرَّقَائِقِ

ʿAlī ibn Muḥammad al-Khāzin (d. 741/1341) — **اَلرَّوْضُ** وَالْحَدَائِقُ فِي سِيرَةِ خَيْرِ الْخَلَائِقِ

Al-Suyūṭī — نَوَادِرُ الْأَيْكِ فِي مَعْرِفَةِ النَّيْكِ

[16] For some examples, see

Abū Isḥāq al-Ḥuṣrī (d. 413/1022) — **زَهْرُ** الْآدَابِ وَثَمَرُ الْأَلْبَابِ

Al-Qasṭallānī (d. 923/1517) — **زَهْرُ** الرِّيَاضِ وَشِفَاءُ الْقُلُوبِ الْمِرَاضِ

Ibn Sammāk al-ʿĀmilī (8th century AH) — **اَلزَّهْرَةُ** الْمَنْثُورَةُ فِي نُكَتِ الْأَخْبَارِ الْمَأْثُورَةِ

Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Tīfāshī — **أَزْهَارُ** الْأَفْكَارِ فِي جَوَاهِرِ الْأَحْجَارِ

Al-Suyūṭī — **اَلْأَزْهَارُ** الْفَائِحَةُ عَلَى الْفَاتِحَةِ

Shihāb al-Dīn al-Khafājī (d. 1069/1659) — **رَيْحَانَةُ** الْأَلِبَّاءِ وَزَهْرَةُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا

Aḥmad al-Maqqarī (d. 1041/1632) — **نَفْحُ** الطِّيبِ مِنْ غُصْنِ الْأَنْدَلُسِ الرَّطِيبِ

The concepts of "brightness and light" represented truth, justice, faith, and wisdom against "darkness," which symbolized untruth, persecution, blasphemy, and ignorance. Accordingly, these concepts became attractive elements for Muslim scholars who bore the responsibility of a mission to appropriate the communication of justice and truth. Consequently, book titles frequently applied terms that evoke the meaning of brightness and radiance. In this regard, terms such as "نُور plu. أَنْوَار," "ضَوْء plu. أَضْوَاء," "لُمْعَة plu. لُمَع," "جِلَاء," as well as the expression "تَـنْوِير," which means the illumination of darkness, are used in the titles of books not only with Sufi content but also in almost any discipline.[17]

Some expressions such as "فَجْر," "شُـرُوق," "صُبْح," and "بُـزُوغ," which mark the beginning of the day or daylight, or even different time spans in proportion to brightness seem functional. For instance, when al-Qalqashandī (d. 821/1418) named his famous work on essential themes of literary composition, he likened the followers of this path to a person who walks in twilight and therefore cannot see well, and expressed the contribution of his work for such a person as follows: صُبْحُ الْأَعْشَى فِي صِنَاعَةِ الْإِنْشَاءِ.

ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad al-Bisṭāmī al-Ḥurūfī (d. 858/1454) — **اَلْفَوَائِحُ الْمِسْكِيَّةُ فِي الْفَوَاتِحِ الْمَكِّيَّةِ**

Al-Suyūṭī — **اَلنَّخْلَةُ الزَّكِيَّةُ فِي الرِّحْلَةِ الْمَكِّيَّةِ**

ʿAlī al-Ṭabarī (d. 1070/1660) — **اَلْأَرَجُ الْمِسْكِيُّ فِي التَّارِيخِ الْمَكِّيِّ**

Ibn ʿAbd al-Munʿim al-Ḥimyarī (d. 727/1327) — **اَلرَّوْضُ الْمِعْطَارُ فِي خبَرِ الْأَقْطَارِ**

Al-Zamakhsharī (d. 538/1144) — **رَبِيعُ الْأَبْرَارِ وَنُصُوصُ الْأَخْبَارِ**

[17] Some examples include

Al-Yaghmūrī (d. 673/1274) — **نُورُ الْقَبَسِ اَلْمُخْتَصَرُ مِنَ الْمُقْتَبَسِ**

Al-Dimnātī (d. 1306/1889) — **نُورُ مِصْبَاحِ الزُّجَاجَةِ عَلَى سُنَنِ ابْنِ مَاجَةَ**

Shihāb al-Dīn al-Qarāfī (d. 684/1285) — **أَنْوَارُ الْبُرُوقِ فِي أَنْوَاعِ الْفُرُوقِ**

Al-Sakhāwī (d. 902/1497) — **اَلضَّوْءُ اللَّامِعُ لِأَهْلِ الْقَرْنِ التَّاسِعِ**

Al-Juwaynī (d. 478/1085) — **لُمَعُ الْأدلة فِي قواعد أهل السنة**

Abū l-Ḥasan al-Ashʿarī (d. 324/936) — **اَللُّمَعُ فِي الرَّدِّ عَلَى أَهْلِ الزَّيْـغِ وَ الْبِدَعِ**

Ḥākim al-Jishumī (d. 494/1101) — **جِلَاءُ الْأَبْصَارِ فِي مُتُونِ الْأَخْبَارِ**

Al-Suyūṭī — **تَنْوِيرُ الْحَوَالِكِ شَرْحُ مُوَطَّأِ مَالِكٍ**

Many astronomical terms made an appearance in book titles, particularly sun (شَمْس) as the most powerful light source, moon (قَمَر), full moon (بَدْر plu. بُدُور), star (نَجْم plu. نُجُوم or دُرِّيٌّ plu. دَرَارِيّ), meteor (شِهَاب plu. شُهُب), or the place where the sun or moon rises (مَطْلَع plu. مَطَالِع).[18]

In addition, book titles comprised manmade instruments of illumination such as lamp (مِصْبَاح plu. مَصَابِيح) or lampion (قِنْدِيل/ مِشْكَاة). For instance, the work by the famous Sufi ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (d. 561/1166) on the holiness of Prophet Muḥammad's ascension to heaven is named اَلسِّرَاجُ الْوَهَّاجُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْمِعْرَاجِ.

In addition to the foregoing, a few concepts likely to arouse interest among disciples have served as a key in the creation of book titles. These expressions include the following terms with the same meter or pattern: "بُغْيَة" and "مُنْيَة" mean what is sought and desired by students of Islamic sciences; "غُنْيَة" means what requires nothing further; and "بُلْغَة" means the very simple thing needed for life. In addition, book titles include expressions such as "نِهَايَة," "مُنْتَهَى," and "غَايَة," which refer to a certain goal and the summit to be attained. For instance, the versatile medieval Muslim scholar and physician Ibn al-Akfānī (d. 749/1348) named his work on preventive medicine غُنْيَةُ اللَّبِيبِ عِنْدَ غَيْبَةِ الطَّبِيبِ (*Rich Information for Intelligent Men in the Absence of Physicians*). Likewise, Quṭb al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī (d. 730/1330) claimed that his work signified the peak of astronomy at the time and accordingly named it نِهَايَةُ الْإِدْرَاكِ فِي دِرَايَةِ الْأَفْلَاكِ

Some book titles, in turn, allowed for an assertive and even arrogant discourse by an author who claimed that the information therein was the ultimate knowledge attainable in the respective branch or discipline. Such titles include نِهَايَةُ الْإِقْدَام فِي عِلْمِ الْكَلَام (*The*

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[18] See, for example,

ʿAbd al-raḥmān ibn Muḥammad al-Bisṭāmī	شَمْسُ الْآفَاقِ فِي عِلْمِ الْحُرُوفِ وَ الْأَوْفَاقِ
Jalāl al-Dīn al-Maḥallī (d. 864/1459)	اَلْبَدْرُ الطَّالِعُ فِي حَلِّ جَمْعِ الْجَوَامِعِ
Al-Suyūṭī	اَلْبُدُورُ السَّافِرَةُ فِي أُمُورِ الْآخِرَةِ
Ibn Jamāʿah (d. 819/1416)	اَلْكَوْكَبُ الْوَقَّادُ فِي شَرْحِ الْاِعْتِقَادِ
Ibn al-Wardī (d. 749/1349)	اَلْكَوَاكِبُ السَّارِيَةُ فِي مِائَةِ جَارِيَةٍ
Alāʾ al-Dīn al-Ghazūlī (d. 815/1412)	مَطَالِعُ الْبُدُور وَمَنَازِلُ السُّرُور
Ibn al-ʿAdīm al-Ḥalabī (d. 660/1262)	اَلدَّرَارِيُّ فِي ذِكْرِ الذَّرَارِيِّ

End of Steps in the Science of Theology) by the famous religious historian al-Shahrastānī (d. 548/1153) and نِهَايَةُ الْأَرَبِ فِي فُنُونِ الْأَدَبِ (*The Ultimate Ambition in the Arts of Erudition*), the 31-volume encyclopedia by the famous Mamluk historian al-Nuwayrī (d. 733/1333).[19]

Likewise, authors often employed terms such as "اَلْكَافِي," "اَلْوَافِي," and "كِفَايَة" to point out the sufficiency of a work in its respective discipline without the need for any other book:

Ibn al-Ajdābī (d. 470/1077) كِفَايَةُ الْمُتَحَفِّظِ وَنِهَايَةُ الْمُتَلَفِّظِ.

In some books, the titles consist of terms such as "stair" (سُلَّم), (مِرْقَاة), (مِعْرَاج) and "step(s)" (دَرَجَات), which signify the spiritual paths (مَسْلَك plu. مَسَالِك) to be taken by means of relevant work. Thus, the work is introduced to the reader as a means of attaining a distant or high objective. For example, the famous work by Ibn Hishām al-Naḥwī (d. 672/1274) is named as below:

أَوْضَحُ الْمَسَالِكِ إِلَى أَلْفِيَّةِ ابْنِ مَالِكٍ.

Such works are also considered a pathfinder, guide, assistant, savior, source of right guidance, or evidence, and they are named accordingly.[20] For instance, pursuant to his objective of spiritual

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[19] Some relevant examples include

Sayf al-Dīn al-Āmidī (d. 631/1233)	غَايَةُ الْمَرَامِ فِي عِلْمِ الْكَلَامِ
Kamāl al-Dīn al-Damīrī (d. 808/1405)	غَايَةُ الْأَرَبِ فِي كَلَامِ حُكَمَاءِ الْعَرَبِ
Sayf al-Dīn al-Āmidī	مُنْتَهَى الْوُصُولِ فِي عِلْمِ الْأُصُولِ
Al-Jammāʾīlī (d. 600/1203)	نِهَايَةُ الْمُرَادِ مِنْ كَلَامِ خَيْرِ الْعِبَادِ
Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 606/1210)	نِهَايَةُ الْإِيجَازِ فِي دِرَايَةِ الْإِعْجَازِ
Al-Ḍabbī (599/1203)	بُغْيَةُ الْمُلْتَمِسِ فِي تَارِيخِ رِجَالِ أَهْلِ الْأَنْدَلُسِ
Ibn al-ʿAdīm (660/1262)	بُغْيَةُ الطَّلَبِ فِي تَارِيخِ حَلَبَ
Abū l-Ḥasan al-Qalṣādī (d. 891/1486)	بُغْيَةُ الْمُبْتَدِي وَ غُنْيَةُ الْمُنْتَهِي
al-Maydānī (518/1124)	مُنْيَةُ الرَّاضِي بِرَسَائِلِ الْقَاضِي

[20] Some examples include

Al-Juwaynī (d. 478/1085)	مُغِيثُ الْحَقِّ فِي اخْتِيَارِ الْأَحَقِّ
Ṭāshkubrīzādah (d. 968/1561)	مِفْتَاحُ السَّعَادَةِ وَ مِصْبَاحُ السِّيَادَةِ
Ibn al-Mibrad (d. 909/1503)	اَلْهَادِي إِلَى تَرْجُمَةِ يُوسُفَ بْنِ عَبْدِ الْهَادِي

guidance for the reader, Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (d. 751/1350) named his work as follows:

هَادِي الْأَرْوَاحِ إِلَى بِلَادِ الْأَفْرَاحِ.

Some book titles benefit from other practical similes. In this context, some works are introduced as a kind of indispensable spiritual nourishment (غِذَاء) or sustenance (قُوت), (زَاد). For example, Ibn al-Jazzār (d. 369/979), the famous 4th-century pharmacist and physician, named his work, which was translated into Latin in a relatively earlier period thanks to its fame in the Muslim world,[21] through an assimilation of indispensable practical knowledge in his book to the sustenance of travel or sustenance زَادُ الْمُسَافِرِ وَقُوتُ الْحَاضِرِ. In addition, a ḥadīth commentary by al-Suyūṭī attained successful harmony between the relevant theme and the name of the author: قُوتُ الْمُغْتَذِي عَلَى صَحِيحِ التِّرْمِذِي.

A group of book titles claim that truths unknown to most are explored by the author. Indeed, such titles may ensure interest in a certain work among readers. Presumably, the following title stimulates remarkable motivation for those who want to know more about the views of Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah about the whirling ritual and music:[22]

كَشْفُ الْغِطَاءِ عَنْ حُكْمِ سَمَاعِ الْغِنَاءِ

(Unveiling of the Rules on Listening Songs)

We may note the use of expressions with sexual content in book titles. They mostly echo the male perspective and reflect lust, including examples such as houri(s) (حُور), bride (عَرُوس plu. عَرَائِس), and virgin (بِكْر plu. أَبْكَار). For instance, Ibn al-Dalāʾī (d. 478/1085) compiled some ḥadīths that constituted the basis for jurisprudent

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al-Yumn al-ʿUlaymī (d. 928/1522) اَلْمَنْهَجُ الْأَحْمَدُ فِي تَرَاجِمِ أَصْحَابِ الْإِمَامِ أَحْمَدَ

21 Khayr al-Dīn al-Ziriklī, *al-Aʿlām: Qāmūs tarājim li-ashhar al-rijāl wa-l-nisāʾ min al-ʿArab wa-l-mustaʿrabīn wa-l-mustashriqīn*, 15th ed. (Beirut: Dār al-ʿIlm li-l-Malāyīn, 2002), I, 85.

22 Other examples include

Al-Shaʿrānī (d. 973/1565) **كَشْفُ** الْغُمَّةِ عَنِ جَمِيعِ الْأُمَّةِ

Abū l-Hasan al-Qalṣādī (d. 891/1486) **كَشْفُ** الْجِلْبَابِ عَنْ عِلْمِ الْحِسَابِ

provisions as early as the lifetime of Prophet Muḥammad and named his compilation as follows, hinting that it was the first of its kind:

اِفْتِضَاضُ أَبْكَارِ أَوَائِلُ الْأَخْبَارِ

(Defloration of Virgins, The Firsts of Narrations)

The prolific 15th-century author al-Suyūṭī crowned the title of his annotation about *Anwār al-tanzīl*, the renowned tafsīr by al-Bayḍāwī, with a name pleasing to male lust:

نَوَاهِدُ الْأَبْكَارِ وَ شَوَارِدُ الْأَفْكَارِ

(Virgins with Recently Blossomed Nipples [and] Overlooked Ideas)

In fact, we encounter elements with sexual connotations in a semi-humorous context in the titles of **اَلْمُسْتَطْرَفَةُ فِي أَحْكَامِ دُخُولِ الْحَشَفَةِ** and some other works by al-Suyūṭī.[23]

Another smart move by Muslim intellectuals to enhance the popularity of a work was to refer to Qurʾānic terminology, making use of its profound influence on the spiritual world of readers.[24] Accordingly, many classical and modern works skillfully incorporated certain concepts from holy scripture in their titles. For instance, the name chosen by the Arab linguist al-Muḥibbī (d. 1111/1699) for his work about duals is inspired by the Qurʾān: **جَنَى الْجَنَّتَيْنِ فِي نَوْعَيِ الْمُثَنَّيَيْنِ**.

In a similar manner, ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAlī Ibn al-Wazīr al-Ṣanʿānī (d. 1147/1735) employs a clause completely identified with the Qurʾān in his work about a certain period in the history of Yemen: **طَبَقُ الْحَلْوَى وَصِحَافُ الْمَنِّ وَالسَّلْوَى**.

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[23] Other examples include

Al-Thaʿlabī (d. 427/1035)	عَرَائِسُ الْمَجَالِسِ
Shams al-Dīn al-Āmulī (d. 753/1352)	نَفَائِسُ الْفُنُونِ فِي عَرَائِسِ الْعُيُونِ
Al-Dawwānī (d. 908/1502)	شَوَاكِلُ الْحُورِ فِي شَرْحِ هَيَاكِلِ النُّورِ
Qāḍī Burhān al-Dīn (d. 870/1466)	عُقُودُ الْأَبْكَارِ مِنْ بَنَاتِ الْأَفْكَارِ

[24] Von Grunebaum gives a comprehensive evaluation of the stimulating influence of Islamic religious motives on literature in general and on poetry in particular. See "The Spirit of Islam as Shown in Its Literature," *Studia Islamica* 1 (1953), 101-119, https://doi.org/10.2307/1595011.

Finally, it is worth noting that the thematic restriction, self-imposed by authors in naming their works, as seen in the foregoing examples, has occasionally led to certain confusions. Authors from different periods or different disciplines have sometimes chosen very similar and even identical names for their respective works. For instance, the same name is shared by a work of the 5th-century author Kamāl al-Dīn al-Anbārī (d. 577/1181) on grammar and a book by the 11th-century author Abū l-Qāsim al-Samarqandī (d. after 888/1483) on metaphor as a term of rhetoric: فَرَائِدُ الْفَوَائِدِ. Likewise, the paths of Ḥasan ibn Bishr al-Āmidī (d. 371/ 981) and al-Dāraquṭnī (d. 385/995) intersect in the names of their works: اَلْمُؤْتَلِفُ وَالْمُخْتَلِفُ

Most likely because of this defect, authors added distinctive expressions to the similar beginning of titles. An example can be seen below, showing one classical and one modern work:

Al-Maqqarī (d. 759/1358)	نَفْحُ الطِّيبِ مِنْ غُصْنِ الْأَنْدَلُسِ الرَّطِيبِ
Maʿrūf al-Ruṣāfī (1875-1945)	نَفْحُ الطِّيبِ فِي الْخَطَابَةِ وَ الْخَطِيبِ

Therefore, the mere mention of book titles may not be sufficient in academic references; the name of the author should also be indicated on some occasions to prevent confusion.

IV. Strong Language of Refutations or Military Terminology in Book Titles

The severity of criticisms within the content of a work is successfully reflected by their authors in book titles inspired by a rhetoric peculiar to military language. In this respect, book titles have, in a sense, served as a platform of defiance and the settling of accounts between authors from different madhhabs and backgrounds in public. The titles of many classical works are, so to speak, an area where scientific authorities square accounts with one another or seek prestige. The title of a work by al-Suyūṭī in response to criticisms against Abū Ḥanīfah (d. 150/767) by the famous historian and ḥadīth scholar al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī (d. 463/1071) is a clear example of such a denomination: اَلسَّهْمُ الْمُصِيبُ فِي نَحْرِ الْخَطِيبِ (*Arrow Aiming at Chest of al-Khaṭīb [al-Baghdādī]).* Likewise, the Ḥanafī jurist Ibn al-Dayrī (d. 867/1463) aims at the chest of apostates in the title of his work: اَلسِّهَامُ الْمَارِقَةُ فِي كَبِدِ الزَّنَادِقَةِ (*Outlaw Arrows Stuck in the Heart of Apostates*).

In addition to "arrow," "sword" is another much-referenced military weapon, including all its types and qualities. For instance, Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728/1328) gives the following name essentially about "punishment for insulting Allah, prophets, and companions" but also punishment for disunion, blasphemy, the violation of agreements by dhimmīs, apostasy, profaneness, and banditry: اَلصَّارِمُ الْمَسْلُولُ عَلَى شَاتِمِ الرَّسُولِ (*Unsheathed Sharp Sword against Insulters of Prophet*). In a similar manner, the biographer Taqī al-Dīn ibn ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Tamīmī (d. 1010/1601) named his work (which is no longer available) about his scapegrace son Ḥasan as اَلسَّيْفُ الْبَرَّاقُ فِي عُنُقِ الْوَلَدِ الْعَاقِّ (*Shiny Sword on the Neck of Rebel Son*), implying his rage and fury. Quṭb al-Dīn al-Bakrī (d. 1162/1749), a relatively later author, named his work in a similar way: اَلسُّيُوفُ الْحِدَادُ فِي الرَّدِّ عَلَى أَهْلِ الزَّنْدَقَةِ وَالْإِلْحَادِ (*Sharp Swords in Response to Apostates*). In another later work, Ibn ʿUsfūr al-Baḥrānī (d. 1186/1772) writes a refutation by hinting at the title of *Sharḥ Nahj al-balāghah* of Ibn Abī l-Ḥadīd (d. 656/1258) and calls it سَلَاسِلُ الْحَدِيدِ فِي تَقْيِيدِ ابْنِ أَبِي الْحَدِيدِ (*Putting Ibn Abī l-Ḥadīd in Iron Chains)*, to which Muḥammad Amīn al-Suwaydī (d. 1246/1831) replies in a similar style: اَلصَّارِمُ الْحَدِيدُ فِي عُنُقِ صَاحِبِ سَلَاسِلُ الْحَدِيدِ (*Iron Sword Hanging on the Neck of the Author of "Iron Chains"*).

The terminology becomes even harsher, employing natural elements instead of military tools in times of heated rivalry between faiths, ideas, or madhhabs. For instance, Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī (d. 974/ 1567) puts his foe to "burning thunderbolts" in the title اَلصَّوَاعِقُ الْمُحْرِقَةُ عَلَى أَهْلِ الرَّفْضِ وَالزَّنْدَقَةِ (*Thunderbolts Burning Refusers and Profanes*). In refutation of al-Haytamī's work, Amīn al-Ḥulwānī (d. 1316/1898) tries to neutralize this attack by means of treacherous waters: اَلسُّيُولُ الْمُغْرِقَةُ عَلَى الصَّوَاعِقِ الْمُحْرِقَةِ (*Floods to Drown Burning Thunderbolts*). In modern times, a work for the refutation of Riḍā Khān Biralwī (d. 1921) makes the respondent an aim of burning meteors:. اَلشِّهَابُ الثَّاقِبُ عَلَى الْمُسْتَرِقِ الْكَاذِبِ

In some titles, interest is aroused through partially humorous touches. For instance, when Ibn Diḥyah al-Kalbī (d. 633/1235) wrote اَلصَّارِمُ الْهِنْدِيُّ فِي الرَّدِّ عَلَى الْكِنْدِيِّ in criticism of Abū l-Yumn al-Kindī (d. 613/1217), he received a humiliating rejection in return:

نَتْفُ اللِّحْيَةِ مِنِ ابْنِ دِحْيَةَ (*Tearing the Hair of Ibn Diḥyah*)

A similar approach is observed in the famous tract by Ibn al-Muraḥḥal (d. 699/1300), the poet and man of letters from Malaga, in

response to criticisms against him: اَلرَّمْيُ بِالْحَصَى وَالضَّرْبُ بِالْعَصَا *(With Stones and Sticks)*.

In his work in response to allegations by a scholar who was a Muslim before converting to Christianity, al-Māzarī (d. 536/1141) adopts humor as well as explicit defamation and violence: قَطْعُ لِسَانِ النَّابِحِ فِي الْمُتَرْجَمِ بِالْوَاضِحِ (*To Tear off the Tongue of Who Barks in Response to Eloquence*).

Evidently, such defiance in book titles not only consolidated the respective community or fanatical followers of authors but also established a strong motivation to attract curious intellectual minds.

In addition to military terminology, critical or refutation works employed some libelous expressions that may damage the pride of readers as well as those with elements of violence. The two following examples, each written in defense of Muḥyī al-Dīn Ibn al-ʿArabī (d. 638/1240), may clarify our point:

Al-Suyūṭī	تَنْبِيهُ الْغَبِيِّ فِي تَبْرِئَةِ ابْنِ الْعَرَبِيِّ
Al-Biqāʿī (d. 885/1480)	تَنْبِيهُ الْغَبِيِّ عَلَى تَكْفِيرِ ابْنِ الْعَرَبِيِّ

V. Techniques

There are certain criticisms and allegations that early Muslim intellectuals were interested in form rather than content and that therefore ornate prose and the *sajʿ* style are insufficient for the appropriate expression of the meaning. However, the objective of this paper is not to respond to such allegations or to show the evolution of the Arab style depending on eras. Instead, in this chapter, we will dwell upon positive examples of the extent to which certain book titles reflect the content. Indeed, Muslim authors have displayed extraordinary attention in determining the title of a work and have yielded appropriate book titles neither more nor less than required despite limitations due to *sajʿ* and alliteration techniques. For instance, an explanatory tract about the nuance between bribery and a gift includes outright "clarity" in rhetorical terms: تَحْقِيقُ الْقَضِيَّةِ فِي الْفَرْقِ بَيْنَ الرِّشْوةِ وَ الْهَدِيَّةْ

A similar situation is observable in the laconic title of the sorrowful work by al-Maqrīzī (d. 845/1442) on scarcity and famine in Egypt until his lifetime: إِغَاثَةُ الْأُمَّةِ بِكَشْفِ الْغُمَّةِ. Finally, the title of a book by the 18th-century Azhar shaykh al-Damanhūrī (d. 1192/1778) about

hemorrhoids involves explicit clarity: اَلْكَلَامُ الْيَسِيرُ فِي عِلَاجِ الْمَقْعَدَةِ وَالْبَوَاسِيرِ.

The following section of our study identifies certain techniques used in book titles that we find interesting in terms of form and theme. We provide relevant explanations after classifying them under certain categories.

A. Rhymed Book Titles of Two, Four, or Six Words

Muslim authors apparently did not exclude aesthetic elements such as meter, pun, and *sajʿ* even in the formation of remarkably short titles that consist of two words. Indeed, hundreds of classical works are designed in a very concise manner since this style ensures significant advantages in pronunciation and memorability.

Some of the two-word book titles with *sajʿ* are possessive constructions. One of the earliest examples is أَحَاسِنُ الْمَحَاسِنِ by Abū Isḥāq Ibrāhīm al-Ḥanbalī (d. 203/647). Furthermore, أَبْكَارُ الْأَفْكَارِ by Sayf al-Dīn al-Āmidī and عَوَارِفُ الْمَعَارِفِ by al-Suhrawardī consist of two plural words with the same meter, whereas بِدَايَةُ الْهِدَايَةِ by Kamāl al-Dīn al-Anbārī and تَحْرِيرُ التَّحْبِيرِ by Ibn Abī l-Iṣbaʿ (d. 654/1256) consist of two singular concepts with the same meter.[25]

Some of the two-word titles are in conjunctive form and connected to one another with the letter **و**. Plural examples with the same meter

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[25] For other examples, see

Sayf al-Dīn al-Dihlawī (d. 1052/1642)	أَخْبَارُ الْأَخْيَارِ
Ibn Abī l-Shukr (d. 682/1283)	أَدْوَارُ الْأَنْوَارِ
ʿAlī ibn Ẓāfir (d. 613/1216)	بَدَائِعُ الْبَدَائِهِ
Salāḥ al-Dīn Khalīl al-Ṣafadī (d. 764/1363)	جِنَانُ الْجِنَاسِ
Sayf al-Dīn al-Āmidī	حَدَائِقُ الدَّقَائِقِ
Sayf al-Dīn al-Āmidī	رُمُوزُ الْكُنُوزِ
Taqī al-Dīn al-Maqrīzī	سُلُوكُ الْمُلُوك
Kamāl al-Dīn al-Anbārī	فَرَائِدُ الْفَوَائِدِ
Al-Asʿad ibn Mammātī (d. 606/1209)	قَوَانِينُ الدَّوَاوِينِ
Fakhr al-Dīn ʿAlī Ṣāfī (d. 939/1532-33)	لَطَائِفُ الطَّوَائِفِ
ʿAlī ibn Muḥammad al-Khāzin	مَقْبُولُ الْمَنْقُولِ
Athīr al-Dīn al-Abharī (d. 663/1265)	مَرَاصِدُ الْمَقَاصِدِ

include اَلتَّوَابِعُ وَالزَّوَابِعُ by al-Jāḥiẓ and اَلْهَوَامِلُ وَالشَّوَامِلُ by Abū Ḥayyān al-Tawḥīdī (d. 414/1023), whereas singular examples with the same meter include اَلْإِيجَازُ وَالْإِعْجَازُ by Abū Manṣūr al-Thaʿālibī (d. 429/1038) and اَلْبِدَايَةُ وَالنِّهَايَةُ by Ibn Kathīr (d. 774/1373).[26]

In addition to the two foregoing categories, there are rhymed book titles of two words with prepositions. Pursuant to our examination, this preposition may sometimes be **فِي**, as in اَلْإِقْتِصَادُ فِي الْاِعْتِقَادِ by al-Ghazālī, **عَلَى**, as in اَلْأَمَدُ عَلَى الْأَبَدِ by Abū l-Ḥasan al-ʿĀmirī (d. 381/992), or even **مِنْ** as in اَلْعَوَاصِمُ مِنَ الْقَوَاصِمِ by Abū Bakr Ibn al-ʿArabī (d. 543/1148).[27]

In punned noun phrases that consist of four words and are connected to one another with a conjunction, the determinatum is associated with the determinatum and the determinant is associated with determinant; in addition, there is an effort to establish a parallelism based on phonetic assimilation between equivalents in regard to adjective clauses. For better comprehension of the relation between words, we highlight the relation between elements in the first example below:

Ibn Abī l-Khiṣāl (d. 540/1146) — **لَوْعَةُ الشَّاكِي وَ دَمْعَةُ الْبَاكِي**

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[26] For other examples, see

Ḥamzah ibn ʿAlī (d. 411/1012)	اَلْإِعْذَارُ وَ الْإِنْذَارُ
Muḥammad al-Tamīmī al-Dārimī (d. 378/989)	اَلتُّحَفُ وَ الظُّرَفُ
Abū Ḥayyān al-Tawḥīdī	اَلْبَصَائِرُ وَ الذَّخَائِرُ
Al-Suyūṭī	اَلْمُحَاضَرَاتُ وَ الْمُحَاوَرَاتُ
Al-Shahīd al-awwal (d. 786/1384)	اَلْقَوَائِدُ وَ الْفَوَائِدِ

[27] Also see the following examples:

Najm al-Dīn al-Ṭarsūsī (d. 758/1357)	اَلزَّوَائِدُ عَلَى الْفَوَائِدِ
Al-Suyūṭī	اَلْأَرَجُ فِي الْفَرَجِ
Ibn Fāris (d. 395/1004)	اَلْإِلْمَاعُ فِي الْإِتْبَاعِ
Qāsim al-Nuwayrī (d. 733/1333)	اَلْإِلْمَامُ بِالْأَعْلَامِ
ʿUmar ibn Badr al-Mawṣilī (d. 622/1225)	اَلْوُقُوفُ عَلَى الْمَوْقُوفِ
Badr al-Dīn al-Ghazzī (d. 984/1577)	اَلْمُرَاحُ فِي الْمُزَاحِ
Al-Suyūṭī	اَلْمُنَى فِي الْكُنَى
Abū Manṣūr al-Thaʿālibī	اَلنِّهَايَةُ فِي الْكِنَايَةِ

Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Khalīl al-Ṣafadī (d. 764/1363)	أَعْيَانُ الْعَصْرِ وَ أَعْوَانُ النَّصْرِ
Ibn Abī l-Khiṣāl al-Ghāfiqī (d. 540/1146)	خَطْفُ الْبَارِقِ وَ قَذْفُ الْمَارِقِ
Taqī al-Dīn Ibn Fahd (d. 871/1476)	عُمْدَةُ الْمُنْتَحِلِ وَ بُلْغَةُ الْمُرْتَحِلِ
Ismāʿīl ibn Ibrāhīm al-Mārdīnī (d.629/1232)	نِصَابُ الْحَبْرِ فِي حِسَابِ الْجَبْرِ
Abū Manṣūr al-Thaʿālibī	سِحْرُ الْبَلَاغَةِ وَ سِرُّ الْبَرَاعَةِ
Zakariyyā al-Qazwīnī (d. 682/ 1283)	مُفِيدُ الْعُلُومِ وَ مُبِيدُ الْهُمُومِ
Ibn al-Naqīb (d. 769/ 1368)	عُمْدَةُ السَّالِكِ وَ عُدَّةُ النَّاسِكِ
Raḍī al-Dīn Ibn al-Ḥanbalī (d. 971/1563)	عُدَّةُ الْحَاسِبِ وَ عُمْدَةُ الْمُحَاسِبِ
Al-Nawājī	رَوْضَةُ الْمُجَالَسَةِ وَ غَيْضَةُ الْمُجَانَسَةِ
Ibn al-Azraq al-Gharnāṭī (d. 896/1491)	بَدَائِعُ السِّلْكِ فِي طَبَائِعِ الْمُلْكِ
Shihāb al-Dīn al-Qarāfī	اَلْأَجْوِبَةُ الْفَاخِرَةُ عَنِ الْأَسْئِلَةِ الْفَاجِرَةِ
Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī (d. 771/1370)	مَنْعُ الْمَوَانِعِ عَنْ جَمْعِ الْجَوَامِعِ

Punned book titles of six words literally recall an equation. The title is divided in two in the middle by means of a conjunction, leaving three words on each side in a symmetrical manner. Some examples are as follows:

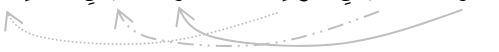
al-Nahrawānī (d. 387/ 997)	اَلْجَلِيسُ الصَّالِحُ الْكَافِي وَ الْأَنِيسُ النَّاصِحُ الشَّافِي
Ibn Hudhayl al-Fazārī al-Andalusī (8th century AH/14th century AD)	عَيْنُ الْأَدَبِ وَالسِّيَاسَةِ وَ زَيْنُ الْحَسَبِ وَالرِّيَاسَةِ
Ibn Hudhayl al-Fazārī	كِيمْيَاءُ السَّعَادَةِ الرَّبَّانِيَّةِ وَ سِيمْيَاءُ السِّيَادَةِ الرُّوحَانِيَّةِ

In both prose and verse, the most superior implementation of the art of *muqābalah* (comparison and collation) is to create a harmony in contradiction between more than two opposites.[28] Muslim authors have yielded the most meticulous examples of this craft and created phrases that establish reciprocal relations between opposite elements

[28] Abū ʿAlī al-Ḥasan ibn Rashīq al-Azdī al-Qayrawānī, *al-ʿUmdah fī mahāsin al-shiʿr wa-ādābihī wa-naqdihī*, ed. Muḥammad Muḥyī al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, 5th ed. (Beirut: Dār al-Jīl, 1981), II, 15.

in book titles of both four and six terms, as seen in the following examples:

ʿAzīz Maḥmūd Hudāʾī (d. 1038/1628)	جَامِعُ الْفَضَائِلِ وَ قَامِعُ الرَّذَائِلِ
Al-Qarabāghī (d. 942/1535)	جَالِبُ السُّرُورِ وَ سَالِبُ الْغُرُورِ
Al-Waṭwāṭ (d.718/1318)	غُرَرُ الْخَصَائِصِ الْوَاضِحَةُ وَ غُرَرُ النَّقَائِصِ الْفَاضِحَةُ



B. Utilization of Arabic Plural Forms in the Creation of Puns

Muslim authors mobilized all means of linguistics to create book titles that are pleasing to both the eye and the ear. In this respect, they often referred particularly to certain plural patterns. Thanks to their pronunciation and lyrical resonance that remain in the memory, "فُعَاة," "فُعُول," "فِعْلَان," "فُعْلَان," "أَفْعِلَاء," "أَفْعَال," "فَوَاعِل," "فُعَلَاء" and "فُعَاة" are the most preferred patterns. For instance, al-Suyūṭī preferred إِتْحَافُ النُّبَلَاءِ بِأَخْبَارِ الثُّقَلَاءِ for his satirical tract about unlikeable typologies.

Likewise, "أَفْعِلَاء" is used by Ibn al-Miṭrān al-Dimashqī (d. 587/1191) in بُسْتَانُ الْأَطِبَّاءِ وَرَوْضَةُ الْأَلِبَّاءُ; the meter "فُعَاة" is used by al-Kāfiyajī (d. 879/1474) in سَيْفُ الْقُضَاةِ عَلَى الْبُغَاةِ; " فَوَاعِل " by Kafawī Ḥusayn Effendī (d. 1010/1601) in سَوَانِحُ التَّفَؤُّلِ وَ لَوَائِحُ التَّوَكُّلِ; and "فِعَال" by Zakariyyā al-Qazwīnī in آثَارُ الْبِلَادِ وَأَخْبَارُ الْعِبَادِ.[29]

The foregoing list should be complemented with feminine plural forms as one of the most available patterns for puns:

Al-ʿAwfī (d. 629/1232)	جَوَامِعُ الْحِكَايَاتِ وَلَوَامِعُ الرِّوَايَاتِ
Al-Iṣfahānī (d. 410/1010)	مُحَاضَرَاتُ الْأُدَبَاءِ وَ مُحَاوَرَاتُ الشُّعَرَاءِ وَالْبُلَغَاءِ

[29] For other examples, see

Abū l-ʿAbbās al-Jurjānī (d. 482/1089)	كِنَايَاتُ الْأُدَبَاءِ وإِشَارَاتُ الْبُلَغَاءِ
Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111)	مَقَامَاتُ الْعُلَمَاءِ بَيْنَ يَدَيِ الْخُلَفَاءِ وَ الْأُمَرَاءِ
Al-Jāḥiẓ	اَلْبُرْصَانُ وَ الْعُرْجَانُ وَ الْعُمْيَانُ وَ الْحُولَانِ
Ibn Iyās (d. 930/1524)	بَدَائِعُ الزُّهُورِ فِي وَقَائِعِ الدُّهُورِ
Anonymous	رَقَائِقُ الْحُلَلِ فِي دَقَائِقِ الْحِيَلِ
Al-Suyūṭī	بُغْيَةُ الْوُعَاةِ فِي طَبَقَاتِ اللُّغَوِيِّينَ وَ النُّحَاةِ

The authors, who had mastered syntax, were able to create astonishing combinations even in unforeseeable plural forms. In addition, some examples show that plurals in a certain meter coexist with other plurals that are similar in terms of form or pronunciation, albeit with different meters. Moreover, there are a significant number of examples in which a plural form skillfully creates a pun with a completely different, non-plural word:

Abū l-Ḥajjāj al-Balawī (d. 604/1208) كِتَابُ أَلِفْ بَاء لِلْأَلِبَّاءِ

Al-Khaṭīb al-ʿUthmānī (d. 780/1378) رَحْمَةُ الْأُمَّةِ فِي اخْتِلَافِ الْأَئِمَّةِ

Another effective pun technique is the phonetic harmony established by a present participle derived from the same root and plural forms of words that rhyme with it, such as "noun of place" or "infinitive with *mīm*." Old scholars invented striking titles in this respect. The artistry in the following examples becomes even more interesting when the chosen words are read by pausing on them:

Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad al-Ghaznawī (d. 593/1197) عُدَّةُ النَّاسِكِ فِي الْمَنَاسِكِ

Marʿī ibn Yūsuf al-Karmī (d. 1033/1624) دَلِيلُ الطَّالِبِ لِنَيْلِ الْمَطَالِبِ

Ibn Abī l-Rabīʿ (d. 688/1289) سُلُوكُ الْمَالِكِ فِي تَدْبِيرِ الْمَمَالِكِ

Ibn al-Akfānī إِرْشَادُ الْقَاصِدِ إِلَى أَسْنَى الْمَقَاصِدِ

Taqī al-Dīn al-Jarrāʿī تُحْفَةُ الرَّاكِعِ وَ السَّاجِدِ فِي أَحْكَامِ الْمَسَاجِدِ

C. Skillful Assembly of Nouns and Verbs in Puns

Since the classical period, Muslim authors have invented interesting book titles where one part of the pun consists of a noun and the other is created by appropriate verbs. In this respect, the harmony between nouns and verbs is remarkable. For better perception of this harmony, the noun at the beginning and the verb at the end should be read without wovelizing their final letters (by a pause). For instance, the classic by al-Dhahabī (d. 748/1348) on history should be read as follows:

اَلْعِبَرُ فِي خَبَرِ مَنْ غَبَرَ

al-ʿ**Ibar** fī khabar man **ghabar**

Some striking examples are given below:

ʿAbd al-Salām Effendī al-Mārdīnī (d. 1843) أُمُّ الْعِبَرِ فِي ذِكْرِ مَنْ مَضَى وَ مَرَّ

Ibn al-ʿImād al-Ḥanbalī (d. 1089/1679) شَذَرَاتُ الذَّهَبِ فِي أَخْبَارِ مَنْ ذَهَبَ

Ibn ʿAqīlah (d. 1150/1737) اَلسِرُّ الْأَسْرَى فِي مَعْنَى سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي أَسْرَى

Taqī al-Dīn al-Subkī (d. 756/1355) أَحْكَامُ الْكُلِّ وَمَا عَلَيْهَا تَدُلُّ

Al-Yumn al-ʿUlaymī اَلتَّارِيخُ الْمُعْتَبَرُ فِي أَنْبَاءِ مَنْ غَبَرَ

Al-Kalāʿī (d. 634/1237) مِصْبَاحُ الظُّلَمِ مِنْ حَدِيثِ رَسُولِ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

Thus, nouns and verbs are brought together to create puns. In addition, we encounter the interesting assimilation of a possessive conjunction with a pronoun and a noun without a pronoun. For example, the tract by al-Fīrūzābādī (d. 817/1415) about famous personalities whose names are ascribed to others than his father is named as follows: تُحْفَةُ الْأَبِيهِ فِي مَنْ نُسِبَ إِلَى غَيْرِ أَبِيهِ.

D. Titles Based on Wordplay

Because of the intense use of puns, some book titles recall tongue twisters and consist of alliterations that are relatively difficult to pronounce. Indeed, it is by no means easy to memorize these book titles, and pronunciation undergoes frequent tongue slips. This might be considered a joke by the author as well. For instance, Zayn al-Dīn al-ʿIrāqī (d. 806/1404), who wants to enlighten his contemporaries with the important information in *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn*, names his work "إِخْبَارُ الْأَحْيَاءِ بِأَخْبَارِ الْإِحْيَاءِ;" likewise, ʿAlāʾ al-Dawlah al-Simnānī (d. 736/1336) names his work on the virtues of ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib "مَنَاظِرُ الْمُحَاضِرِ لِلْمُنَاظِرِ الْحَاضِرِ," whereas Shihāb al-Dīn Maḥmūd al-Ālūsī (d. 1270/1854) names his work, originally a testament, "إِنْبَاءُ الْأَبَّنَاءِ بِأَطَيَبِ الْأَنْبَاءِ." Furthermore, the mathematician Ismāʿīl ibn Ibrāhīm al-Mārdīnī (d. 629/1232) designs his own elementary numbers as a kind of equation, namely, "إِعْدَادُ الْإِسْرَارِ فِي أَسْرَارِ الْأَعْدَادِ."

1. Book Titles Formulized in Anagrams

Scholars also opted for anagrams in which they reversed a given title or two terms therein or created a kind of riddle between words by reversing the letters in these terms to create parallel, contrasting, or associated combinations. For example, al-Suyūṭī establishes such a relation between the words "كَبْت" and "كَتْب" as well as قُرْآن and "أَقْرَان"

scribes under a standard practice of Qurʾānic orthography: **كَبْتُ الْأَقْرَانِ فِي كَتْبِ الْقُرْآنِ.**

In a similar manner, when naming his book about the fire in Damascus in 740 AH, Ibn al-Wardī applies the technique of alteration and establishes such a relation between the words وَصْف and صَفْو as well as رَجِيق and حَرِيق : **صَفْوُ الرَّحِيقِ فِي وَصْفِ الْحَرِيقِ**

The qaṣīdah anthology by the famous book seller and poet al-Ḥaẓīrī (d. 568/1172), also known as the "book guide," is named in a manner we can include in the same category: **لُمَحُ الْمُلَحِ.**

Below are some interesting book titles that are derived pursuant to the technique of an anagram, where a relation is established between two words by the interchange of the places of letters:

Ibn Khaldūn	أَعْمَالُ الْأَعْلَامِ
Ibn al-Kirmānī (d. 833/1430)	مَجْمَعُ الْبَحْرَيْنِ وَجَوَاهِرُ الْحَبْرَيْنِ
Ibn al-Naqīb al-Miṣrī (d. 769/1368)	اَلتَّوْشِيحُ الْمُذْهَبُ فِي تَصْحِيحِ الْمُهَذَّبِ
Niẓām al-Dīn al-Nīsābūrī (d. 730/1329)	غَرَائِبُ الْقُرْآنِ وَ رَغَائِبُ الْفُرْقَانِ

2. Technique of Establishing Relationships between Dotted and Non-Dotted Letters

Some wordplays in book titles establish relations between words that are formally identical but vary through dots. Such relations are often between analogous letter groups such as ج-ح-خ , غ-ع , and ص-ض. For example, the title of the famous biography of his contemporaries by Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī has such an aesthetic aspect:

إِنْبَاءُ الْغُمْرِ بِأَبْنَاءِ الْعُمْرِ.

Other examples are given below:

Ibn al-Athīr (d. 637/1239)	اَلْمَثَلُ السَّائِرُ فِي أَدَبِ الْكَاتِبِ وَ الشَّاعِرِ
Al-Biqāʿī	أَسْوَاقُ الْأَشْوَاقِ مِنْ مَصَارِعِ الْعُشَّاقِ
Ibn al-Ḥājib (d. 646/1249)	اَلْمَقْصَدُ الْجَلِيلُ فِي عِلْمِ الْخَلِيلِ
Ibn Yaḥyá al-Wansharīsī (d. 914/1508)	مِعْيَارُ الْمُعْرِبِ وَالْجَامِعُ الْمُغْرِبُ

3. Technique of Reading the Same Word with Different Vowels

Vowels are a phenomenon in the Arabic language that allows diverse pronunciations of the same word. This characteristic has pushed classical Muslim authors to make use of this linguistic feature and to turn it into an artistic advantage. Consequently, authors have found a kind of pleasure in gathering together in their book titles analogous words that differ through one or more vowels despite consisting of the same letters. Thus, we have many classical works that can be pronounced in different manners with or without vowels; this method points out the subtle wit and fine anticipation of the author.

For instance, in his **اَلْمُشْرِقُ فِي حُلَى الْمَشْرِقِ**, Ibn Saʿīd (d. 685/1286) employs a change of vowels in the letter *mīm*, whereas *shaddah* is replaced in **بَحْرُ الْعَوَّامِ فِيمَا أَصَابَ فِيهِ الْعَوَامّ** by Raḍī al-Dīn Ibn al-Ḥanbalī (d. 971/1563). The title of the following work by the Shāfiʿī jurist Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Ṭabarī (d. 694/1295) would be hard to read if the letter **ق** is not vowelized:

خَيْرُ **الْقِرَى** فِي زِيَارَةِ أُمِّ **الْقُرَى**

In this regard, some examples in which a kind of play is made with words and concepts are given below:

ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Baghdādī (d. 429/1038)	اَلْفَرْقُ بَيْنَ الْفِرَقِ
Najm al-Dīn al-Nasafī (d. 537/1142)	طِلْبَةُ الطَّلَبَةِ
Asʿad Effendī (d. 1166/1753)	إِطْبَاقُ الْأَطْبَاقِ
Al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1505)	اَلْهَيْئَةُ السَّنِيَّةُ فِي الْهَيْئَةِ السُّنِّيَّةِ
Al-Jaʿbarī (d. 732/1332)	نَفِيسُ الْإِجْزَاءِ فِي مَعْرِفَةِ الْأَجْزَاءِ
Ibn al-ʿIrāqī (d. 826/1423)	اَلْإِطْرَافُ بِأَوْهَامِ الْأَطْرَافِ

Another important category based on phones and timbers is ensuring matchup or identification by dropping or adding a letter. For example, Jamāl al-Khalwatī (d. 899/1494) makes use of the formal and vocal similarity between "حَبَّة" and "مَحَبَّة" in his حَبَّةُ الْمَحَبَّةِ. Likewise, there is a similar relation between the words "قِنَاع" and "إِقْنَاع" in the work كَشَّافُ الْقِنَاعِ عَنْ مَتْنِ الْإِقْنَاعِ by Manṣūr ibn Yūnus al-Buhūtī (d. 1051/1641).

4. Technique of Title Formation Based on the Pronunciation of Analogous Letters

In some titles, authors opt for wordplay based on pronunciation by establishing a relationship between phonetically similar letters. This relation, which can be found between ع/أ, ص/س, ز/ظ and similar duos, comprises such artistry that it can only be understood through an attentive experience of pronunciation. For example,

Al-Fīrūzābādī	اَلْإِسْعَادُ بِالْإِصْعَادِ إِلَى دَرَجَةِ الْاِجْتِهَادِ
Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir (d. 692/1293)	اَلرَّوْضُ الزَّاهِرُ فِي سِيرَةِ الْمَلِكِ الظَّاهِرِ
Ibn Saʿīd al-Maghribī	بَسْطُ الْأَرْضِ فِي الطُّولِ وَالْعَرْضِ

5. Techniques of Dropping, Adding and Changing Letters

Another particularly effective and successful implementation of *sajʿ* is to bring together words, one shorter and one longer in pronunciation, within the same book title. More precisely, authors use this technique to create the shorter word by dropping some letters of the longer. For instance, the work by al-Suyūṭī in praise of a rooster is named اَلْوَدِيكُ فِي فَضْلِ الدِّيكِ, where the author obtains the word دِيك by dropping one letter of وَدِيك.

The same applies for هَدِيَّةُ الْمُسَافِرِ إِلَى النُّورِ السَّافِرِ by Shāfiʿī jurist Bahāʾ al-Dīn al-Subkī (d. 773/1372) and تَحْبِيرُ الْمُوَشِّينَ فِيمَا يُقَالُ بِالسِّينِ وَالشِّينِ by al-Fīrūzābādī. The opposite examples are observable in the titles of تَـرْغِيـبُ الرَّائِـضِ فِي عِلْمِ الْفَرَائِضِ by the famous mathematician Ibn al-Hāʾim (d. 815/1412) and اَلْوَافِي فِي نَظْمِ الْقَوَافِي by the renowned elegiac poet Abū l-Baqāʾ al-Rundī (d. 684/1285).

Another common *sajʿ* method is to use two words together that consist of an equal number of letters with a single different letter. For instance, Niẓām al-Dīn al-Nīsābūrī (d. 730/1329) named his annotation as follows:[30] اَلصَّافِيَةُ شَـرْحُ الشَّافِيَةِ.

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[30] Other examples include

Muḥyī al-Dīn Ibn al-ʿArabī	شَقُّ الْجَيْبِ لِمِفْتَاحِ الْغَيْبِ
Al-Biqāʿī	أَخْبَارُ الْجِلَادِ فِي فُتُوحِ الْبِلَادِ
Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Khalīl al-Ṣafadī	تَصْحِيحُ التَّصْحِيفِ وَ تَحْرِيرُ التَّحْرِيفِ

E. Skillfully Created Titles with Puns in Compliance with Proper Nouns

Proper nouns are another area of application where Muslim authors proved their creativity in the style of *sajʿ*. In the titles of thousands of classical works, these nouns are matched with words that are phonetically appropriate and pleasing to the ear. By combining authors' language taste with their subtle wit, many foreign names are adapted to the meters and patterns of the Arabic language. In addition, there is no distinction regarding whether a name actually belongs to a person, place, or book. Successful examples are observable in a work by Najm al-Dīn al-Nasafī about scholars of Samarqand, where he uses the word "sugar" (قَنْد) together with a place name (سَمَرْقَنْد); in the work by Ibn ʿAsākir (d. 600/1203) with the adjective "مُغَطًّى" on the famous "اَلْمُوَطَّأ" of al-Imām Mālik; and finally, between the word "فَاشُوش" and the proper noun "قَرَاقُوش" in the political criticism by Ibn Mammātī, who wrote about the deeds of Bahāʾ al-Dīn Qarāqūsh (d. 597/1201), the potent governor of Cairo in the time of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn (589/1193):[31]

Kamāl al-Dīn al-Fārisī (d. 716/1319)	أَسَاسُ الْقَوَاعِدِ فِي أُصُولِ الْفَوَائِدِ
Shihāb al-Dīn al-Qarāfī	اَلْاِسْتِغْنَاءُ فِي أَحْكَامِ الْاِسْتِثْنَاءِ
Al-Kātibī (d. 675/1277)	اَلْمُفَصَّلُ فِي شَرْحِ الْمُحَصَّلِ

31 Other examples with prominent artistic aspects include

a) Person Names

ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Baghdādī	اَلْحَرْبُ عَلَى ابْنِ حَرْبٍ
Abū Ṭālib al-Marwazī (d. 614/1217)	غُنْيَةُ الطَّالِبِ فِي نَسَبِ عَلِيِّ بْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ
Ibn Ṭūlūn (d. 953/1546)	اَلزَّهْرُ الْأَنْعَشُ فِي نَوَادِرِ الْأَعْمَشِ
Ibn al-Mulaqqin (d. 804/1401)	مَا تَمَسُّ إِلَيْهِ الْحَاجَةُ عَلَى سُنَنِ ابْنِ مَاجَةَ
Al-Bisāṭī (d. 842/1439)	شِفَاءُ الْغَلِيلِ عَلَى كَلَامِ الشَّيْخِ خَلِيلٍ
Ibn ʿAbd al-Hādī al-Maqdisī (d. 744/1439)	اَلصَّارِمُ الْمُنَكِّي فِي الرَّدِّ عَلَى السُّبْكِيِّ

b) Place Names

Lisān al-Dīn Ibn al-Khaṭīb	اَلْإِحَاطَةُ فِي أَخْبَارِ غِرْنَاطَةَ
Al-Sakhāwī	اَلْمُفَاخَرَةُ بَيْنَ دِمَشْق وَ الْقَاهِرَةِ

اَلْقَنْدُ فِي ذِكْرِ عُلَمَاءِ سَمَرْقَنْد
كَشْفُ الْمُغَطَّى فِي فَضْلِ الْمُوَطَّأ
اَلْفَاشُوشُ فِي أَحْكَامِ قَرَافُوش

Conclusion

Rhymed prose, which Muslim authors could not help but employ in naming their works, is one of *sui generis* characteristics of Arabic linguistics. In fact, this practice based on phonetic aesthetics has become an artistic effort uncommon in other cultures but ever popular among Muslim authors.

It is fair to say that the works written during first two centuries AH do not include such ornamental endeavors or concerns. Nevertheless, particularly as of the early 3rd century AH, scholars have tried to generate titles with eloquent, compelling, and artistic wordings so that their intellectual crops and scientific studies are remembered in an easier manner. Consequently, the work by a scholar or man of letters attracted greater attention from intellectual circles and attained greater popularity among the public.

The embellishment of book titles by ornamental concerns can bring together a Mauritanian scholar, an Andalusian poet, a Basrian journalist or a Yemeni historian in a very specific field of language and in the same pot of pleasure.

The influence and pressure of the age-long tradition of composing thematic and lyrical book titles in the Muslim world is also observable in non-Arabic works. For instance, the same method has been followed for centuries in the Ottoman writing tradition; similarly,

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زَهْرَةُ الْآسِ فِي بِنَاءِ مَدِينَةِ فَاس — Abū l-Ḥasan ʿAlī al-Jaznāʾī (d. 766/1365)
مَعَالِمُ الْإِيمَانِ فِي مَعْرِفَةِ أَهْلِ الْقَيْرَوَانِ — ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Dabbāgh (d. 699/1300)
طِرَازُ أَعْلَامِ الزَّمَنِ فِي طَبَقَاتِ أَعْيَانِ الْيَمَنِ — ʿAlī ibn Ḥasan al-Khazrajī (d. 812/1410)
اَلْجَامِعُ الْمُسْتَقْصَى فِي فَضَائِلِ الْمَسْجِدِ الْأَقْصَى — Ibn ʿAsākir

Iranian scholars, who wrote in Persian, could not stand idly by this tradition as they named their respective works.

The technique of making use of the power of *sajʿ* is based on the humorous and artistic syntax of words in book titles. This technique still preserves its importance today, and modern authors continue to name their works with similar attention and sensitivity.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Teaching and Learning the Sciences in Islamicate Societies (800-1700), by Sonja Brentjes

Hasan Umut

Islamic Law of the Sea: Freedom of Navigation and Passage Rights in Islamic Thought, by Hassan S. Khalilieh

Punsara Amarasinghe

The al-Baqara Crescendo: Understanding the Qurʾan's Style, Narrative Structure, and Running Themes, by Nevin Reda

Ersin Kabakcı

Teaching and Learning the Sciences in Islamicate Societies (800-1700), by Sonja Brentjes (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2018), 334 pp., ISBN: 978-2-503-57445-5, $59.00USD, €45.00 (pb)

Studies on science in Islamic societies have been on the rise for a while. The book in question takes as its subject the learning and teaching of the sciences in Islamic (or "Islamicate," as the author adopts Marshall Hodgson's conceptualization) societies prior to the eighteenth century. It is penned by Sonja Brentjes, who has written extensively on various aspects of the mathematical sciences in Islamic societies. Her book is not a comprehensive account but rather "an erratic process, broken by many gaps and interrupted by too many questions I could not answer or perhaps not even ask," but it should also be added that she skillfully engages with the large number of primary and secondary sources (p. 262).

The main focus of the book is the mathematical sciences, but medicine, the occult sciences, and philosophical disciplines such as logic and natural philosophy are also covered. Brentjes's account is clear and reader-friendly, generally speaking. The subjects of the chapters seem to be determined on the basis of what Brentjes considers the major themes that inform the characteristics of science education in Islamic history. Having said this, one also detects a chronological order within each chapter. Covering the period of almost a millennium (800-1700), the book addresses numerous subjects, texts, scholars, and scientific currents from different geographies and periods, but Brentjes's account relies largely on scientific experiences in intellectual settings that can be geographically located in the areas of modern-day Egypt, Syria, Iraq, and Iran. While Muslim scholars are the main actors of the book, there are also references to science education in non-Muslim communities in Islamic societies.

In addition to the introduction, appendices — including lists of dynasties, scholars, and rulers mentioned in the book — and a bibliography, the book is composed of eight chapters. Chapter 1, "Contextualizing Learning and Teaching of the Sciences in Islamicate

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Societies," aims to present an introductory overview to various contexts within which the education of science and philosophy emerged, as they were inherited from antiquity and then underwent several transformations until the late sixteenth century. This chapter also includes helpful maps to acquaint the reader with the geographical contexts of the developments in question. Chapter 2, "Teachers and Students at Courts and in Private Homes (Eighth-Twelfth Centuries)," deals with the pre-madrasah period during which the loci of teaching are mostly private homes and courts. By referring to several scholars and texts, Brentjes explains various forms of education that were prevalent during this period, namely, reading, writing, commenting, and compiling short treatises for answering specific questions. Chapter 3, "Schools of Advanced Education," is concerned with the formation and structure of advanced education, highlighting that the sciences were studied in such institutions as madrasahs, mosques, hospitals, houses for timekeepers, libraries, tombs, and Sufi lodges. Specialization and professionalization in science education are also mentioned as important processes observed in various parts of the Islamic world. Chapter 4, "The Sciences at Madrasas," is a continuation of the subject covered in the previous chapter, providing many examples of textbooks and various forms, topics, and methods of education as well as examples of teaching patterns related to the mathematical sciences, the medical sciences, natural philosophy, and the occult sciences. Chapter 5, "Other Teaching Institutions," deals with "other formalized kinds of" science education in Islamic societies, such as education in families and hospitals (p. 113). Also included is travelling as a form of teaching and learning. Again, Brentjes provides examples from various intellectual settings during the pre-modern and early modern periods. Chapter 6, "Teaching and Learning Methods," contains biographical sources, as well as scientific and philosophical texts, many of which have yet to be edited, providing information regarding the methods and prerequisites of studying various sciences in Islamic societies. Brentjes also introduces commentaries and glosses as crucial vehicles of education in the postclassical period. Chapter 7, "Encyclopedias and Classifications of the Sciences," deals with the importance of these genres in terms of the organization and representation of knowledge. In introducing the different types of sciences in terms of their content or the method of their compilation, this chapter points out transformations observed in those genres with respect to their format and length, as well as to the intellectual and

social backgrounds of their writers. Finally, Chapter 8, "Teaching Literature and Its Temporal Geographies," provides historical and content-based information, derived from a number of scientific and philosophical texts that were taught after the twelfth century in various places already introduced in previous chapters, such as institutions of learning and teaching.

As far as its place within the literature on the history of education in Islamic societies is concerned, Brentjes's book is a welcome contribution to the field, since unlike many other works, learning and teaching sciences is its main focus. Since the publication of George Makdisi's scholarship, Islamic education and its institutionalization have sparked a number of discussions with various approaches and interpretations. Makdisi identified the educational, administrative, and pedagogical characteristics of the madrasah as a well-defined and hierarchically structured model, and several studies published after him, including those of Brentjes, have attempted to challenge his theory by emphasizing the informal and teacher-oriented character of education in Islamic societies. According to this approach, education in Islamic history was not necessarily linked to an institution.

In the beginning of the book, Brentjes asserts "the individualistic and informal character of education in Islamicate societies before the introduction of modern Western systems to the Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia during the nineteenth century," but also notes that "this is not to say that no institutions of learning and teaching existed" (pp. 10-11). One wonders, then, how education could be individualistic and informal within an institutional context. According to Brentjes, the informal and individual character of teaching "means that teachers were socially more important in a scholar's self-representation than institutions" (p. 72). Moreover, she also concludes that this informality and teacher-centered model "combined to work against a systematic, sequential, disciplinary teaching of knowledge" (p. 111). In a similar vein, Brentjes also claims that philosophy and the mathematical sciences were "a matter of personal choice" (p. 147). Yet she also states that the mathematical and medical sciences, as well as natural philosophy and logic, "were the main beneficiaries of this fundamental change in which learning and teaching were institutionalized" (p. 11).

If I understand correctly, these seemingly contradictory arguments rely on the assumption that teachers for the most function

independently of their affiliated institutions. Of course, it may not be reasonable to propose a meta-theory that can be applied to all experiences of science education throughout Islamic history, and I do not claim that Brentjes does so. However, taking the opportunity that writing this review offers me, I would like to express the hope that future studies on education in Islamic societies be less interested in pitting the institution against the individual and focus more on proposing dynamic models that consider the institution as a nexus in which various agencies of education including teachers, students, physicians, and patients in the case of hospitals, texts and their disciplines, patrons, intellectual, social, and political/bureaucratic challenges, intellectual and scientific outlooks, and various kinds of networks are interrelated and embedded. In this respect, the example of the Ottoman experience might serve better to understand, in part, education in the early modern period, since a good number of Ottoman primary sources related to this subject has come down to us. As a growing number of new studies has observed, the Ottoman madrasah model should be understood with reference to various dynamics, including teachers, students, political and bureaucratic elites, and the institutionalization and hierarchization of the higher education system.

With its clarity and attempt to introduce the reader to a number of scholars, institutions, and texts on well-selected subjects, Sonja Brentjes's book is to be highly recommended for those interested in learning about the history of science and intellectual history within an Islamic context. I hope this work will attract more attention to the history of science education in Islamic societies.

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Islamic Law of the Sea: Freedom of Navigation and Passage Rights in Islamic Thought, by Hassan S. Khalilieh (Cambridge & London: Cambridge University Press, 2019), xvi + 326 pp., ISBN: 978-1108481458, $81.03 (hb), doi: 10.1017/9781108630702

The vast literature available on the historical evolution of international law of the sea has mainly derived from the viewpoints of European jurists of the age of enlightenment in the 17th century and those ideas are strongly rooted in the core concepts developed in European intellectual order that legitimized the national interests imbued with accumulation of wealth. For instance, when the 17th century Dutch jurist Hugo Grotius wrote *Mare Liberium* which gave birth to the freedom of the seas, his argument was bolstered by the mercantile interests of the Dutch Republic.

Currently, there has been increasing discourse on deconstructing Eurocentrism in international law. Scholars mainly from the Global South representing different civilizational, religious, and cultural values have written various reinterpretations of international law. At such a crucial juncture in academia, which has taken a revolutionary step toward deconstructing the Eurocentric narratives in the discipline, this book by Hassan S. Khalilieh is a promising work that unfolds Islamic thought on the law of the sea. Given the vast complexity of Islamic jurisprudence, the task undertaken by Khalilieh is absolutely praiseworthy. The cardinal argument that stems from his work is based on comparing and contrasting the Islamic legal principles on the law of the sea with Western concepts. In performing this task, the author aptly uses Qurʾānic references to the sea and water that later provided the ground rules for Islamic legal principles of the law of the sea: "A Qurʾānic verse (21:30) states: '*We have made from water every living thing*'" (p. 30). In addition to illustrating references from the Qurʾān as the prime source, Khalilieh traces the historical development of the Islamic jurisprudential approach to the freedom of navigation during the time of the Prophet Muḥammad. In fact, the author provides a comprehensive account of the

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development of the Islamic jurisprudential approach to the law of the sea from the time of the Prophet Muḥammad to the post-prophetic era, when Muslim jurists created different narratives based on geopolitical divisions. The historical analysis presented by Khalilieh shows the extent to which Islamic rulers developed their penchant for systematically organizing maritime affairs as a result of the expansion of Islamic empires.

The second chapter of the book addresses offshore sovereignty and the territorial sea in the context of the development of Islamic legal principles prior to European ideas on laws relating to territorial seas and sovereignty. In particular, the author provides a palpable analysis of how Islamic jurists distinguish between territorial seas and high seas. Khalilieh uses the writings of the 15th-century Islamic jurist Ibn Mājid (d. 1500) to elucidate the Islamic notion of territorial and high seas. In discussing Ibn Mājid's concept of territorial and high seas, the author states, "In saying that the sea 'is not peculiar to anyone of these people,' Ibn Mājid plainly precluded the right of any political authority or nation to claim possession of any part of the high seas" (p. 105).

In the international law of the sea under UNCLOS, treaties often expressed the agreements of states concerning rules pertaining to territorial claims over offshore marine zones. Privileges were normally granted to one city or state and often brought with them exclusive rights of trade and navigation. The author has vividly described the treaty practices that existed under the Islamic rulers in the heyday of the Almohads dynasty in the Iberian Peninsula as the Almohads rulers made a series of diplomatic and commercial treaties with the Pisa Duchy in Italy to recognize each other's sovereign rights to a belt of water adjacent to the shoreline of the respective state, although the outer boundaries remained unspecified.

The third chapter of the book mainly discusses the Islamic legal implications for piracy in the high seas. The issue of piracy appears to be one of the most crucially important issues in modern international law of the sea. While presenting the Islamic legal interpretation and practices of pirates, the author illustrates how those practices evolved through implicit references in the Qurʾān (p. 173). In particular, he clearly presents the acts that constitute the elements of piracy under Islamic law of the sea practices in this chapter. Relying on Qurʾānic references and Islamic juristic writings developed in the post-

prophetic age, author states, "A pirate is therefore a *muḥārib* who commits armed robbery and spreads evil and violates the primordial order and logic existence set by the Divine Text" (p. 179).

Another important aspect of the book is that it provides a fair answer to the common misconceptions prevailing in academia regarding some of the concepts of Islamic law and its practices. For instance, the author refutes some of the academic myths justifying the connection between piracy and the Islamic concept of jihād (p. 180). In the concluding chapter, Khalilieh claims that Grotius's doctrine of freedom of the seas was rooted in a non-European setting, and he further elaborates the manner Muslims adopted in preserving the universality of the sea as a divine gift to all humankind (p. 216). Additionally, the author makes a rather astute comparison between modern international law of the sea practices and the Islamic notion of the law of the sea in the concluding remarks. In doing so, he frames a picture of how the features of UNCLOS III regarding territorial seas are akin to those that the classical Muslim theologians and jurists ascribed to the Hijaz by asserting de jure and de facto possessory control over a large portion of the Red Sea bordering Arabia (p. 217).

Overall, the book provides a comprehensive account of the Islamic legal approach to the law of the sea from a historical perspective that aptly reveals a different civilizational narrative existing beyond Eurocentric scholarship in international law. Hence, this book is likely to become classic reading on the subject of the law of the sea and international law. Nevertheless, in our opinion, the book would have been much more coherent if the author had reduced the amount of Islamic theological references showing the sources of Islamic law of the sea. It is true that tracing Qurʾānic principles to prove the authenticity of Islamic legal practices on the law of the sea reveals the sources of legal practice, but the vast number of explanations and their theological meanings present a tiresome task for a reader who has not been exposed to Islamic jurisprudence or Islamic theology.

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The al-Baqara Crescendo: Understanding the Qurʾan's Style, Narrative Structure, and Running Themes, by Nevin Reda (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2017), xi + 250 pp., ISBN: 978-0-7735-4886-2, $95.47 (hb)

Considering recent Western Qurʾānic studies, there is no doubt that "coherence/unity studies" is one of the prominent research areas. In this context, especially after the 1980s, the chapters (*sūrah*s) of the Qurʾān have been analyzed on the basis of the hypothesis that they are literary unities. Among the studies that ignited this literature was the *Studien Zur Composition der Mekkanischen Suren* (1981) by Angelika Neuwirth. Since then, these studies have ranged from short Meccan *sūrah*s to the longest Medinan ones. When considering the general conception of the Qurʾānic text from the 19th to the last quarter of the 20th century in Western literature, it would not be wrong to describe "coherence/unity studies" as a kind of "challenge" to previous studies describing the Qurʾānic text as "unsystematic," "boring," or possessing a "lack of unity/coherence."

One of the recent studies on the structure of the Qurʾānic text appeared in 2017 by Nevin Reda from the University of Toronto: *The al-Baqara Crescendo: Understanding the Qurʾan's Style, Narrative, Structure, and Running Themes*, the revised version of her PhD dissertation submitted in 2010. This work is dedicated to the analysis of the text structure of the *sūrat* al-Baqarah, the longest chapter of the Qurʾān, from a "holistic" perspective. Reda's work is significant for two main reasons. The first is that the author's work is based on the hypothesis that the *sūrat* al-Baqarah is a holistic unit, not a compilation of several unconnected passages, as usually proposed by previous Western Qurʾānic scholars. Moreover, the driving force of the scholar to exert such an effort is not a religious concern such as to show the *iʿjāz* of the Qurʾān. Rather, Reda analyzes the structure of the *sūrah* by way of contemporary literary theory, Biblical studies, and the notion of orality (p. 6). Drawing particular attention to the "orality" elements in establishing the unity of the *sūrat* al-Baqarah,

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Reda suggests that oral literary elements of the text must be taken into account in unity studies (pp. 7, 26-28). She claims that it is appropriate to analyze the *sūrah* as a "literary genre" and to take a path that makes assumptions on this basis (p. 10).

In the first chapter of her work, "How to Read the Qurʾān Holistically," Reda focuses on how the Qurʾān can be read as a whole structure. According to her, a kind of reading that concentrates on the whole of the *sūrah* rather than focusing on short passages is required. Short passages should be seen as "building blocks" that make up the whole *sūrah* rather than being read independently (p. 16). In this context, according to Reda, the term "holistic" goes beyond the studies of "coherence," which proceeds as the successive linking of verses or verse passages and refers to reading the *sūrah* from a wider perspective (pp. 18-19). Referring to the classical and contemporary *tafsīr* literature in the context of the subject in this part of her work, Reda also compares the holistic approach she adopts with both the "atomistic" approach that focuses on the verse and verse passages and the contemporary approaches in which the *sūrah*s are read around certain main themes (pp. 20-23).

Reda analyzes the text structure of the *sūrat* al-Baqarah based on the combination of two types of reading. She describes the first of these as "divine self-revelatory reading," which means that "the text describes the transcendental being from the perspective of the transcendent being." In other words, this way of reading implies that God surrounds the text as a central protagonist (pp. 33-34). The other is defined as "pedagogical reading," which considers the human-centered language of the Qurʾān. In sum, the scholar attempts to conduct a holistic reading from both a God and human-centered perspective (pp. 37-38). According to her, the dialogic relationship between these two reading styles contributes to the holistic reading of the *sūrah* (pp. 40-42).

The second chapter examines the relationship of the *sūrat* al-Fātiḥah with the *sūrat* al-Baqarah by referring to literary devices such as *iqtiṣāṣ, concatenation*, and *iltifāt* (pp. 50-61). According to Reda, considering that the Qurʾān has an oral character, it must make the addressees aware of the subject changes through some rhetorical elements. Therefore, instead of concentrating on the thematic changes in a *sūrah*, the main focus should be on the rhetoric. In this context, she applies "inclusion," a well-known rhetorical element in

Biblical studies as well, to show the sub-chapters of the *sūrat* al-Baqarah.

Thus, in the third chapter, the *sūrah* is analyzed with reference to repeating elements of the *sūrah*s to identify seven inclusios within three main panels in the *sūrat* al-Baqarah (pp. 70-81). Reda argues that appealing to rhetorical elements in dividing the *sūrah* into sub-chapters instead of contending with thematic elements is a more essential and objective approach (p. 91). In addition to inclusios, the musical term "crescendo," which means "a gradual increase in loudness," is another main element in Reda's analysis of the structure of the *sūrah*. Accordingly, any phrase in the *sūrah* repeats by expanding in its later parts (pp. 94-96). According to Reda, there is an increasing emphasis in both the inclusios and the thematic elements (p. 103).

In the fourth chapter of her work, "Thematic Affirmation," Reda focuses on the chiastic structure of the *sūrah* (p. 107). The fifth chapter, "God as Guide," analyzes the divine self-revelatory reading of the *sūrah* with specific reference to the literary element "leitwort" (pp. 125-134). The next chapter, "Placing Humanity at the Focal Point," forms the other wing of her reading: While God is at the center of her reading in the former chapter, man settles in the center here. Thus, we witness a reading consisting of the combination of "divine self-revelatory" reading and the "pedagogical" reading (pp. 140-155). In the last chapter of her work, "Windows into the Tradition," Reda includes the analyses of Burhān al-Dīn al-Biqāʿī (d. 885/1480) and Muḥammad Ḥusayn al-Ṭabāṭabāʾī (d. 1981) regarding the structure of al-Baqarah. According to Reda, both *mufassir*s made important contributions to the field in approaching the *sūrah* as a unity (p. 158). In addition, she mentions scholars who are prominent in the context of *munāsabah* literature (pp. 158-184).

Reda mentions the historical process of the emergence of holistic approaches in Biblical texts in the "Appendix" to her work. In addition, the scholar, who also provides information about the terminology employed in the aforementioned approaches, addresses the common points of holistic approaches in Biblical and Qurʾānic studies (pp. 197-201).

The present book has acquired fame among the studies that can be called "unity/coherence studies" in recent Western Qurʾānic studies. Reda appeals to not only Biblical studies but also the

disciplines of music and literature in her analyses. The analysis is impressive at many points, but because it is ultimately a "reader-oriented" (p. 93) reading, it contains subjective arguments. For instance, it would not be difficult for a reader of the Qurʾān to see a kind of "divine self-revelatory" or "pedagogical" relation among the verses (*āyah*s) of many *sūrah*s. In addition, although the application of a musical element like crescendo specific to the *sūrat* al-Baqarah seems impressive, it is necessary to investigate whether this element can be witnessed in the other long *sūrah*s. This work might encourage new initiatives in this regard. Another example of subjectivity is the chiastic structure of *sūrat* al-Baqarah, which is given as ABC/B'C'A'/C"B"A' (p. 107), and is different from the suggestions of other scholars, such as Mustansir Mir, Neal Robinson, Raymond Farrin, Michel Cuypers, Mathias Zahniser, and D. E. Smith, on the chiastic structure of the same *sūrah*. In the last instance, Reda's work is particularly indispensable for readers interested in the structure of the Qurʾānic text, as it opens interesting "windows" into the field.

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Book

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Michot, Yahya M. *Ibn Sīnā: Lettre au Vizir Abū Saʿd: Editio princeps d'après le manuscrit de Bursa, traduction de l'arabe, introduction, notes et lexique.* Beirut: al-Burāq, 2000.

Book Chapter

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