



بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

*In the name of God, Most
Gracious, Most Merciful*





*Whoever acts righteously, whether male or female,
and is a believer, We will certainly enable him lead a
PURE LIFE and surely We will bestow on such
their reward according to the best of their deeds .
(an-Nahl: 97)*



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International Multidisciplinary Journal of PURE LIFE (IMJPL) is an interdisciplinary quarterly English-language electronic journal. The scope of this journal is Comparative and Interdisciplinary Studies in Religion and Life, Lifestyles, Interreligious Dialogues and Advertising in Cyberspace; however, its focus is on “*The Meaning of Life and Pure Life in the Modern Age*”.

Promoting the level of scientific research related to the Humanities and the Meaning of Life, **IMJPL** seeks to facilitate and develop the relationship among researchers who are doing studies on humanities and divine religions.

Unlike predatory journals whose focus is on making money by the publication of works mainly written by university faculty members and charging authors under the name of APC, this journal welcomes all scientific standard papers in the scope of the journal from scholars, researchers and professors around the world and publishes articles for free regardless of religion, gender, academic rank and any other discrimination only upon the issuance of the letter of acceptance after peer reviews by two editors of the journal.

All required international standards have been considered to prevent any discrimination and create an open scientific space to fulfil the slogan of the Al-Mustafa International University, which is to have the authority on the international science and propagation, and production of science and software movement in the Islamic world. As of now, many of the editorial staff and authors who have published their articles in the journal are priests, Christians and followers of various religions and denominations.

This international journal is in English and is accessible on the website of the journals of Al-Mustafa International University at <http://journals.miu.ac.ir> and receives papers only through the linked e-mail to the above website. Also, **IMJPL** according to License ID 74327 E-Rasaneh (Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance/ Date: 2/3/2015) it Registered at the Level of “Licensed Journals”.

IMJPL belongs to Al-Mustafa International University. The managing editor of the journal is *Dr. Saeid Arjmandfar* (Assistant Prof. of Al-Mustafa International University and President of Al-Mustafa Open University). The editor in chief of the journal is *Prof. Saeid Nazari Tavakoli* (Prof. at the University of Tehran). It has 44 editorial board members from 15 nationalities, of which 23 members of them are full professors.

The journal is also indexed in 20 domestic and 28 international databases and benefits 135 reviewers from 22 nationalities. The first issue of **IMJPL** came out in 2015, and it has published 287 papers by 516 authors from 41 nationalities in 37 issues so far. Out of this number, 140 authors (equivalent to 27.1% of total authors) are women.

Also, **IMJPL** is the only journal approved by the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology in the Islamic Republic of Iran, which is published in English in the sub-category of Philosophy and Theology.

1	Period of Publication	Quarterly
2	Type of Publication	Electronic
3	Language of the Journal	English
4	The First Issue Published	May 2015
5	Specialized Field	The Meaning of Life and Pure Life in the Modern Age
6	Review Process	Double Blind Peer Review (Two Evaluators)
7	Standard Method of Citing References	APA
8	The Duration of Evaluation	Three Months
9	Rapid Evaluation of Papers	No
10	Cost of Evaluation	Free

Aims and Scope

Objectives:

1. Theorizing and Production of Science in the Field of Religion, Meaning of Life and Humanities under the Concept of **Pure Life**
2. Deepening and Promoting of Religious and Human Teachings in the Field of Meaning of Life and **Pure Life**
3. Analysis, Critique and Review of Important Ideas and Theories in the Field of Humanities and Life Meaning
4. Presenting Models and Applied Theories of Humanities in the Face of Contemporary Social Challenges and **Pure Life** in the Modern Age
5. Explaining the Basic Religions Ideas and Systematization based on it in Different Areas of Life
6. Explaining the Theoretical Foundations of the Islamic Republic and the Great Islamic Revolution of Iran in Relation to the Concept of **Pure Life**
7. Creating and Expanding the Scientific and Research Opportunities in Al-Mustafa International University with Emphasis on Teaching Education Life and Religion in Cyberspace
8. Scientific Defense of Religious Teachings and Ideas and Response to Contemporary Doubts in the Field of Meaning of Life and **Pure Life**

Policies and Strategies:

1. The Focus of Abrahamic Religions, the Thoughts and Ideals of Imam Khomeini, Imam Khamenei and the Discourse of the Great Islamic Revolution of Iran under the Concept of **Pure Life**
2. Observance of Moral and Legal Standards and Norms among the Abrahamic Religions
3. Attention to the Needs and Priorities of Research in the International Arena with a Focus on the Humanities and **Pure Life**
4. Emphasis on Using the Scientific Capacity of Non-Iranian Professors, Researchers, Scholars and Graduates of Al-Mustafa International University and International Scientific Institutions
5. Emphasis on Preserving the Originalities and Values of the Seminary and Adhering to the General Policies of the Islamic Republic of Iran
6. Respect for Natural People and Legal Entities
7. Observance of the Principle of Approximation of Monotheistic Religions and Denominations and Refraining from Raising Challenging Issues of Contrary to Unity
8. Interaction and Cooperation with International Scientific Centers and National and International Publications

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International Multidisciplinary Journal of PURE LIFE (IMJPL) and its publisher Al-Mustafa International University adhere to the principles of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) and Best Practice Guidelines for Journal Editors and the Code of Conduct for Journal Publishers. **IMJPL** also follows recommendations contained in A Guide for Editors-in-Chief, Associate Editors, and Managing Editors.

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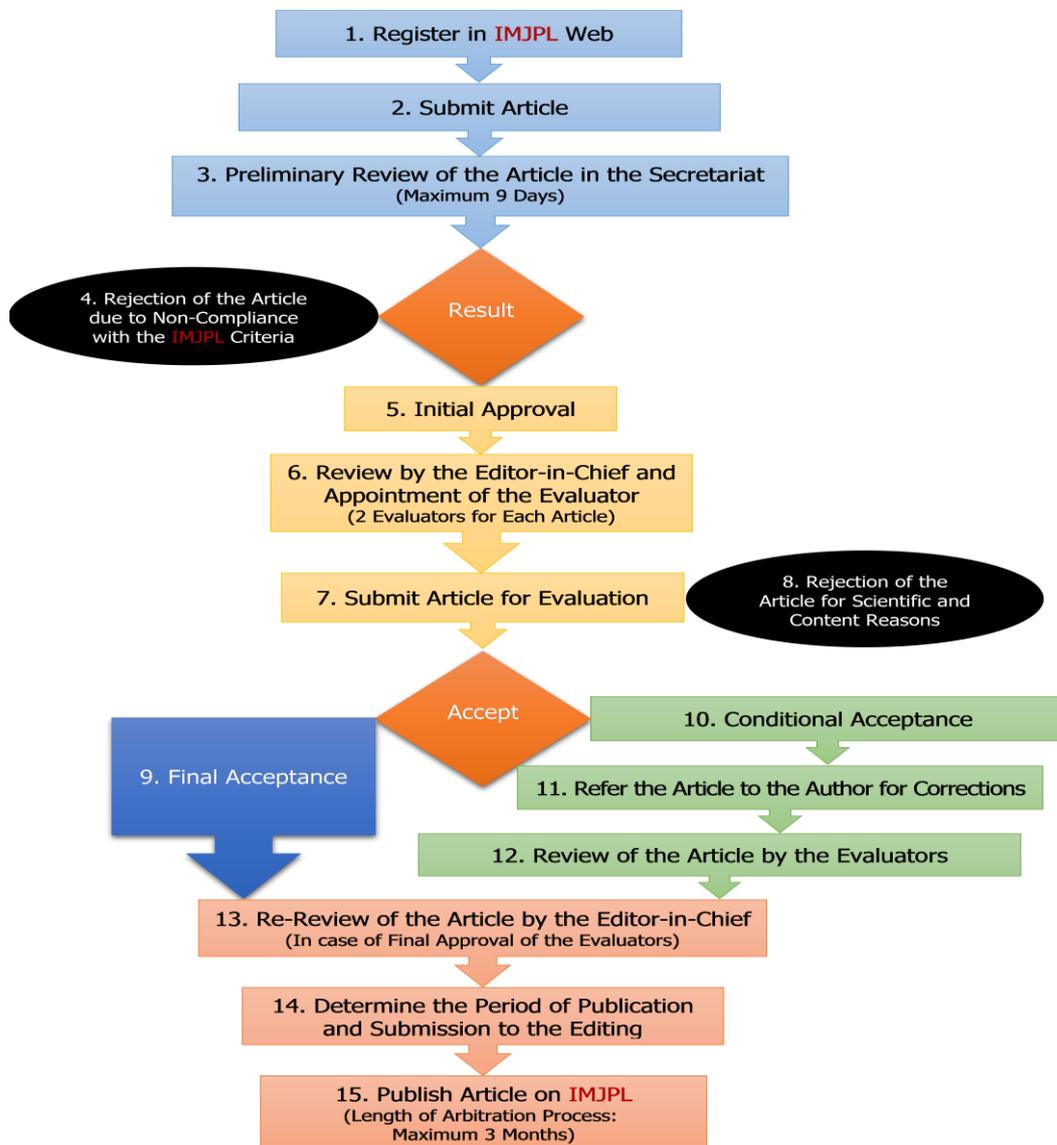
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Flow Diagram Evaluation

The process of evaluation and accepting articles in IMJPL is in accordance with the following 15-step diagram, and all journal processes from submitting an article to announcing the result of evaluation and announcing the Editor-in-Chief final opinion on publishing or rejecting an article are done through the journal system:



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A Word from Director-in-Charge

International Multidisciplinary Journal of PURE LIFE (IMJPL) is an scientific Journal of which will be a window to man's eternal life.

On the other hand, Al-Mustafa International University, considers its mission to introduce the divine teachings to ground dwelled man, so that he could be able to establish a fresh living by using the knowledge bestowed upon him by Almighty God in such a manner that it brings him worldly peace and eternal prosperity.

Accordingly, **IMJPL** is an opportunity for the students and graduates of university and other researchers to spread out their scientific and cognitive knowledge on the vast arena of cyberspace and also, by using scholarly dialect, reflect religious knowledge of monotheistic religions and sects into various aspects of human life.

We hope through efforts of knowledge seekers, this window may become more magnificent outstanding.

A Word from Editor-in-Chief

Research is the vital stream of life in the realm of insight and science. Its dynamism leads to generation and expansion of knowledge borders and neglecting this area, makes knowledge sleeping and lifeless, and the first consequence of this sleeping is ignorance. In these very days, we are witnessing the modern ignorance, which roots in absence of sound and lucid research in different areas.

Today research is considered to be a gate for expanding the borders of knowledge and plays an eminent role in human activities. Exploring humanities areas and Abrahamic religions can enable people to understand the human issues and difficulties to offer solutions for them.

The growing of different fields of knowledge demands discussions in more scientific areas. Today, Explaining a vast range of humanities Science areas and religions in global scope is a necessity.

International Multidisciplinary Journal of PURE LIFE (IMJPL) with the aim of creating a situation for presenting articles by scholars and researchers around the world, is trying to improve the level of scientific researches in humanities and religions for expanding the relationships among researchers in humanities and Abrahamic religions.

This interdisciplinary journal is published electronically and in each issue, approach is to deal with comparative studies in the field of religion and life. In every special issue, we are ready to publish scientific articles by scholars, researchers and professors around the world.

PURE LIFE is published, every season, in a form of an electronic journal. Thanks to Al-Mustafa Journals Commission, **PURE LIFE** as the first international journal in Al-Mustafa International University is ready to publish the scientific articles.



PAPER DERIVED FROM THESIS

An Analytical Approach to the Human Body from the Perspective of Transcendental Wisdom and Yoruba Philosophy

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT	
<p>Article History: Received: 15 November 2023 Revised: 20 January 2024 Accepted: 10 February 2024</p>	<p>SUBJECT & OBJECTIVES: This research paper aims to delve into the foundational beliefs and principles of Yoruba Philosophy and Transcendental wisdom regarding the human body, including its composition, function, and significance, aiming to explore the similarities and differences in their interpretations and comparative analysis between these two philosophies.</p>	
<p>Key Words: Human Body Imaginal Body Orunmila Yoruba Philosophy Transcendental Wisdom</p>	<p>METHOD & FINDING: By utilizing library research, descriptive analysis, and analytical approaches, this study provides a comprehensive examination of the concept of the human body in the realms of Yoruba Philosophy and Transcendental Wisdom. It investigates how these philosophical perspectives influence cultural practices, rituals, and beliefs related to the human body in Yoruba and Islamic societies, critically reflecting on the implications of these varied philosophical views for understanding the nature of the human body, its connection to the soul, and its place within cosmology and metaphysics.</p>	
<p>DOI: 10.22034/imjpl.2024.9506</p>	<p>CONCLUSION: The study conducts a comparative analysis of the human body in Yoruba Philosophy and Transcendent Wisdom, highlighting the divergent perspectives. In Yoruba Philosophy, the human body is viewed as an essential aspect of an individual's holistic existence, intricately connected to spiritual and material realms. It is considered to embody various spiritual essences and energies crucial for achieving internal equilibrium. The body also holds significant cultural and social value, representing personal and communal identities. Conversely, in Transcendental Wisdom, the human body is seen as a transient vessel facilitating the soul's pursuit of enlightenment and divine knowledge, portraying it as a means for its transcendental journey.</p>	
		
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<p>NUMBER OF REFERENCES 49</p>	<p>NUMBER OF AUTHORS 2</p>	<p>NATIONALITY OF AUTHOR (Nigeria, Iran)</p>

Introduction

Understanding the human body through *Yoruba Philosophy* is significant for many reasons. It highlights the body's spiritual aspects, viewing it as a vessel for the immortal soul and its connection to the environment. Traditional *Yoruba* healing practices emphasize body balance, reflecting personal and cultural identities. *Segun Gbadegesin* notes the body is a temporary home for the soul (*Gbadegesin, 1996*).

In contrast, *Mulla Şadrā's Transcendental Wisdom* also views the body as a vessel for the soul, introducing the "imaginal body" that bridges the physical and spiritual realms world (*Mulla Şadrā, 1981*).

This research explores the human body concept in both philosophies, focusing on their holistic nature.

As the primary research question, what is the human body concept in *Yoruba Philosophy* and *Transcendental*

Wisdom, and what common aspects do both schools share?

I will conduct a thorough examination using library, descriptive, and analytical methods. Engaging with *Yoruba Philosophy* is significant for its intricate connections between the human body and cultural, spiritual, and existential insights, allowing nuanced comparisons with *Transcendental Wisdom* and highlighting unique ontological and epistemological viewpoints.

Theoretical Foundations and Research Background

1. Human Body

The concept of the "human body" can be understood in various contexts. In Latin, it is called "Corpus" (*Wysiadecki et al., 2024*). The human body is defined as the physical substance of an organism, composed of living cells organized into tissues, organs, and systems (*The Encyclopaedia, 2024*).

Biologically, it consists of tissues and organs forming a single structure while containing

billions of cells that work together to sustain life. The study of the human body encompasses physiology (functions) and anatomy (structure) (*Villa-Forte, 2022*). Essentially, the body is a complex entity of organs and systems cooperating to fulfill vital functions (*Wysiadecki et al., 2024*). *Wieczorkiewicz Anna* (2000) notes that the body enables existence in time and space. Definitions of the human body and soul vary across philosophies (*Wysiadecki et al., 2024*).

2. Imaginal Body

The term "Imagination" in philosophy has two qualifiers: continuous and discontinuous. "Imagination" as discontinuous refers to the soul's perceptive faculty, while continuous pertains to the imaginal world, where the imaginal body exists (*Rahimian & Mohammad Zadeh, 2015*).

3. Orunmila

Shopie Bosede Oluwole explores three perspectives to reveal the essence of *Orunmila*: the

Mythical, Corporate, and Historical. The Mythical *Orunmila* is depicted as a celestial figure providing wisdom to the community, while the Corporate *Orunmila* embodies *Yoruba* philosophical thought and the continuity of teachings across generations. The Historical *Orunmila*, born around 500 B.C., propagated *Ifa* teachings and influenced its evolution through the *Babalawo* tradition. *Oluwole's* analysis positions *Orunmila* as a philosopher, the founder of *Ifa* divination, and a mentor to many brilliant minds, similar to *Socrates* in European culture (*Olúwolé, 2017*).

4. Yoruba Philosophy

The Yoruba people, a major sub-Saharan ethnic group primarily in Nigeria, make up 21.4% of the country's population, accounting for about 45,668,000 individuals (*World Data, 2023*), mainly in *Lagos, Oyo, and Ogun* (*Childs & Falola, 2005*). In the Benin Republic, they represent 12.2% of the population, totaling

1,586,000, with their presence extending from southern Nigeria to the *Weme River* and into the *Atakpame* region (*World Data, 2023*). *Yoruba* communities are also found in *Togo, Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire*, and the *diaspora* (*Akyeampong, 2000; Aribidesi, 2008*).

As articulated by *Prince Yemi D. Ogunyemi* (2018), *Yoruba Philosophy* is a narrative, cultural, and folk philosophy that explores the nature and origins of both physical and spiritual realms. It comprises narratives and customs aimed at understanding the universe's essence and causes (*Ogunyemi, 2015*). While it is a branch of African philosophy, it specifically centers on the *Yoruba* people, their environment, and their existence.

Practiced by *Yoruba* scholars, it acknowledges *Oduduwa* as the founder of the *Yoruba* nation and philosophy (*Agai, 2015; Kamau, 1976*). Topics encompass literature, folklore, proverbs, love, wisdom, religion, metaphysics, ethics, epistemology,

ontology, and anthropology. *Yoruba* philosophers investigate the physical and spiritual worlds through three key elements: *Ori, Ifa (Orunmila), aphorisms, and proverbs*.

5. Transcendental Wisdom

Al- Hikmat al-Muta'āliyah (Transcendental Wisdom) was pioneered by *Şadr al-Dīn Shīrāzi*, known as *Mulla Şadrā*. The term *Şadrāi* refers to *Mulla Şadrā's* disciples and students interested in his philosophical methods. Before *al-Hikmat al-Muta'āliyah*, four major schools of thought existed in the Islamic world, namely Peripateticism, Illuminative philosophy, Mysticism, and *Kalām* (theology). *Mulla Şadrā's* unique approach instigated a significant scientific revolution in Islamic philosophy, shaping its history, now recognized as the *Transcendental Wisdom* school (*Motahari, 1996*).

The term *al- Hikmat al-Muta'āliyah* was originally coined by *Avicenna* in *al-'Ishārāt* for his philosophical school,

now associated with Peripatetic Philosophy (Avicenna, 1997). *Transcendental Wisdom* blends intuitive and mystical experiences with rationality to address philosophical problems (Tusi, 1996; Ibrahim & Gorjian, 2023).

Like its predecessors, it discusses special and general theology. Mulla Şadrā introduced new topics, such as the "Primacy of Existence," which helped resolve various philosophical disputes, including those between philosophy, mysticism, and theology (Mulla Şadrā, 1981; Obudiyyat, 2014).

Literature Review

Yoruba Philosophy and *Transcendental Wisdom* have each examined the concept of the human body. Notable works include Temitope Adefarakan's article "8 Integrating Body, Mind, and Spirit Through the Yoruba Concept of Ori" (2018), Akin Makinde's (1984) study on "An African Concept of Human Personality: The Yoruba Example," Khademi et al (2021) research on the "Nature of Soul and Body in Sadraic

Solution to Soul and Body Problematique," and Mousavi Hadi's (2016) study on "The Concept of Body in Mulla Şadrā's Perspective." However, no comparative analysis between the two schools has been conducted to date.

The Concept of the Human Body in Yoruba

The term 'body' in *Yoruba* is 'Ara, which refers to the physical aspect of a human being, encompassing both external and internal components (Gbadegesin, 1996; Makinde, 1984). In *Yoruba Philosophy*, Ara is not limited to just the body frame but includes all material constituents (Oladipo, 1992), such as the external (*ori, oju, apa, ese, eti, imu, enu*) and internal organs e.g., brain, skull, intestines, kidneys, and liver (Dingemanse, 2006).

Each part has vital functions that sustain life (Jegede, 2005). Segun Gbadegesin views the body as a vessel representing various aspects of a person, facilitating interaction with the world through the senses. He

describes it as a temporary home for the soul, emphasizing its physical attributes. *Yoruba* thinkers largely agree there is more to a human than just the body (*Gbadegesin, 1996*).

1. The Creation of the Human Body

Yoruba Philosophy posits that the creation of the human body entails a division of labor among *Olodumare*, *Orisanla*, *Ajala* (*Gbadegesin, 1996*), and *Ogun* (*Makinde, 1984*). It is believed that *Olodumare* collaborated with these Gods i.e. *Orisanla*, *Ajala*, and *Ogun* to create human beings (*Gbadegesin, 1996*). *Orisanla*, in particular, was responsible for constructing and shaping the physical body (*Ibid*). This system can be likened to the system of creation of human beings aided by four supreme psychic forces known as the four great angels in *Transcendental Philosophy* (*Abdul Haq, 1972*). *Olodumare* then infused the soul into it (*Gbadegesin, 2004*).

Subsequently, the body, along with the living force (*emi*),

proceeds to the reservoir of inner heads (*ori*), which are molded by *Ajala*, where the individual selects their destiny (*ori*) (*Ibid*).

2. The Interconnection Between the Human Physical and Spiritual Bodies

The interconnection between the physical and spiritual bodies is a key concept in *Yoruba Philosophy*, where the physical body serves as a vessel for the spiritual body, encompassing the individual's essence or soul. Each body influences the other; the health of the physical body affects the spiritual body and vice versa. *Segun Gbadegesin* (1984) distinguishes the Material world (physical body) from the Non-material world (spiritual body), which is home to spiritual beings like *Olodumare*, *Orisa*, and *ancestors*. *Olodumare*, the supreme deity, operates indirectly through *Orisa*, who acts as an intermediary between *Olodumare* and humans while also protecting them from evil threats.

Ancestors are the forebears who transition from the material to the immaterial after death, acquiring divinity (*Gbadegesin, 2004*). *Abimbola* (1971) describes death as a transformation enabling individuals to gain greater authority and become an *Orisa* for their lineage. The connection between parents and children persists after death, with ancestors protecting their descendants from misfortune, while *Orisa* safeguards all humanity. Honoring ancestors is crucial for ensuring their protection and avoiding their wrath. This highlights the holistic nature of *Yoruba Philosophy*, where physical and spiritual realms are intertwined, and through rituals, the Yoruba aims to maintain balance and harmony, influencing their ethics, morality, and identity.

3. The Human Body's Fate After Death

Yoruba Philosophy emphasizes the duality of human beings, consisting of body and soul, referred to as the material (body) and non-material (soul)

worlds (*Gbadegesin 1984*). The material world includes physical entities like the human body, plants, animals, and land, while the non-material world is home to *Olodumare*, *Orisa*, and *ancestors*.

The material is mortal, while the spiritual is immortal, with the material world ultimately coming to an end, whereas the spirit world endures (*Ibid*). *Gbadegesin* suggests that the body is a temporary abode for the soul, enabling it to navigate the physical realm and fulfill earthly responsibilities (*Ibid*).

In *Yoruba* beliefs, death marks the end of earthly existence and the start of an afterlife, indicating that the 'end' refers to the fate of the body rather than the soul. Consequently, *Yoruba* philosophers focus more on the soul's fate after death rather than the body's.

Although there is a belief in reincarnation (*atunwaye*), where individuals return to fulfill uncompleted dreams, this manifests in three forms: *Ipadawaye* (ancestor's rebirth),

Akudaaya (die and reappear), and *Abiku* (born to die) (*Osanyinbí & Falana, 2016*).

The Concept of the Human Body in Transcendental Wisdom

The nature and definition of the body in *Mulla Şadrā's* philosophy is a complex and ambiguous issue within the transcendental philosophical system (*Mousavi, 2016*). Various perspectives emerge from published works, highlighting significant differences in interpreting the body based on *Mulla Şadrā's* expressions (*Ibid*). Consequently, finding a comprehensive definition that reconciles all his contradictory expressions proves challenging.

Mulla Şadrā often uses multiple adjectives to describe the body rather than a single term (*Ibid*). In *Transcendental Wisdom*, key foundations of the human body include the originality of existence, substantial motion, and the relationship between the soul and the body.

The term "body" refers to a natural organic entity capable

of vital functions and actions through various instruments (*Mulla Şadrā, 1981; Khademi et al, 2021*), applicable even to vegetative bodies. The soul is defined by philosophers as the "first entelechy of a natural body," (*Khamenei, 2003; Afzali & Ghasempour, 2014*) implying that a natural organic body is synonymous with the concept of a body (*Mulla Şadrā, 1981; Khademi et al, 2021*).

In *Transcendental Wisdom*, "organic" is interpreted as "possessing faculties," encompassing celestial, human, animal, and vegetative souls (*Ibid*). *Mulla Şadrā* posits that the body is a composite of conflicting elements tending toward separation, sustained by a force beyond itself (*Mulla Şadrā, 1981; Sajjadi, 1982*).

The body is a natural organic entity whose movement begins at conception as substantial motion (*Mulla Şadrā, 1981*). The body's quality relies on the soul's attachment; without the soul, the body lacks life

and resembles any inanimate object (*Mulla Şadrā, 1981*). The body represents the material aspect of the soul, and the unity of both is essential for regulation and sustenance (*Mulla Şadrā, 2003*).

According to *Transcendental Wisdom*, the decline of the soul leads to the body's decline, as the soul's excessiveness is linked to the body (*Mulla Şadrā, 1981*). If the soul diminishes, so does the body's existence, which depends on the soul's connection and its excessiveness (*Ibid*). *Mulla Şadrā* distinguishes between the material body and the real body, the latter being devoid of natural characteristics and inherently connected to the pure origin (*Ibid*). He identifies three categories of the body, namely the material body, the subtle body, and a new category called the imaginal body.

1. Material Body

The material body is a composite entity of matter and form, relying on matter for its existence (*Mulla Şadrā, 1981*;

Azarian, 2021). It consists of "matter" as the foundation and "form," and is primarily examined in physics. Both matter and form share a three-dimensional structure and are composed of the four elements (*al- 'Anasir al-Arb 'ah*) in various proportions (*Ibid*; *Sheikh, 2019*).

The material body exists in the physical world, displaying its effects and characteristics (*Mulla Şadrā, 1981*). *Mulla Şadrā* viewed the material body as made up of metaphysical elements that are in conflict and tend toward separation and disintegration (*Ibid*). These elements require the soul to maintain their balance and unity (*Mulla Şadrā, 2003*). According to *Transcendental Philosophy*, the material body is a composite entity with multiple facets and temporal qualities, marked by transient and unreal perceptible parts susceptible to decay (*Mulla Şadrā, 1981*; *Zamaniha & Yavari, 2018*).

The body's outward appearance differs from substances governed by the soul, which is achieved through intermediaries (*Mulla Şadrā, 1981; Khademi et al, 2021*). The material body serves as the vessel for the soul, preserving its essence and temperament; without it, the body decays, leaving no means for the soul's expression (*Mulla Şadrā, 1981; Obudiyyat, 2014*).

The soul is essential for the natural body, just as form is for matter. Matter lacks substantial form without the soul, and similarly, the soul cannot exist in the material world without the body. The soul's connection to the body is natural, resulting from the body's development through substantial movement. While the soul and body coexist in their natural states, in the afterlife, the body, having shed imperfections, becomes the form of the soul (*Mulla Şadrā, 2012*).

2. Imaginal Body

Mulla Şadrā was the first philosopher to demonstrate the

existence of a body beyond the material one, known as the "imaginal, exemplar, or ideal body" (*Mulla Şadrā, 2002; 1981; Obudiyyat, 2014; Miri, 2021*). He sometimes refers to this body as the psychic animal, intermediate animal, or animal soul (*Ibid*).

The imaginal body is distinct from matter but has material consequences, being superior to the material body, which serves merely as an outer shell between the pure soul and the physical body. Like the physical body, it has size, shape, and form, but it is immaterial and lacks mass.

Mulla Şadrā describes imaginal bodies as intermediaries between two worlds, blending abstraction and corporeality. They are akin to a shadow of the soul, inseparable from it, unlike perishable earthly bodies. The afterlife's elements, such as trees and rivers, take on conceptual forms based on perception, which embodies their essence (*Mulla Şadrā, 1981*).

The imaginal body, as described in *Şadrā*'s works,

enables us to interpret *Nafs* (soul) as an ideal body, serving as the source of vital activities and life in humans, thus aligning with the definition of the soul (*Ibid; Obudiyyat, 2014*). This relationship illustrates the complexity of the issue while offering potential solutions to philosophical problems, such as bodily resurrection, embodiment of actions, and dream interpretation.

A key function of the imaginal body in Transcendental wisdom is to clarify the connection between the soul and the body. *Mulla Şadrā* provides proof of the imaginal body's existence in *Asfar*, stating that it is the form perceived in dreams, where individuals experience sensory actions through spiritual faculties rather than physical organs (*Mulla Şadrā, 1981*).

3. Subtle Body

Mulla Şadrā describes the true primary human body as the subtle body, also referred to as the real body, luminous body, or primary body. In the ninth

volume of *Asfār*, he states that the soul operates not in the heavy body, which inherently induces slackness, but in a subtle, balanced, luminous entity that represents the primary (subtle) body, while the heavy body acts as its outer covering (*Mulla Şadrā, 2003*).

He emphasizes several characteristics of this real (subtle) body. They come as follows;

- It is a luminous essence.
- It can be enveloped by the physical body.
- It does not provoke tremors or shivers.
- It is one of the faculties of the soul.
- Light, perception, and life flow through it.
- Its relationship with the soul resembles that of light with the sun.
- The soul has essential control over it.
- It does not manifest through ordinary senses.
- It interacts with similar entities.
- It is inherently alive and immortal.

- It possesses an existential union with the soul (*Mulla Şadrā, 2003*).

Mulla Şadrā uses "luminous" for entities with a degree of abstraction (*Ibid*). The soul serves as the sheath of the luminous body only if the physical body's ultimate stage is viewed as the initial stage of the luminous body, allowing both to coexist. While the subtle body can be seen as a lower degree of the soul and the physical body as its covering, there is no existential unity between the two; they possess distinct levels of existence that allow for connection. This correspondence between their levels establishes the conditions for the soul's governance over the body (*Mousavi, 2016*).

One might wonder if Yoruba Philosophy divides the human body or recognizes another body as in *Transcendental Wisdom*. However, *Yoruba Philosophy* sees humans as having a single body that functions as a vessel for the

soul in the material world (*Gbadegesin, 2004*).

4. Human Body through the Lens of Substantial Motion

Mulla Şadrā viewed the body not just as a material aspect of humanity but as evolving toward abstract perfection through substantial motion (*Mulla Şadrā, 2003*). His philosophy emphasizes that the material world serves as the foundation for humanity's evolutionary journey toward pure abstraction.

According to the theory of substantial motion, the entire material universe transitions gradually from materiality to abstraction, and the human soul embodies this process. The soul starts as a corporeal entity and evolves spiritually through life in the earthly realm.

Initially, the soul requires a material body for its existence. As it progresses through stages of perfection, it manages the body and influences its faculties and organs, remaining dependent on it. *Mulla Şadrā* states that the

body is the material cause of the soul, which serves as the formal cause and essence of humanity (*Mulla Şadrā, 2003*).

The connection between the soul and body is mediated by a subtle, luminous spirit that possesses both corporeal and spiritual attributes. Once the soul attains perfection, it no longer needs the body, and its attachment diminishes until it eventually discards the body at natural death. *Mulla Şadrā* argues that the soul persists after death, associating with a liminal or otherworldly body (*Ibid*).

5. The Creation of the Human Body

Delving into the creation of human beings in *Transcendental Philosophy* necessitates referencing the Holy Qur'an and Ḥadīth. *Şadrāians* believe that God has incorporated the essence of all material elements into the physical constitution of human beings (*Mulla Şadrā, 1981; Abdul Haq, 1972*).

They provide evidence from these texts to support their claims, asserting that humans

synthesize both the material and spiritual worlds. In material terms, humans embody the total form of matter, integrated with the essence of all physical elements (*Ibid*).

Various verses of the Qur'an elucidate human creation, covering both body and soul (*Misbah Yazdi, 2010; Tabatabai, 1997*). The Qur'an mentions multiple stages and materials involved in this creation, including earth (*The Qur'an, 11: 61; 53: 32*), water (*The Qur'an, 25: 45; 21: 30; 77: 20; 32: 8; 86: 5-6; 25: 54*), sperm (*The Qur'an, 16: 4; 18: 37; 22: 5; 23: 13-14*), dust (*The Qur'an, 3 :59; 13: 5; 18: 37; 22: 5; 32: 7*), clay (*The Qur'an, 6: 2*), quintessence or extraction of clay (*The Qur'an 23: 12; 32: 7-9*), sticky clay (*The Qur'an, 37: 11*), sounding clay and mud molded in to shape (*The Qur'an, 15: 26,28,33*), sounding clay like the pottery (*The Qur'an, 55: 14*), and the Spirit breathed into humans (*The Qur'an, 15: 29; 38: 72*).

Şadrāians interpret these terms as follows: dust represents

primary matter; clay indicates a mixture of water and dust; quintessence refers to refined clay; sticky clay denotes malleable clay; sounding clay suggests air-molded clay; and the last forms signify the effects of fire (*Mulla Ṣadrā, 2000; Ibid, 2001; Abdul Haq, 1972*).

Ultimately, God completes the human body by breathing His Spirit into it (*The Qur'an, 15: 29; 38: 72*).

Transcendental Wisdom posits that the creation, maintenance, and reality of humans involve four supreme psychic forces or angels, namely *Isrāfīl*, *Mīkā'īl*, *Jibrīl*, and *ʿĀzar'ēl*. *Isrāfīl* breathes life into human bodies, while *Mīkā'īl* provides food and sustenance. *Jibrīl* conveys divine messages to prophets, and *ʿĀzar'ēl* abstracts forms from matter and transitions souls from the physical to the spiritual realm (*Mulla Ṣadrā, 2001*).

Each angel interacts with different human faculties: *Isrāfīl* influences thought and imagination, *Mīkā'īl* aids memory

and assimilation, *Jibrīl* enhances speech and comprehension, and *ʿĀzar'ēl* oversees the change from physical to spiritual existence (*Ibid; Tabatabai, 1997*).

6. The Human Body's Fate After Death

To understand the fate of the human body in *Transcendental Wisdom*, one must explore the material body's nature. According to *Ṣadrāians*, the body is a "Material body", a composite of matter and form, dependent on matter for existence (*Mulla Ṣadrā, 1981; Azarian, 2021*). It embodies metaphysical elements and consists of conflicting parts that naturally tend towards separation and disintegration (*Mulla Ṣadrā, 1981*).

The visible aspects of this body are transient, unreal, and subject to decay (*Mulla Ṣadrā, 1981; Zamaniha & Yavari, 2018*). The soul is essential for maintaining the body's balance and unity (*Mulla Ṣadrā, 1981; Khademi et al, 2021*), acting as its vessel and preserving its essence. Without

the body, the soul lacks the means for growth and expression (*Mulla Şadrā, 1981; Obudiyyat, 2014*). The soul's presence is as vital to the body as form is to substance; without the soul, the body lacks purpose (*Ibid*). In this philosophy, death signifies the body's decay and serves as the soul's transition to a higher realm, allowing it to fulfill its purpose and ascend.

Transcendental Wisdom categorizes existence into three realms: the lowest is the material world, transient and corrupt; the middle comprises ideal forms separated from matter; and the highest realm consists of intellectual forms and divine likeness. Only the human soul integrates these three realms while retaining personal unity. Throughout life, humans evolve, refining their essence and progressing towards a spiritual realm, eventually attaining intellectual capacities (*Mulla Şadrā, 1981*). Thus, death signifies the body's end in the material realm, confirming

the body's nature as part of the material world.

Comparative of Yoruba Philosophy and Transcendental Wisdom

This section investigates similarities and differences between *Yoruba Philosophy* and *Transcendental Wisdom*.

1. Creation of the Human Body

The creation process in *Yoruba Philosophy* parallels the human creation in *Transcendental Wisdom*. In *Yoruba* belief, creating the human body involves a collaborative effort among *Olodumare* (the Almighty), *Orisanla*, *Ajala*, and *Ogun* (*Gbadegesin, 1996; Makinde, 1984*). *Olodumare* directly creates the human soul, while *Orisanla* shapes the physical body and acts as a mediator between *Olodumare* and humans, protecting them from malevolent forces. *Ancestors* and *Orisa* both serve protective roles, but *Orisa* safeguards all humanity, whereas *ancestors* protect their

descendants (*Gbadegesin, 2004*). *Ajala* molds the inner heads (*ori*) and determines destiny, while *Ogun*, the God of Iron, shapes limbs and digits (*Makinde, 1984*).

Transcendental Wisdom similarly attributes the creation and reality of humans and the physical world to four supreme psychic forces known as the four great angels, namely *Isrāfīl*, *Mīkā'il*, *Jibrīl*, and *'Āzar'ēl* (*Mulla Ṣadrā, 2001*). *Isrāfīl* breathes life into human bodies, while *Mīkā'il* provides sustenance and ensures balanced growth. *Jibrīl* communicates divine revelations to prophets, and *'Āzar'ēl* separates the rational soul from the body, transferring it to the spiritual realm (*Tabatabai, 1997*).

- **Fate of the Human Body**

A significant similarity between both schools is their view on the fate of the human body after death. *Yoruba Philosophy* states that the material world

will eventually cease to exist, while the spirit world is eternal (*Gbadegesin, 1996*). The body serves as a temporary dwelling for the soul, allowing it to fulfill earthly duties, but its journey ends in the ground (*Ibid*). Death represents the end of human existence on earth and the beginning of an afterlife (*Gbadegesin, 2004*).

Similarly, *Transcendental Wisdom* views the material body as a vessel for the soul, essential for its development and expression (*Mulla Ṣadrā, 1981*). Without the body, the soul lacks a medium (*Obudiyyat, 2014*). The body's purpose is tied to the presence of the soul (*Azarian, 2021*). In this philosophy, death and decomposition signify the material body's role in facilitating the soul's transition to a higher realm beyond the material world (*Mulla Ṣadrā, 1981*).

- **Philosophical Foundation**

The main difference between

Yoruba and *Transcendental Wisdom* lies in their philosophical foundations. However, these distinctions can also be viewed as resemblances. *Yoruba Philosophy* is based on three key elements: *Ori*, *Ifa* (*Orunmila*), *aphorisms*, and *proverbs*. Similarly, *Transcendental Wisdom* relies on three essential elements for philosophical discussions: intellectual reasoning, revelation (intuition), the Holy Qur'an, and tradition (*Ibrahim & Gorjian, 2023*), though they vary in content, principles, and outcomes.

- **The Classification of the Cosmos**

Another difference between the two schools is their categorization of the universe. *Yoruba Philosophy* divides it into two realms: the material world and the non-material world. The material world is further split into two levels: the first level is the realm of direct experience, which includes the earth as a habitat for plants, animals, and

humans, where the body is a temporary residence for the soul. The second level lies beneath the ground, where individuals rest eternally. The non-material world consists of spiritual entities: *Olodumare*, the supreme deity who interacts with humans through *Orisa*, and *ancestors*, who were once humans (*Gbadegesin, 2004*).

In contrast, *Transcendental Wisdom* categorizes the universe into three realms: the material world, the ideal world, and the world of intellect (*Azarian, 2021*). The material world, characterized by motion, space, and time, represents the transition from potentiality to actuality and is seen as the most fragile realm (*Ibid*). Everything in this realm serves as a symbol of the ideal and intellectual realms (*Mulla Sadrā, 1981*).

The ideal world, which is relatively immaterial, exists between the material and intellectual worlds, exhibiting attributes of matter without physical substance (*Ibid*). The

world of intellect consists of entirely immaterial beings (*Ibid*). This hierarchical structure places the ideal world above the material world and the intellectual world at the apex, symbolizing the presence of the Almighty God as the source of all existence (*Ibid*).

- **Classification of the Human Body**

Yoruba Philosophy views humans as having one body that serves as a vessel for the soul to fulfill its purpose in the material world. (*Gbadegesin, 2004*). In contrast, *Transcendental Wisdom*

categorizes the body into two types: the material body belonging to the material world and the ideal body belonging to the non-material world (*Mulla Sadrā, 1981*).

The table below highlights similarities in shaded areas, while differences are presented in white.

Comparative of *Yoruba Philosophy* and *Transcendental Wisdom*

No	Title	Yoruba Philosophy	Transcendental Philosophy
1	Creation of the Human Body	involves a division of labor among <i>Olodumare, Orisanla, Ajala, and Ogun</i> .	Involves distributing tasks among the four great angels: <i>Isrāfīl, Mīkā'il, Jibrīl, and 'Āzar`ēl</i> .
2	Fate of the Human Body	Its journey concludes with death	Its journey ends through death.
3	Philosophical Foundation	<i>Ori, Ifa (Orunmila), aphorisms, and proverbs</i> .	Intellectual reasoning, revelation, Holy Qur'an, and tradition.
4	Classification of the Cosmos	The material world and the non-material world.	The material world, the ideal world, and the world of intellect.
5	Classification of the Human Body	Material body	Material and imaginal body

Conclusion

Yoruba Philosophy views the human body as essential to an individual's existence, linking the material and spiritual realms. It is seen as housing vital spiritual energies, with its well-being crucial for harmony and balance, while also reflecting cultural identity. Conversely, *Transcendental Wisdom* regards the body as a temporary vessel for the soul's journey toward enlightenment. Despite differing perspectives, both philosophies highlight the body's spiritual connection and the importance of maintaining its health for spiritual growth. This comparative analysis enriches our understanding of the body across cultures, emphasizing holistic health and fostering respect for diverse beliefs in a global community.

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ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Mulla Şadrā's Moral Realism and its Effects on Pure Life

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ARTICLE INFO		ABSTRACT
Article History: Received: 25 January 2024 Revised: 20 March 2024 Accepted: 15 April 2024	SUBJECT & OBJECTIVES: Moral realism means that moral values are real regardless of feelings and emotions, collective agreement, and the orders of anyone. This article aims to explain the relationship between <i>Mulla Şadrā's</i> viewpoint and moral realism, as well as the influence of his thoughts on our lives.	
Key Words: <i>Moral Philosophy</i> <i>Moral Value</i> <i>Moral Realism</i> <i>Pure Life</i> <i>Mulla Şadrā</i>	METHOD & FINDING: The research benefitted from an analytical-descriptive method. At first, by referring to all the works of <i>Mulla Şadrā</i> , his moral ontological foundations were deduced, and based on his statements and foundations, it was analyzed in an integrated manner and finally, its effect on pure life has been explained. We have concluded that based on <i>Mulla Şadrā's</i> idea, he is a realist. We can enumerate the following shreds of evidence to prove this claim: 1) The reality of the moral criterion, 2) The criticism of divine command theory, 3) The real basis of moral judgments, 4) The consequences of moral judgments, and 5) The manifestation of inner attributes. Additionally, we have demonstrated that action based on the realistic foundations of <i>Mulla Şadrā</i> will direct life towards a divine life with true happiness and will suggest a different way of life.	
DOI: 10.22034/imjpl.2024.9292	CONCLUSION: Action based on the realistic principles of <i>Mulla Şadrā</i> will guide life towards a divine life with true happiness and will suggest a different way of life.	
		
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Introduction

All human beings are looking for happiness and true perfection. But what is happiness and perfection? And how can they be achieved? In response to these two questions, various theories have been presented, which sometimes appear to be in opposition to each other. In many cases, disagreements on moral issues are rooted in fundamental differences, that's why moral values differ from one school to another. For example, perfection and happiness are different for an irreligious person and a religious one, and happiness is different for a liberal and a communist. Therefore, it is useful and necessary to examine the intellectual foundations of thinkers.

Examining the foundations of *Mulla Şadrā's* moral thought is important because he is considered one of the greatest Islamic thinkers and many philosophers, theologians, and thinkers in other fields of humanities are influenced by his thoughts. Therefore, examining his opinions is also effective in

understanding the opinions of other Islamic thinkers.

We are trying to investigate the foundations of *Şadrā* in the field of ethics. A proper understanding of these foundations can be effective in shaping specific and pure life. In other words, building one's life based on strong intellectual foundations frees a person from doubt and enables him to live a happy life peacefully and away from anxiety and stress. Such a style of life will not be achieved but through relying on the authentic foundations that Islamic thinkers have introduced. Therefore, the purpose of the author in this research is to introduce the intellectual foundations of *Mulla Şadrā* and its effect on the realization of pure life. The author believes that paying attention to strong and reliable foundations and regulating life based on them can provide the human need for peace and comfort in life.

Among the various ethical foundations, we focused on the ontological foundations of

ethics and examined them from the perspective of *Mulla Ṣadrā*, the founder of *Transcendental Wisdom*. The most important issue in the ontological field of ethics is the issue of moral realism or non-realism. According to moral realism, morality is rooted in reality, but according to non-realism, morality is based on individual feelings, collective agreements, etc. The answer to the question of whether morality is real or not has a tremendous impact on our moral decisions, actions, and judgments. Hence, its examination is of particular importance. So, we concentrated on moral realism from *Mulla Ṣadrā*'s viewpoint and the impact of his foundation on pure life in brief.

Although few works related to his intellectual foundations have been published, the discussion of moral realism from his viewpoint and its influence on our lives has not been investigated. For this reason, the review of their opinions can provide the basis for further research. Therefore, as the main question of this

study, what is *Mullah Ṣadrā*'s ontological foundations in moral issues and what effect does his view have on pure life?

Theoretical Foundations and Research Background

1. Moral Realism

Several definitions have been presented for moral realism. Referring to some of the provided definitions, we will explain what we mean by moral realism. *Richard W Miller* believes that in moral realism, moral judgments are considered to be statements of truth. These statements do not merely describe the beliefs or cultural norms of the person making the claim, but instead, they assert objective moral truths that can be recognized by others. (*Miller, 1992: 1154*)

McNaughton believes that the moral reality is independent of our moral beliefs which determines whether they are true or false (*McNaughton, 1991: 7*).

According to *Jonathan Dancy*, moral realism is the belief that there are objective facts about what is right and wrong, and

what is good and bad. However, this belief is complex and can be categorized into the following three main claims;

1. Moral facts are considered special and different from other facts, but there is disagreement among realists as to whether natural facts can be considered moral facts.
2. Moral facts are independent of beliefs or thoughts that people may have about them.
3. People can make mistakes about what is right and wrong, even if they think carefully about their decisions. (Ref; Dancy, 1998)

Examining each of the above-mentioned definitions demands another domain. By separating the epistemological aspects from the ontological ones, moral realism can be considered as a belief i.e., regardless of the feelings and desires of individuals, the contract and collective agreement and order of the commanders, moral values are real. Then we discover values not construct them.

The common point of *Mulla Ṣadrā* and the moral philosophers,

who defined realism from their viewpoint, is the belief in objective reality for moral values, not subjective one, i.e., regardless of the moral agent, moral values exist. Of course, *Mulla Ṣadrā*'s view differs from other realists in two following ways at least;

The first point is the type of reality of moral values in which *Mulla Ṣadrā* goes back to the real relationship between voluntary affairs and the true perfection of man, but the type of moral reality in the Western philosophers' viewpoint is different due to the differences in foundations, and includes items such as being adaptable with nature, rationality, etc. The second point is the separation of ontological aspects from epistemological ones, since in other theories such as *Miller*'s and *McNaughton*'s definition, the issues of the truth or falsity of moral propositions are also pointed out, which refer to epistemology and not the ontology, while in *Ṣadrā*'s view, these matters are apart from each other.

2. *Al- Ḥayāt al-Ṭayyibah* (pure life)

Another issue refers to clarifying *al-Ḥayāt al-Ṭayyibah* (pure life). The term *Ṭayyibah* (pure) has several meanings like good, pleasant, agreeable, nice, and lawful. (Ref: *Ibn Manzur, 1993, Vol.9: 227&563*)

It is meant in the Holy Qur'an as good (*The Qur'an, 3: 38; 9: 72*), pure, or lawful. (*The Qur'an, 2: 168; 4: 43*)

The phrase of pure life was once mentioned within the Holy Qur'an where Allah (AWT) said,

“Whoever acts righteously, [whether] male or female, should he be faithful, We shall revive him with a pure life and pay them their reward by the best of what they used to do”.
(*The Qur'an, 16: 97*)

In short, a pure life can be considered as a kind of individual or social life that is characterized by calmness, smoothness, purity, peace of mind, free from any kind of pollution, oppression, betrayal, enmity and hatred, captivity and humiliation, as well as all kinds

of worries that makes our life unpleasant. (*Muhammad-Bello et al, 2021*)

3. Mulla Şadrā

Şadr al-Dīn, Moḥammad b. Ibrāhīm al-Shīrāzī, known as *Şadr al-Muti'allihīn* and *Mullā Şadrā* is one of the most important philosophers after *Avicenna*. He is the thinker who revolutionized the doctrine of existence in Islamic metaphysics and extended the shift from *Aristotelian* substance metaphysics to *Neoplatonic* process metaphysics of change. He mixed logical reasoning, spiritual inspiration, and deep meditation upon key scriptural sources of the Twelver Shi'i tradition and innovated a new methodology in his system of thought. (*Rizvi, 2007: 1-2*)

Mulla Şadrā's positions related to ethics are found in some of his works like *Al-Hikmat al-Muta'aliya fi l-Asfar al-'Aqliyyat al-Arba'a*, *Kasr al-Asnam al-Jahiliyya*, *Risala-yi Sih asl* and *Mazahir al-Ilahiyya*.

The moral philosophy, as it is popularized today, was not popular during *Mulla Şadrā's*

lifetime. Therefore, it is normal that the issues of moral philosophy cannot be found in a single, detailed, and coherent manner in his works. Thus, to cite the opinions of moral philosophy in general and moral ontology (moral realism) and its influence on pure life in particular, it is necessary to consider their related expressions and extract their viewpoint by analyzing and examining them. On one hand, to deduce the issues of moral realism, it is not enough to study and examine a specific work, all works should be considered.

On the other hand, examining the background of the research shows that *Mulla Ṣadrā's* views on ontology i.e., philosophy in the general sense, general epistemology, and politics have been published in a limited number of works. However, nothing was found regarding the ontological foundations of his ethics, especially what focuses on the explanation of moral realism from his viewpoint and paying attention to its effect on pure life.

Evidence for *Ṣadrā's* Moral Realism

Although *Mulla Ṣadrā* did not provide an independent definition for Moral Realism, it seems that, based on his perspective, it is necessary to separate epistemological from ontological dimensions in the aforementioned definitions of moral realism. For example, whether moral judgments are true or false is related to the epistemology of ethics, but whether moral values are real, regardless of the moral agent, is a completely ontological issue. Therefore, from his viewpoint, realism can be seen as believing in the reality of moral values and their non-dependence on the moral agent or agents. So, all the viewpoints that consider ethics to be dependent on the feelings of individuals or collective agreement or commands that are not based on reality, have in a sense considered ethics to be dependent on the moral agent and hence are considered nonrealistic theories. (*Misbah, 2008: 48*)

To explain moral realism from *Mulla Ṣadrā's* viewpoint, various explanations can be presented, the most important of which in this context includes explanation through the reality of the criterion of goodness and badness, the causal relationships in moral judgments, real consequences, and the manifestation of inner attributes in the hereafter.

The Reality of the Criterion

One of the most important proofs to establish moral realism according to *Mulla Ṣadrā's* viewpoint is his emphasis on real purpose in morality. According to *Mulla Ṣadrā*, moral value depends on its effect on happiness. Furthermore, happiness is real and the effect of human actions on real happiness is real as well. In other words, moral values are not dependent on the order, taste, and feelings of individuals or collective agreement ontologically. Therefore, based on the famous classification of moral theories, his view is classified as a teleological school of thought. (*Frankena, 1988:14*)

To explain moral realism through the reality of the criterion, it is enough to pay attention to the reality of the ultimate goal. Therefore, focusing on the criterion of morality, we will explain its reality.

As will be explained, According to *Mulla Ṣadrā's* viewpoint, every human action affects his perfection. According to him, the true perfection of man is connected with the active intellect, joining the world of intellects, and finally, proximity to God Almighty. (*Mulla Ṣadrā, 1981a, V.9: 231*)

Proximity to God is an undeniable truth that is not achievable except after the realization of the congruent causes.

According to him, perfection, happiness, and goodness, which are considered the goal of morality, belong to the category of existence (*Ref: Ibid, 2020*), and man must achieve his genuine perfection through theoretical and practical efforts, which is the realization of the transcendental

state, connection to the world of intellects, and true understanding of the universe. From *Mulla Ṣadrā's* viewpoint, although every existential perfection cannot be considered a moral perfection, every moral perfection is necessarily an existential perfection. It is clear that this goal is real and its achievement also depends on performing certain actions and realizing the attributes and properties that are appropriate to it. Therefore, the intrinsic value that is applied to the goal of morality is real. Instrumental values, which refer to the effect of actions in achieving goals, are also real, because every action has a real effect, either positive or negative, in realizing the true happiness of man, whether those effects can be seen in the world or not. So, the criterion of goodness and badness is real and objective. (*Mulla Ṣadrā, 1981a, Vol.4: 115; Ibid , (2020); Ibid, 1960*) Therefore, the real criterion for morality guarantees that *Mulla Ṣadrā's* moral viewpoint is among realistic theories.

Causal Relationships in Moral Judgments

Mulla Ṣadrā explained the relationship between jurisprudence and morality in such a way that jurisprudential rulings are like doctors' recommendations, which appear to praise medicine and order to use it but refer to the real background of those recommendations and orders. In other words, the doctors' recommendations do not imply the inherent desirability of that medicine, but rather that the use of medicine is effective in reducing pain and ultimately finding recovery. Religious and jurisprudential rulings are often issued in the form of order or prohibition, but each of them refers to the causal relationship between some actions and the true happiness of man, which is often not taken into account:

Likewise, legal and religious actions are a cure for heart diseases, while they are something that most people do not feel, most of them have neglected it, and few are aware of the ways of connection and

relation between the actions that the Law commanded us to do and the creation of virtuous states and the avoidance of heart diseases. (*Mulla Ṣadrā, 2002: 82-83*)

Therefore, the prescriptive appearance of jurisprudence or religious rulings should not prevent attention to the fact that the ruling was issued regarding that fact and reality. Divine decrees have been established to prevent the creatures from the vices and moral defects that cause people to attach to worthless worldly affairs and prevent them from achieving true happiness and to guide them to proximate to the almighty God (*Ibid, 2002: 153*). The wisdom behind all orders and religious rules is to guide man toward his true happiness, and none of them is devoid of strengthening human faculties. (*Ibid, 1981b: 368*)

Consequences of Moral Judgment

Another way to prove moral realism based on *Mulla Ṣadrā's* viewpoint is to pay attention to

the real consequences of moral rulings. *Mulla Ṣadrā* considered actions such as adultery, stealing, gossiping, killing, violating the rights of orphans, and oppressing others to be existential matters (*Ibid, 2002, Vol.7: 61*). He explained that although these things are considered perfect and good compared to the animal aspect of man, they are considered defects and evil compared to human perfection.

Mulla Ṣadrā referred to three points in explaining the immorality of the aforementioned actions, each of which can be considered an independent proof to demonstrate that *Mulla Ṣadrā's* theory is one of realistic viewpoint. The first point is to explain the true perfection of man. He explained that the perfection of human rationality is dependent on the formation of the transcendental state and overcoming desire and anger, and the defect of the intellectual faculty is that it is defeated by the animal. This explanation indicates that *Mulla Ṣadrā's* viewpoint is a realistic one.

The second point refers to the argument that *Mulla Ṣadrā* has presented to prove the immorality of the mentioned actions. In his opinion, these actions are reprehensible since they are deviations from the reason and revealed rulings.

The third point, which can be considered as the logical support of the reason and revealed ruling is that the aforementioned actions lead to unfortunate effects and consequences such as separating lineage and inheritance, challenging the upbringing of children, disruption of the system, chaos, sedition, and rebellion. These results are the real consequences of unethical acts (*Mulla Ṣadrā, 1981a, Vol.7, 103-106*). Therefore, *Mulla Ṣadrā*'s moral view can be considered realistic in terms of real practical consequences.

The Manifestation of Inner Attributes

Each of the inner attributes or dispositions has a special appearance in every one of each abode and world (*Ibid, 1981b: 329*). Therefore, a face

can have different effects on different places. For example, water in the world is a liquid and when it comes into contact with something, it moistens that thing, but water does not have such an effect in imaginal and intellectual worlds.

In the same way, moral dispositions also have a different effect in this world and the hereafter, e.g., anger in this world brings effects such as redness of the face and warmth of the body, but it is not unlikely that in the hereafter will appear as a fire that will burn its owner. (*Ibid, 1981b: 329-330*)

Based on the acceptance of the embodiment of actions, the repetition of each of the actions causes the formation of sensual properties corresponding to it, and these sensual properties appear in the next world in physical forms corresponding to that world. Therefore, each of lust, anger, envy, hatred, arrogance, conspiracy, hypocrisy, complacency, or their reverse characteristics have a reality that the eyes of many people

are obscured from seeing them, but their reality is in the form of beasts, snakes, and scorpions and it is visible with the eye of discernment.

According to *Mulla Ṣadrā*, these torments that appear in the form of snakes and scorpions are not material and constructed torments, but rather external forms of the person's soul that have become such. Indeed, these horrible faces are the face of his actions in this world, which have become visible to him in the hereafter. These forms also exist before death, but the moral agent is not able to understand them. (*Mulla Ṣadrā, 1960; Ibid, 1996: 239-240*)

Every inner state and disposition that dominates a person in this world will find its corresponding form in the hereafter. (*Ibid, 1996: 241*)

Every human being in the hereafter, depending on the attributes that s/he got used to in this world, will be surrounded by forms that match those attributes. The result of the predominance of the traits of

lust and desire is to associate with animals such as bears, pigs, or insects (*Ibid, 1961, 28*). The predominance of anger, rage, and predatory nature is to be resurrected in the form of dogs and wolves, harassment of others leads to being resurrected in the form of snakes and scorpions, thieves and tricksters appear in the form of rats and crows, the predominance of arrogance would entail to a lion and a leopard form, the result of self-exaltation is the face of a peacock and a partridge, and the result of greed and hoarding of goods is being resurrected in the form of an ant, and in general, it can be said that everyone will be resurrected according to his/her intentions. (*Ibid, 1961: 45-51*)

All the blessings of heaven and the torments of hell can be interpreted on this basis and it is the natural result of human behavior which will appear in the hereafter. (*Ibid, 1981a, Vol.7: 81-83*)

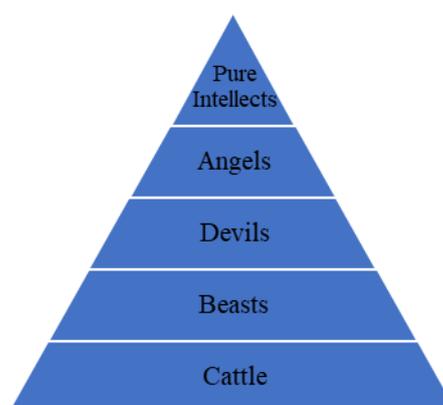
Based on the above proofs and evidence, we can consider *Mulla Şadrā* as a realist in the field of ethics. Additionally, he has positively explained the reality of moral values, and at the same time, he has explained realism negatively, criticizing nonrealistic theories such as the divine command theory.

1. The Levels of Moral Reality

Moral reality is the very existence and its degrees that man achieves by his own free will and by overcoming the faculties of lust and anger, and it is called happiness and perfection. (*Mulla Şadrā, 1981a, Vol.8: 107; Islmainasab et al, 2022*) Undoubtedly, based on the foundations of *Mulla Şadrā*, existence and consequently happiness, which is the type of existence, contains different levels. If we consider the moral reality as both positive and negative, it can be said that according to *Mulla Şadrā*, some humans are not only in the rank of animals, but also inferior to animals, and this is because of their interest in worldly and animal affairs.

Some others are in the rank of animals, and some are in a rank that obeying them is obeying God, doing business with them is doing business with God, and observing them is observing the Almighty. This shows that the moral reality has different levels and each person may reach one of these wide levels according to his actions and inner attributes. According to some of *Şadrā's* sayings (*Ref: Ibid, 1981a, Vol.8: 107*), human beings may fall into one of the following categories and each of them can achieve a much higher position based on the correct moral choice and purity of their heart. (*Khazaei, 2018*)

Fig.1: Levels of the Human's Soul



Reference: *Mulla Şadrā, 1981a, Vol.8: 107*

In this regard, an important question is raised in what process and by what mechanism

can a human being reach the highest level of happiness, or may he fall to the lowest level of morality and sometimes be dragged into the abyss of immorality or anti-morality? *Mulla Ṣadrā* has answered this question in several positions of his works. In his opinion, the human soul, while being single, simple, and immaterial, is the origin of all-natural and animal actions and movements, and the soul's faculties play the role of preparatory cause. This statement means that whenever there is perception or stimulation, the human soul is active at that level.

For example, in seeing, hearing, and thinking, it is the human soul that is placed in the rank of faculty of seeing, hearing, and intellect, and when it is provoked to appetitive affairs, anger, or enthusiasm for doing good deeds, it is the soul that works in the rank of appetitive and irascible or intellectual faculties.

Accordingly, a person changes and diversifies at every moment based on his

activity, and except for a few people whose eyes have been opened in this world, they are unaware of this fact. (*Mulla Ṣadrā, 1981b: 229-230; Ibid, 1984: 553*)

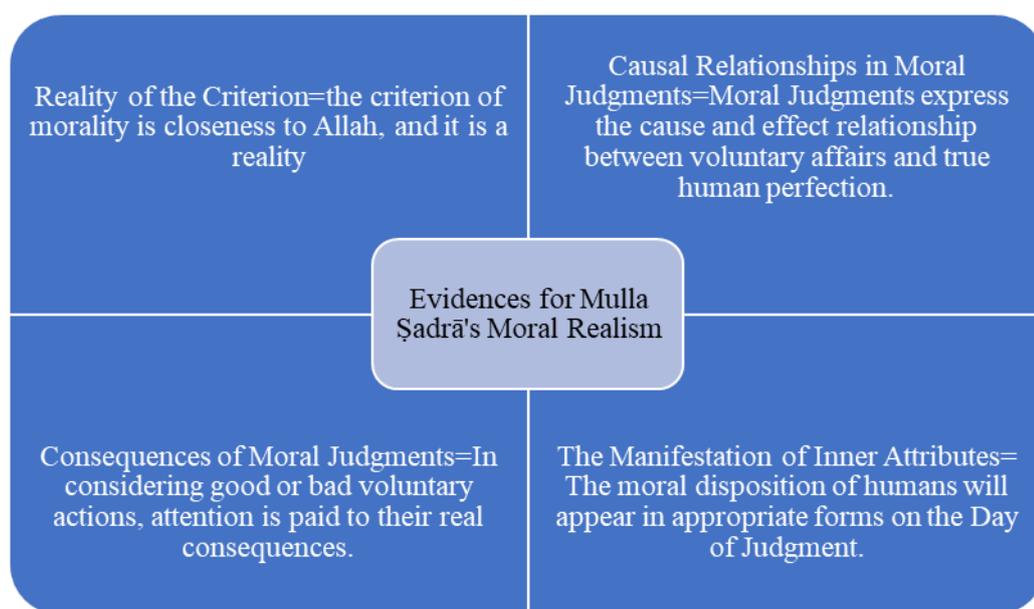
Therefore, the connection of the soul with each of the different levels can be effective in its belonging or disconnection to the world and worldly affairs, and consequently, the position of the soul among the different levels of happiness.

It is worth mentioning that the levels of moral reality are not limited to the three mentioned levels. There are many levels between happiness and misery. Each stage of this reality can also be depicted as the stage. The example of true human happiness, which is associated with entering heaven and enjoying divine blessings, has several levels. The lowest level of intellectual happiness of people is to know God, creation, and God's attributes like knowledge, will, and power, as well as active intellects, i.e., the angels, to know the system of creatures

and to reach the level of acquired intellect. (*Mulla Ṣadrā, 2020*)

The differences that exist between human beings do not exist in any type of species. Human matter is created in such a way that it can transfer to any kind of form and attributes to any features, from the level of beast animals to the highest level of close

angels. Some are in the rank of beasts. Some are at the rank of predatory. Some are on the devil's level and some are like angels. For each of these four items, there are unlimited types.



2. Function of Ṣadrā's Realism in Pure Life

As mentioned in the first proof of *Mulla Ṣadrā's* moral realism, from his viewpoint, the criterion of moral value is real, that is closeness to God Almighty. Accordingly, the moral value of any action is dependent on how far that

action takes a person away or closer to God. This basis, which requires the acceptance of God Almighty as the origin of existence and also the acceptance of resurrection as the place where the results of human's worldly actions are manifested, is very influential in

the human pure life and distinguishes the life of believers in God and monotheists from polytheists and deniers of God. It is clear that God plays a central role in life, and the believer always strives to gain God's pleasure, owes all his facilities to God, and submits and obeys his orders. In contrast, life is based on unrealistic views such as emotionalism, socialism, existentialist ethics, and other views in which man is authority and not God. Man focuses on material and worldly affairs and ignores the other world while according to the verses of the Holy Qur'an, the world is the real and alive one,

“The abode of the Hereafter is indeed Life”.
(The Qur'an, 29: 64)

Since believing in unrealistic approaches leads people to animalism instead of bringing them a good and pure life and real happiness. In some verses of the Holy Qur'an, God warns believers from adopting such approaches. For example, based on the 216th verse of Surah Baqarah, God Almighty denies the association between human desire and achieving happiness and has pointed out that following

one's hopes, wishes, and desires may not lead to happiness. In this respect, Allah (SWT) said,

“Yet it may be that you dislike something while it is good for you, and it may be that you love something while it is bad for you and Allah knows and you do not know”.
(The Qur'an, 2: 216)

In some other verses, He forbade following convention and the majority of people, because most people act based on suspicions, and following them is not necessarily related to attaining reality and perfection. He said,

“If you obey most of those on the earth, they will lead you astray from the way of Allah. They follow nothing but conjectures and they do nothing but surmise”.
(The Qur'an, 6:116)

According to Islamic moral thought and based on Mulla Ṣadrā's perspective, the best life is achieved when a person chooses the right path wisely and preserves the dignity and position of humanity, which is a divine position, and avoids drowning

in worldly pleasures and lusts and neglecting the hereafter.

Another point related to *Mulla Ṣadrā's* realistic thought and providing a desirable and happy life can be obtained from the third reason mentioned. *Mulla Ṣadrā* has dealt strongly with literalism in his works. It means that instead of deep thinking, one is satisfied with superficial evidence, and based on that, a verdict is issued, or instead of thinking about the subject of discussion and without understanding the secret and the reason for the events and happenings, human time is spent doing routines. For example, instead of thinking about the meanings of the verses of the Holy Qur'an and putting the correct understanding of divine knowledge at the top of his life, he spends his attempts only on reading the correct letters and words of the scriptures. The result of such superficiality will be a lack of correct understanding of religious teachings. (*Mulla Ṣadrā, 1984: 62-63*)

A superficial life may make a person appear happy confronting others, but in reality, it is not a happy life and it does not bring

true growth and perfection. This point is instructive both for the life of believers and non-believers. It is a lesson for the believers since it reminds them to give depth to their worship and not to be satisfied with the mere performance of worship in an outward form. It is possible to fulfill one's duty outwardly by performing prayer and fasting, but prayer and fasting that are devoid of the spirit of servitude, neither make man aware of higher perfections, nor make him aware of God Almighty, and do not cause him to be humble before God. This doctrine, i.e., the negation of appearances, is also useful for non-believers because it prevents their hypocrisy, arrogance, and selfishness against the truth and provides the ground for their guidance and salvation.

The third reason inspires the point that all moral and jurisprudential rulings in some way express the real relationship between voluntary affairs and human happiness. Therefore, even though the moral recommendations and jurisprudential rules are in the form of orders and it may be

difficult for some Muslims to act on their basis, it should be noted that all the mentioned rules are rooted in reality, and acting according to them brings true happiness. This explanation will make a person accept those commandments with satisfaction. Therefore, paying attention to the philosophy of moral and jurisprudence rules is the guarantee of human happiness and this can be considered as one of the advantages of *Shari'ah*-based religions. In these religions, there are more opportunities to guide people to happiness, of course, if there are no distortions in those rules.

The fourth reason given to explain *Mulla Ṣadrā's* realism also inspires the point that human actions are influential in shaping the future of human life and the future must be built with moral actions and only in this way can mankind be freed from existing moral problems. Ignoring the rights of the oppressed, colonization of weak people and governments, and moral corruption related to women are part of existing moral problems that cannot be overcome except by living morally.

Mulla Ṣadrā's realism can also affect human life in another way. *Ṣadrā's* attention to the issue of the embodiment of human actions and the effect of human actions on his inner self and character is an important point that prevents humans from committing vices. If a person pays attention to the point in his moral life that every action, however small, forms a part of his existential structure or personality and has an influence on his inner being and will be resurrected in the same inner form in the hereafter, he will be more careful in performing his actions morally.

The pure life of such a person will be different from others in economic, social, political, and cultural matters because such a person feels more responsible towards God Almighty and His creatures. Such a person always considers himself in the presence of God, as stated in the 14th verse of Surah 'Alaq, "Does he not know that Allah sees [him]?" He does not usurp and encroach on the rights of others, respects others, and strives to fight

moral corruption in society. He does not prefer the satisfaction of the creature to The Creator in political matters and he will strive to promote religious culture in the society.

The last noteworthy point about the influence of *Mulla Şadrā's* realism in life is the gradual influence of actions on the moral growth of human beings. In other words, it is not the case that a person can expect infinite moral development with a single moral act, but to achieve true happiness, one must go step by step and by constantly taking care of the actions, provide the ground for the promotion of morality from one level to a higher one.

Conclusion

Examining *Mulla Şadrā's* opinions in his works indicates that he has adopted a realistic approach to moral issues. According to him, moral values have real support. The reality that is the basis of moral judgments is the relationship between the voluntary actions of man and the results that are obtained for him. We mean by result the

growth and perfection of the soul that is gradually achieved for the human soul and takes him from the lowest material level to the highest spiritual one. Therefore, as mentioned, moral values have different levels in proportion to the perfection that is achieved for the soul, and they have different levels (gradation). Depending on the achievement of each level, every person will enjoy the results in this world and the hereafter. For this reason, enjoying the blessings, especially the blessings of the afterlife can be seen as a witness and a sign for determining the level of moral development in each person.

It also became clear that a realistic view of morality is effective in human life, and especially when it is accompanied by a divine interpretation of happiness, it can guarantee the true happiness of a person in this world and the hereafter. Believing in this interpretation of happiness, which is under *Mulla Şadrā's* perspective, will put a person's life on a different path and will draw his attention from this world to the hereafter, and without

becoming a prisoner of worldly pleasures and lusts, he will use them in the direction of moral growth and perfection. The result of such a life will be satisfactory interaction with others, satisfaction with personal life, pleasing God Almighty, and respect for the environment.

When a person realizes that regardless of the wishes and desires of people, social agreements, and divine commands, there is a real and ontological relationship between voluntary affairs and the true happiness of a person, and each of the voluntary movements of a person causes the rise or fall of him, he will be more careful in choosing his actions. Undoubtedly, every wise individual who is concerned about securing his real happiness, with a correct understanding of the above-mentioned moral realism, will experience a different life and will adopt a religious pure life whose minimum result is worldly peace and enjoying divine blessings in the Hereafter.

In this life, the level of human responsibility will reach its peak and its scope will include not only other

humans, but also God, himself, and other animals and plants. The result of this level of responsibility is that no one's rights will be violated as much as possible. Another point is that the center of human attention in this style of life is God Almighty instead of being a human being, and His satisfaction is preferred over the satisfaction of others. In moral dilemmas, the acquisition of spiritual things that are pleasing to God is preferred over material things that are pleasing to creatures.

Another consequence of believing in moral realism is that the inner and spirit of actions are more important than their appearance in the eyes of the moral realist. For this reason, even when performing the duties and tasks that are his responsibility, he performs them not only for the reason that is obligatory on him but also because it leads to his growth and perfection. Therefore, he does not feel dissatisfaction and fatigue in performing his duties, but he performs them with complete peace and satisfaction.

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Author Contributions

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ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

An Analysis of the Impacts of Religious Ethics Principles on the Individual Lifestyle in the Contemporary Era

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT	
<p>Article History: Received: 28 December 2023 Revised: 09 February 2024 Accepted: 20 March 2024</p>	<p>SUBJECT & OBJECTIVES: The article provides an analysis and evidence on the impact of ethical principles on individual lifestyles. Ethical principles in their moderate state are admitted and recommended in Islam.</p>	
<p>Key Words: <i>Ethical Principles</i> <i>Religious Ethics</i> <i>Theocentrism</i> <i>Soul Control Individual</i> <i>Lifestyle</i></p>	<p>METHOD & FINDING: In an analytical-descriptive method, this study examined Islamic ethical principles and clarified their impacts on people’s lifestyles. Muslims need to be aware of ethical principles to choose a way of life that is in line with their beliefs to avoid an identity crisis.</p>	
<p>DOI: 10.22034/imjpl.2024.9562</p>	<p>CONCLUSION: Man is in dire need of rethinking to live according to transcendental values and beliefs, particularly in the contemporary age. Islam invites humans to live based on ethical principles and harmonize their lifestyle with values and doctrines by which they can find perfection and salvation. In this respect, man is required to benefit from believing in the oneness of Almighty Allah (SWT) and the Day of Judgment as well as controlling the soul that influences people’s lifestyles. Additionally, man has to manage his/her deeds toward achieving perfection and avoiding identity crisis i.e., s/he must harmonize his beliefs with his/her lifestyle including social relations, wearing clothes, entertainment, eating habits, etc.</p>	
		
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Introduction

Ethical principles are people's basic qualities that help hold the fabric of society together. In other words, they are standards of right and wrong that a person or group may have. They can be passed down to us by our family and peers, dictated by society or religion, and certainly changed throughout our lives, depending on our experiences. We live in a contemporary world where various lifestyles due to Western culture and welfare facilitate us to find different options in opting for our lifestyles. Contrary to the ancient era when Muslims followed one determined lifestyle and had no various choices for their way of living, they can nowadays choose the way of life based on Islamic teachings, ethical principles, and moral systems (*Ref: Ebrahimi & Kamaruzaman, 2017*).

However, some people behave based on a lifestyle similar to Western culture dominating parts of the world. As fundamental principles of Islam, every Muslim believes

in Allah (SWT), His oneness, His justice, His Messengers, and the day of Judgment. However, s/he might be influenced by non-Islamic lifestyles derived from Western culture. Believing in Islamic doctrines but following a non-Islamic lifestyle might lead man toward an identity crisis. Hence, there is a binding adaptability and harmony between believing and protecting Islamic moral principles, deduced from the fundamental doctrines of Islam, and behaving on their basis in life to avoid the probable identity crisis (*Obead & Ali, 2023*).

By utilizing library research, descriptive analysis, and analytical approaches, this study comprehensively examines the impacts of religious ethics principles on the individual lifestyle and tries to adapt them in the contemporary era. Although diverse aspects of individuals' lives could be included in the study's examination, it investigates how the mentioned principles impact some prominent elements, e.g.,

social relations, clothing, entertainment, and eating habits. This research did not conduct experimental techniques.

Therefore, it was based upon the selection and profound analysis of primary and secondary sources that delve into philosophy of ethics and the related sciences. For this purpose, we conducted an analytical-descriptive methodology dealing with ethical, Qur'anic, traditional, theological, biographical, and historical sources that better fit the category of the research. The selection of the sources was conducted using the following criteria:

1. Relation to the topics
 2. Level of academic quality and relevancy
 3. Language
 4. Diversity in formats
 5. Availability and accessibility
 6. Date of publication.
- Hence, as the main question of the article, how do the ethical principles impact the individual lifestyle?

Theoretical Foundations and Research Background

1. Ethical Principles

They have a normative nature and observe moral dos and don'ts. In other words, ethical principles include ethical right and wrong which are accepted by a person or social group. These principles can justify human ethical opts and indicate why a certain behavior or characteristic is acted by a human being (*Ref: Robinson, 2008; Zakieh-Sadat Hosseini et al, 2021, 91-106*).

2. Religious Ethics

Religious ethics is a scholarly area that studies the many ways in which religion and ethics are interrelated. Scholars of religious ethics critically investigate religion's efforts to shape the character and guide the behavior of individuals, groups, and institutions, and they often draw on religious sources to address contemporary or perennial moral problems (*Ref: Miller, 2016*).

3. Individual Lifestyle

It reflects an individual's attitudes, way of life, values, or worldview. Therefore, a lifestyle is a means of forging a sense of self and creating cultural symbols that resonate with personal identity. Lifestyle is the interests, opinions, behaviors, and behavioral orientations of an individual, group, or culture (Ref: Lynn & Angeline, 2011).

4. Theocentrism

Theocentrism is a philosophical and theological perspective that places God at the center of all understanding and reality. In this view, God is the primary focus of existence, meaning that all human activities, beliefs, and values should be oriented around divine principles and authority. Theocentrism contrasts with anthropocentrism, which centers on human beings as the most significant entities in the universe.

Essentially, theocentrism emphasizes that God's will and nature are central to understanding life and morality (Ref: Hoffman & Sandelands, 2005).

5. Soul Control

Soul Control is the ability to manipulate the properties of souls. In other words, it is the ability to regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behavior in the face of temptations and impulses (Ref: Diamond, 2013).

Research Background

Various books and articles might be found in this respect, some of which come as follows:

1. International Sources

Makarim al-Akhlāq written by Ṭabarsī, in which the author intended to recount a bit of the praised morality of the Prophet and Imams (PBUT) their states, actions, manners in sitting and standing, journey and home, and other issues in this regard for education and the life of people (Ref: Ṭabarsī, 1972).

Thawāb al-A'māl wa 'Iqāb al-A'māl written by Shaykh Ṣadūq, in which the author mentioned Islamic hadiths describing right and wrong deeds and their spiritual

consequences which lead to *Thawāb al-A'māl* (reward) or *'Iqāb al-A'māl* (punishment). It has always benefited the Shi'a scholars and the common Shi'a and is remarked as one of the greatest Shi'a hadith collections (*Ref: Ṣadūq, 1989*).

Jāmi' al-Sa'ādāt written by *Narāqī*, in which the author believed that the theosophers of the past had made great efforts in explaining and spreading ethics due to their understanding. However, after the coming of Islam, moral points were explained in detail so that what previous theosophers and mystics of different schools of thought and religions had mentioned were inconsiderable compared to them.

Ethics for the New Millennium written by *Dalai Lama* is another book. According to the author, our survival has depended and will continue to depend on our basic goodness. It presents a moral system based on universal rather than religious principles. Its ultimate goal is happiness for every individual, irrespective

of religious beliefs. Although he is a practicing Buddhist, the *Dalai Lama's* teachings and the moral compass that guides him can lead every one of us Muslim, Christian, Jew, Buddhist, or atheist to a happier, more fulfilling life.

2. Internal Sources

As an example, there is an article entitled "*Lifestyle from a Sociological Perspective: An Introduction to Understanding and Analyzing the Concept of Lifestyle*" written by *Bayengani et al*. According to the author, the term lifestyle is a product of the modern world, in which, by weakening structural variables such as social class, choices, and behaviors are considered the basis of the formation of a person's identity and existence. The modern world and its identifiers and developments, such as the expansion and development of technological and communication tools, the increase of cultural values in families, and abundant access to these elements have a great and undeniable impact on creating

different lifestyles and accordingly forming identities that fit those styles (*Ref: Bayengani et al, 2013*).

As another example, there is an article entitled “*The Effect of Islamic Education and Beliefs on Lifestyle; Sociological Approach*” written by *Yusefifar et al*. According to the author, the lifestyle that Islam offers provides a special engineering plan for application in individual and social life, which can lead to education aligned with accepted principles and values when this plan is presented and implemented by families and other institutions in life (*Ref: Yusefifar et al, 2019*).

Notably, benefitting from the mentioned sources and many other works and articles, we decide to present an analysis of the impacts of religious ethics principles on the individual lifestyle in the contemporary era.

Ethical Principles

Some foundations and principles for Islamic ethics must be explained in this inquiry to show their impacts on people’s lifestyles. The

principles, playing a crucial role in individuals' way of living, will be examined in this article. Believing in the oneness of Almighty Allah (SWT) and the Day of Judgment as well as controlling the soul determine ethical principles that influence people’s lifestyles including social relations, wearing clothes, eating habits, entertainment, etc.

1. Theocentrism

This principle will consciously or unconsciously impact our decisions and behaviors. In other words, there is one who is the ultimate, necessary, and absolute being as well as independent, transcending any other ones in existence (*Ref: Hoffman & Sandelands, 2005*).

This absolute being i.e., Allah (SWT) is the infinite, eternal, unparticipated, and the reason for all contingent beings' coming-to-be and continued existence. Contrary to the theocentrism is anthropocentrism or cosmocentrism of humanism, rationalism, naturalism, secularism, and materialism

that lay aside Allah (SWT) from the center. In this respect, Almighty Allah (SWT) repeatedly said,

“Allah—there is no god except Him—is the Living One, the All-sustainer. Neither drowsiness befalls Him nor sleep. To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth”
(*The Qur’an, 2: 255*).

Theocentrism requires believing in the Holy Qur’an, The Lord, and His messenger whose mission was to purify people’s morality to achieve happiness (*Noori, 1988, Vol.11: 187*).

Thus, contrary to polytheism, materialism, and other schools of thought that do not restrict man to a particular way of living, believing in Allah (SWT) obligates man to consider His commands in lifestyle. The aforementioned schools lead man towards unlimited freedom and enjoy whatever is pleasant in life.

2. *Ma’ād* (Resurrection)

Ma’ād is one of the roots of faith in Islam and means the return of people after death into life on *Qiyamah* (the Day of Judgment). Believing in resurrection also grants man a specific perspective and manner of living in which everyone is required to be responsible for his/her actions on the Day of Judgment. Happiness in the hereafter is not achievable by merely believing in Almighty Allah (SWT), rather it requires believing in *Ma’ād* in which everyone will find reward or punishment. There are various forms of understanding for resurrection in Christianity, Islam, and Judaism, but as a commonality, individuals are brought back to life to meet the consequences of their deeds during their lifetime.

The fundamental sources in Islam are the Qur’an and traditions which both describe the Day of Judgment in which every person would be either rewarded or punished, as well as its signs including the destruction of the universe,

blowing the Trumpet, etc. Therefore, believing in the resurrection is closely related to the individuals' lifestyles (Ref: *Misbah Yazdi, 1998*).

3. Soul Control

The man should control his inner faculties to act in a particular way to achieve perfection. In this respect, man should manage his/her inner faculties to not lead toward *al-Ifrāt wa al-Tafrīt* (exaggeration and simplicity). Soul control means to keep continuing inner faculties in the moderate form, called *'Idālat* (justice) and *I'tidāl* (moderation) in Islamic ethics. If a man intends to achieve happiness, perfection, and *Taqarrub* (seeking proximity) to Allah (SWT), s/he needs to control his/her inner faculties and protect them in moderate form.

This is contrary to Hedonism, which refers to a set of theories, all of which as commonality present that pleasure plays a central role. Based on Hedonism. Pleasure is happiness i.e., there is no

happiness but pleasure and enjoyment. *Jeremy Bentham & John Stuart Mill*, two contemporary English philosophers and economists, believe that the action is right if it tends to promote happiness or pleasure and wrong if it tends to produce unhappiness (*Misbah Yazdi, 2008: 107-109*).

However, happiness in Islamic ethics is achieved through managing pleasure, and desire as well as moderating the unlimited wishes.

Soul control plays a key role in man's character, behavior, and lifestyle since it, along with its faculties, is the offspring of all moral virtues and vices that direct people's behaviors. Before finding out how to control the soul in moderate status, we should initially know the exact meaning of soul control in advance. To find the objective, this study will examine each of the faculty of intellect, anger, and concupiscence as follows:

3.1. Faculty of 'Aql (Intellect)

Intellect or reason is a human cognitive faculty and one of The Four Sources for the deduction of the laws of *shari'a* or jurisprudential rulings.

According to epistemologists, the intellect cognizes general concepts and consists of two functions, namely *Shohūd* (intuition; cognition of self-evident propositions) and *Ta'aqul* (reasoning; discovery of theoretical knowledge). The intellect is of two kinds, namely theoretical and practical. The theoretical intellect cognizes the facts what is there and the practical intellect has a prescriptive or imperative function what ought or ought not to be done (Ref: Walczak, 2020).

Remarkably, what is regarded in this study refers back to the theoretical intellect. This faculty will be examined in both *T'tidāl* (Moderation) and *Al-Ifrāṭ Wa al-Tafrīṭ* (exaggeration and simplicity) statuses as follows:

- ***Hikmat* (Wisdom) as *T'tidāl* (Moderation) Side of Theoretical Intellect**

There is a controversial discussion on controlling and finding theoretical intellect into moderate status. Some Islamic scholars believe in the impossibility of managing the theoretical intellect into moderate status while others disbelieve in it. In a fairly nice explanation, the late *Mulla Mohammad Mahdi Narāqī* said,

There is no meaning for the theoretical intellect to be attributed to moderation since it is aimed to motivate people to seek for truth and encourage them to achieve unknown items through thinking. There is no meaning for the moderate status of intellectual faculty to receive knowledge or its limitation. The more theoretical intellect achieves, the more virtues are obtained and come close to perfection. Some

other scholars maintain that theoretical intellect can be attributed to moderation but based on the two following interpretations of moderation;

- *Practical intellect, faculty of anger and concupiscence be obedient for theoretical faculty.*
- *All faculties be in moderate status but obedient for the theoretical intellect and line with it (Narāqī, 2002, Vol.1: 97).*

Diverse ethical virtues are found when the faculty of intellect is managed. Many scholars in the science of *Akhlāq* (ethics) introduced *Hikmat* (wisdom) as an ethical virtue for the moderate status of the faculty of intellect. However, there will be found some vices e.g., *Balāhat* (stupidity) and *Makr* (sophistry) if the faculty of intellect deviates from moderate status toward *Al-Ifrāt Wa al-Tafrīt* (exaggeration and simplicity). In this respect, *Mulla Muhammad Mahdi*

Narāqī introduced *Hikmat* as the virtue of intellect and said,

There is a virtue for theoretical intellect which is introduced by scholars in ethics as wisdom by which we recognize all existents as they are (Ibid, p.110).

Enumerating the virtues for intellect, *Ibn Miskawayh* said,

There are some subset-virtues for intellect e.g, Tafakkur (thinking), al-Dakā' (cleverness) by which man easily finds the result, al-Dukr (reminding) by which man can image all things in his mind, and purity of mind by which man can infer what is intended to learn easily (Ibn Miskawayh, 2014, p.106).

However, other Islamic thinkers have expressed some other virtues for intellect such as the recognition of trueness and falsehood in speech, rightness and wrongness in beliefs, and beauty and ugliness in practice. The mentioned virtues are

examples of *Hikmat* that manifested in their recognition. In other words, they are not something apart from wisdom. In this regard, *Şadr ad-Dīn Muḥammad Shīrāzī*, known as *Mullā Şadrā*, said,

Intellect is the best faculty of the human being by which man can become the successor of Almighty Allah (SWT) in the mundane world and excel all angels through wisdom, defined as cognition about the truth of things as they are (Mullā Şadrā, 1981a: 137).

He considered wisdom as the elixir of life by which man gets a lot of goodness whenever drinks it (*Ibid: 275*). Furthermore, Almighty Allah (SWT) has repeatedly mentioned wisdom as abundant good and the objective of sending Prophets (PBUH) (*Ref: The Qur'an, 2: 269; 3: 164*).

Therefore, it is mandatory to monitor the faculty of intellect to be in moderate status from which emanates wisdom.

Wisdom is the fruit of managing the faculty of intellect by which man receives knowledge and finds cognition on the reality of all existents.

- ***Makr* (Sophistry) as *al-Ifrāt* (Exaggeration) Side of Theoretical Intellect**

If a man does not manage his/her faculty of intellect, it will sometimes incline toward *Makr* which is called *al-Jarbazah*. Sophistry is an ability to deceive others which is laid into the *al-Ifrāt* (exaggeration) side of wisdom.

Although man applies his/her intellect in sophistry, it is not appropriate to call it wisdom since s/he merges it with lies and dissimulation to mislead people. *Mulla Mohammad Mahdi Narāqī* defined sophistry in the 1st volume of his book, *Jāmi' al-Sa'ādāt* as, "Finding hidden ways to deceive others. Hence, it is vice for theoretical intellect and the most lethal factor and mortal sin" (*Narāqī, 2002, Vol.1: 426-427*).

Furthermore, concerning the vice of theoretical intellect, *Narāqī* said,

There are two vices against Hikmat (wisdom) namely, sophistry and stupidity. The first one is the al-Ifrāt (exaggeration) side of wisdom from which man utilizes his/her intellectual faculty more than what deserves to be. The second one is related to the al-Tafrīt (simplicity) side in which man ignores or ceases to benefit from intellect (Narāqī, 2002, Vol.1: 110-111).

Multiple traditions disapprove of sophistry. For instance, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said,

He who deceives is not a Muslim among us (Ṣadūq, 1989, 1:271).

- **Balāhat (Stupidity) as al-Tafrīt (Simplicity) Side of Theoretical Intellect**

Stupidity is the deviated condition of intellect which means to cease working on intellect purposefully with no

defect in mind. In other words, it is a kind of non-benefit and non-control on the faculty of intellect, leading to *Jahl* (ignorance) including *al-Basīt* (simple) and *al-Murakkab* (complex) ones i.e., Simple ignorance is when a man does not know something, but he knows his ignorance. Complex ignorance is when a man is ignorant but considers himself/herself knowledgeable. They both are considered the immediate consequences of useless intellect. Additionally, some other negative results originate from ignorance e.g., *Hairat* (perplexity) and *Shak* (skepticism) (*Mullā Ṣadrā, 1981b: 200*).

Referring to the Qur'an and traditions, numerous *Maṣādīq* (extensions) would be found to condemn ignorance, irrationality, and their negative consequences. For instance, Allah (SWT) said,

“Only those seek a leave [of exemption] from you who do not believe in Allah and the Last Day, and whose hearts are in doubt, so they waver in their doubt” (The Qur'an, 9: 45).

In this respect, *Imam 'Alī* (PBUH) said,

Stupidity is an ailment that cannot be remedied and a sickness that cannot be cured (Āmadī Tamīmī, 1989: Ḥadīth 1205).

Indeed, Imam Ali (PBUH) laid stupidity and wisdom against each other to show the credibility of wisdom and the worthlessness of ignorance. He said,

The desire of a wise man is in wisdom and the ambition of an ignorant one is in stupidity (Ibid: 484).

3.2. Faculty of Ġaḍab (Anger)

To find perfection and happiness, this inner faculty of human beings has to be controlled. This faculty consists of two statuses namely, *al-'Tidāl* and *al-Ifrāṭ Wa al-Tafrīṭ*. Noticeably, the moderate side is called *Shojā'at* (bravery) while the exaggeration and simplicity sides are called *Tahavvur* (temerity) and *Jobn* (cowardice). Respectively, every one of which might be an

offspring of moral virtues and vices (*Ref: Narāqī, 2002: 111*).

- ***Shojā'at* (Bravery) as *al-'Tidāl* (Moderation) Side of the Faculty of Ġaḍab (Anger)**

Shojā'at (bravery) is a virtue originating from the moderate status of the faculty of anger. To achieve perfection, man should control his/her faculty of anger to be in moderate status.

Imam Ali (PBUH) considered *Shojā'at* an honored instinct that Allah (SWT) institutionalized within man, whom He loves the most. In this respect, Imam Ali (PBUH) said,

Generosity and bravery are honored instincts that Allah (SWT), the Glorified, institutionalizes within man, whom He loves and subjects to test (Āmadī Tamīmī, 1989: Ḥadīth 1845).

Defining *Shojā'at*, *Ibn Miskawayh* said,

“It is a virtue for the faculty anger which appears for the man when it obeys al-Nafs

al-Natiqa (rational or superior soul), and an application of which results to al-Ra'y al-Maḥmūd (admired opinion) on significant affairs. Indeed, man is not frightened to do fearful deeds when they are great actions, and patience with them is praiseworthy.” (Ibn Miskawayh, 2014:105)

Logically defining *Shojā'at*, *Narāqī* compared and contrasted it with two of its opponents i.e., temerity and cowardice. He wrote,

The opponent for temerity and cowardice is bravery. Remember the nobleness of bravery, persuade your soul to its requirements to become Malakah (permanent ability), and remove the impacts of its opponents. Shojā'at is the noblest habit of the soul, and those who are disqualified of bravery are free from manliness (Āmadī Tamīmī, 1989: Ḥadīth 253).

Hence, when a man monitors his/her faculty of anger, s/he will achieve moderate status from which would emanate many other virtues including greatness of soul, self-confidence, chivalrousness, constancy, forbearance, calmness, and physical endurance (*Ibn Miskawayh, 2014: 107*).

The author of the book *Akhlāq-i Nāsirī* has also enumerated the above-mentioned virtues within (*Tūsī, 1953: 112-113*).

- ***Tahavvur* (Temerity) as *al-Ifrāt* (Exaggeration) Side of the Faculty of *Ġaḍab* (Anger)**

Temerity is an action that should be avoided due to danger, but an audacious man who blurts temerity in his acts does not avoid dangerous situations. In this respect, *Narāqī* said,

Tahavvur is to take an action that should be avoided and to expose her/himself in a dangerous situation, forbidden by 'Aql (intellect) and Shari'a including narrations and verses (Narāqī, 2002, Vol.1: 251).

Narāqī cites his claimant on disapproving *Tahavvur* in Islamic doctrines in the following verse,

“And do not cast yourselves with your own hands into destruction”
(*The Qur'an*, 2: 195).

Hence, if an audacious man casts himself with his own hands into destruction, he will lose his life, not allowed in religion. It is prohibited in religious teachings to destroy Allah's (SWT) deposit that is bestowed on man. The late *Narāqī* invoked his claims by 'Aql (intellect) which orders us to protect ourselves from dangers and mentioned that ones who cast themselves into destruction are somehow stupid since 'Uqala (wise men) will never expose themselves in dangerous circumstances.

- ***Jobn* (Cowardice) as *al-Tafrīt* (Simplicity) Side of the Faculty of *Ġaḍab* (Anger)**

Jobn is another extreme attribute that lies on the

simplicity side of the faculty of anger. In this case, man does not do anything unless the priority for him is revenge. *Jobn*, from one aspect, is contrary to *Shojā'at* (bravery) and from another aspect is contrary to *Tahavvur* (temerity).

Cowardice is placed on the extreme side and is a big destructive vice from which man will be attributed to some despicable features such as self-abasement, lowliness, and life terribleness. They might become lazy, complacent, and unstable in their jobs. Furthermore, people will seek his/her life and wealth. Thus, s/he will be banned from perfection and salvation. The oppressors will invade his/her life and impose various kinds of infamy on a cowardly person, who might be subjected to various curses and accusations, but careless about all things that cause infamy and shame. Also, disgraced in Shari'a, s/he will abandon his/her lofty goals (*Narāqī*, 2002: 252).

Cowardice and pusillanimity have been disapproved by the infallible Imams (PBUT) in many cases. For instance, Imam Ali (PBUH) said,

Be wary of cowardice for it is indeed disgraceful and a deficiency (Āmadī Tamīmī, 1989: Ḥadīth 272).

3.3. Faculty of Concupiscence

The faculty of concupiscence has a pivotal role in man's perfection since it helps him to control his desires and joys. Man in this faculty attracts everything pleasant and desirable including sexual ones as well as eating, drinking, wearing, etc. The faculty of concupiscence, likewise the faculties of intellect and anger, consists of two sides namely, *al-'Iṭidāl* (moderation) and *al-Ifrāṭ Wa al-Tafrīṭ* (exaggeration and simplicity).

Noticeably, the moderate side is called '*Iffat* (chastity). In contrast, the exaggeration and simplicity sides are called *Sharah* (greediness) and *Khomūd* (subsidence) respectively, every one of which might be an offspring

of moral virtues and vices. Keeping the soul moderated in the faculty of concupiscence is more important than the two previously mentioned faculties since it deviates much from moderation toward *al-Ifrāṭ Wa al-Tafrīṭ* (Lahiji, 2021: 265).

- '*Iffat* (Chastity) as *al-'Iṭidāl* (Moderation) Side of the Faculty of Concupiscence

To define '*Iffat* lexically and technically, the author of the book *Akhlāq-i Islāmī* wrote,

'Iffat (chastity) means to save the soul from disagreeable deeds in lexical meaning, but in Ethics, it is called for moderate status comes into being for the faculty of concupiscence and protects man from al-Ifrāṭ Wa al-Tafrīṭ (Davoodi, 2020: 142).

Numerous traditions are found to admire chastity. For instance, Imam Ali (PBUH) said,

The best worship is chastity (Narāqī, 2002, Vol.2:22).

Also,

Chastity is at the top of all good things (Āmadī Tamīmī, 1989: Ḥadīth 1168).

Enumerating the virtues for ‘Iffat, Ibn Miskawayh said,

Following chastity man can find diverse virtues like comfort, patience, generosity, freedom, contentment, gentleness, regularity, reconciliation, solemnity, best guidance and piety (Ibn Miskawayh 2014: 106).

- **Sharah (Greediness) as al-Ifrāt (Exaggeration) Side of the Faculty of Concupiscence**

Clarifying *Sharah*, the late *Narāqī* said, “The man obeys all desires e.g., sexual desires, appetite for eating and drinking, property accumulation, etc. It is also called extreme avidity for eating and having sex. Hence, greediness is more general than other vices for the faculty of concupiscence and their origin (*Narāqī, 2002, Vol.2: 17*).

Disgracing *Sharah*, several verses of the Qur’an and narrations have been

mentioned. Disapproving *Sharah* and introducing Jews as more greedy than pagans in mundane life, Allah (SWT) said,

“Surely, you will find them the greediest for life, of all people even the idolaters. Each of them is eager to live a thousand years, though it would not deliver him from the punishment, were he to live [that long]. And Allah watches what they do” (The Qur’an, 2: 96).

In this respect, Imam Ali (PBUH) said,

A greedy man never finds relaxing (Āmadī Tamīmī, 1989: Ḥadīth 6601).

- **Khomūd (Subsidence) as al-Tafrīt (Simplicity) Side of the Faculty of Concupiscence**

Khomūd means to be listless and lassitude to look for necessary enjoyments even if ones permitted by religion and intellect (*Ṭūsī, 1953: 120*).

Khomūd is a kind of suppression against the faculty

of concupiscence in which a kind of deficiency in living, eating, sexual desires, and so on would be found. In addition, it contrasts the correct path of Shari'a and a deviation from the right line of *Takwīn* (creation).

Noticeably, Allah (SWT) has entrusted this faculty to man to benefit it in its right path toward perfection, whereas a shortcoming within causes numerous diseases and cuts off generations, which is against Allah's (SWT) will. Furthermore, innumerable traditions encourage man to provide food to have the power to worship Allah (SWT), acquire knowledge and attain moral virtues, and benefit from this blessing to make a family and enjoy sexual relations rightly (*Taftazani, 1988, Vol.3: 346; Jorjani, 1907, Vol.6: 130*).

Lifestyle

lifestyle is the typical way of life of an individual, group, or culture. Indeed, a relatively specific model of behaviors and culture distinguishes people

from each other (*Bayengani et al, 2013: 61*).

Remarkably, the aforementioned ethical principles impact and direct the way of people's lives. *Anthony Giddens* defined a lifestyle and said,

A lifestyle can be defined as a more or less integrated set of practices which an individual embraces, not only because such practices fulfill utilitarian needs, but because they give material form to a particular narrative of self-identity (Ref: Giddens, 2006: 81).

Defining lifestyle in detail, including the manner of living for individuals in the community and encompassing objective and mental affairs such as beliefs and values, *Bayengani* said,

Lifestyle is a relatively harmonious and coherent set of all the objective and mental affairs of an individual's or group's life. It consists of objective affairs such as possessions, behavioral models, social relations, consumption,

leisure activities, clothing, eating habits, home decoration, etc. It also includes some mental actions like attitudes, perceptions, beliefs, worldviews, tendencies, values and preferences, etc (Ref: Bayengani, 2013: 46).

This query seeks to mention that lifestyle is a set of relatively stable behavioral models, which includes man's attitudes, tendencies, and behaviors to achieve a goal. The behavioral models are influenced by beliefs and moral values, playing pivotal roles in the objective life in the community including models of social relations, wearing clothes, type of entertainment, eating habits, etc. We will examine the aforementioned items to prove their impacts on the lifestyle in the following:

1. Social Relations

The quality of interactions among people within a society characterizes social relations. Noticeably, Islamic ethical perspectives are entirely different from Hedonism in

the relationship between men and women, boys and girls, etc. According to Hedonism, pleasure plays a central role in relationships, while in Islam they are based on a structure introduced by Shari'a. Hence, people should control their souls to be obedient to Allah (SWT) and to avoid the consequences of its non-controlling on the day of judgment.

A kind of limitation is regarded in the relationship among individuals in Islam i.e., it is sometimes *Ḥalāl* (permitted) and sometimes *Ḥarām* (prohibited), while the first one is advised and admitted, but the second one is blamed and prohibited. In contrast, no limitation is found for relations in Hedonism. Verily, Shari'a determines a kind of relation in the family, with neighbors and people in the community, and introduces particular rights. For instance, as common rights for husband and wife, Islam introduced emotional rights, geniality, cheerfulness, respect,

neatness, cooperation, and loyalty, whereas some specific rights presented for them as well such as guardianship, paying alimony and dowry, etc. Unlike Hedonism, Humanism, and Liberalism, Islamic doctrines do not only determine the relationship among individuals in family and neighbors but also their relations in society is considered too (*Ref: Khajegir & Afroogh, 2018*).

For example, concerning the relationship with neighbors, Imam Ali (PBUH) said,

Up to forty houses are neighbors on four sides (Hurr 'Amili, 1995, Vol.2: 132).

Thus, Muslims should care about their neighbors. In this respect, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said,

Gabriel has continued to strongly recommend me to be kind to my neighbor until I thought that he would make him among my heirs (Ibn Abī Jumhūr, 1983, Vol.1: 256).

Pleasantness is another right that should be considered

in Muslim relations with neighbors. In this respect, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said,

Whoever believes in Allah (SWT) and the Day of Judgement should not harm his neighbor (Noori, 1988: 423).

2. Wearing Clothes

Since a particular design of clothes shows man's esthetic sense and preference to look attractive within, his style of wearing is in harmony with his beliefs on the universe and hereafter. There is an interrelation among beliefs, moral values, and people's wearing clothes because Imam Ali (PBUH) said,

Uprightness of the exteriors is a symbol of the soundness of the inner conscience (Āmadī Tamīmī, 1989: Hadīth 5805).

Hence, there is a contradiction between believing in Islamic doctrines and wearing clothes like humanists, materialists, and hedonists who cut off God from

their lives. However, some unconscious people, who face identity crises and do not know how to harmonize their lifestyle with their beliefs, may act in the mentioned contradiction. Remarkably, religion does not determine the form and shape of clothes but expresses the criteria in which the standard of clothing is considered to protect man from inclination toward immorality and degeneration. In this respect, Almighty Allah (SWT) said,

“O Prophet! Tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the faithful to draw closely over themselves their chadors [when going out]. That makes it likely for them to be recognized and not be troubled, and Allah is all-forgiving, all-merciful” (The Qur’an, 33: 59).

Accordingly, the criteria determined that faithful women are not allowed to come in public without *Hijab*. The Qur’an does not state the

form of a *Hijab* including wearing a *Chador*, *Burqa*, etc, but orders women to cover their head, neck, as well as body up to wrist and ankle, and avoid wearing abnormal, strange, and attractive clothes to *non-Mahram*.

3. Entertainment

Since Muslims are not allowed to enjoy *Harām* (forbidden) kind of entertainment, they benefit from particular ones that are far different compared to materialists, hedonists, and liberalists. On the one hand, some entertainment and recreation combined with things prohibited in Islam. No matter what the intention may be, it is not permissible if entertainment involves drinking alcohol, using drugs, gambling, and listening to frivolous and licentious music (Ref: *The Qur’an*, 5:90).

On the other hand, human beings require diversity and recreation for them to continue their lives and have high spirits. Humdrumness will curtail their daily

activities and will even harm their spirituality. The recreation and entertainment that do not lead man astray from the right path and do not cause him to fall into sin are not only permissible but are also completely approved and endorsed by the religion.

Therefore, Muslims do not entertain prohibited pleasure and enjoyable acts but rather spend their spare time in line with their beliefs because they believe in the Day of Judgment in which man receives either a reward or punishment for deeds during his lifetime.

4. Eating Habits

What and how to eat is directed in the Qur'an and traditions. Unlike hedonists, humanists, and materialists, Muslims cannot turn a blind eye to their faith in eating whatever is tasty and enjoyable and drinking whatever is desirable, rather they have to consider permitted and prohibited

foods. In this respect, Allah (SWT) said,

“O apostles! Eat of the good things and act righteously. Indeed I know best what you do”
(The Qur'an, 23: 51);
“O you who have faith! Eat of the good things We have provided you, and thank Allah, if it is Him that you worship”
(The Qur'an, 2: 172).

Hence, Islamic instructions determine the lifestyle of believers since they forbid them from eating foods that are ceremonially unclean. For example, believers are prohibited from eating the flesh of dogs, bears, cheetahs, rabbits, cats, cockroaches, crocodiles, crows, eagles, and elephants. These instructions distinguish Muslims' eating habits from others. Some divine commandments present the quality of eating and drinking e.g., Muslims are recommended to wash their hands in advance, begin eating with a little salt, eat slowly, not have too much food, not eat hot food, not speak during eating, and end it with salt too.

These recommendations distinguish Muslims eating habits from the unbelievers (*Ref: The Qur'an, 6: 145; 16: 114-116, 5: 3-5, 6: 118-121; 5: 87-90, 7: 31, 23: 51; 2: 168, 40: 79*).

Analytical Review

Religious ethics have a significant impact on individual lifestyles in the contemporary era. Many religions provide a framework for moral and ethical decision-making, guiding individuals in navigating complex ethical issues and shaping their personal choices. These principles influence various aspects of life, such as relationships, work, consumption, and personal values.

For instance, religious principles often emphasize the importance of compassion, forgiveness, and helping those in need, which can motivate individuals to engage in charitable work and social activism. Similarly, religious beliefs about marriage, family, and sexuality can shape personal relationships and family structures. It's important to note that the specific impacts of religious ethics on individual lifestyles vary depending on the individual's religious tradition, personal interpretation, and other cultural and social factors.

Table 1. Ethical Principles & Individual Lifestyle

Ethical Principles								
Theocentrism								
Resurrection								
Soul Control								
Intellect			Anger			Concupiscence		
<i>Ifrāt</i>	<i>'Tidāl</i>	<i>Tafrīt</i>	<i>Ifrāt</i>	<i>'Tidāl</i>	<i>Tafrīt</i>	<i>Ifrāt</i>	<i>'Tidāl</i>	<i>Tafrīt</i>
Sophistry	Wisdom	Stupidity	Temerity	Bravery	Cowardice	Greediness	Chastity	Subsidence
Individual Lifestyle								
Social Relations		Wearing Clothes			Entertainment		Eating Habits	

Conclusion

In the contemporary world where various options are available to lead man applying a lifestyle derived from welfare and Westernization, we are in dire need of rethinking and expanding consciousness to live according to transcendental values and beliefs. Some schools of thought such as Hedonism, Liberalism, and Humanism incline man towards absolute freedom in which material joy and pleasure play the central role.

In contrast, the school of Islam invites man to live based on ethical principles and harmonize his lifestyle with values and doctrines by which man can find perfection and salvation. In this respect, man is required to benefit from believing in the oneness of Almighty Allah (SWT) and the Day of Judgment as well as controlling the soul that influences people's lifestyles.

Controlling of the soul necessitates attaining *Hikmat* (wisdom), *Shojā'at* (bravery), and *Iffat* (chastity). They are

accessible through avoiding the faculty of intellect toward *Balāhat* (stupidity) and *Makr* (sophistry), the faculty of anger toward *Tahavvur* (temerity) and *Jobn* (cowardice) as well as the faculty of concupiscence toward *Sharah* (greediness) and *Khomūd* (Subsidence). Furthermore, man also needs to manage his deeds toward achieving perfection i.e., s/he must harmonize his beliefs with his/her lifestyle including social relations, wearing clothes, entertainment, eating habits, etc.

Incorporating the principles of religious ethics into an individual's lifestyle, especially in the modern era, can foster personal growth, social responsibility, and community cohesion. As suggestions, we can embrace compassion and empathy, promote justice and fairness, foster community engagement, cultivate personal integrity, practice environmental stewardship, promote peace and nonviolence, encourage lifelong learning, integrate mindfulness and spirituality, and promote health and well-being.

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PAPER DERIVED FROM THESIS

Criticizing Muslim Thinkers' Views on Religion and Development in Modern Islamic Civilization

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ARTICLE INFO		ABSTRACT
Article History: Received: 20 February 2024 Revised: 18 April 2024 Accepted: 15 May 2024	SUBJECT & OBJECTIVES: The emergence of the epistemic system of modernism and its epistemological requirements has caused Eastern societies, including the Islamic world, conflicts such as the conflict between religion and development and efforts to resolve it. This research aims to explain the pattern of the new Islamic civilization by emphasizing the views of <i>Muzaffar 'Iqbāl</i> from the book <i>Islam and Science</i> . Also, most Muslim thinkers view the relationship between Islam and its efficiency in new scientific topics, including development, as positive and admirable.	
Key Words: <i>Religion</i> <i>Development</i> <i>New Islamic Civilization</i> <i>Muslim Thinkers</i> <i>Muzaffar 'Iqbāl</i>	METHOD & FINDING: Using the method of qualitative analysis and referring to his books, essays, and other thinkers, it has been found that the Islamic scientific tradition began at the time of the Prophet. Additionally, Islamic scientists have continued this movement throughout history with ups and downs and have rejected the discussion of conflict that has been raised by Westerners, especially <i>Goldzihar's</i> theory which denied the connection between Islam and science.	
DOI: 10.22034/imjpl.2024.9291	CONCLUSION: According to <i>Muzaffar 'Iqbāl</i> , Islam is a comprehensive religion and these views and scientific theories are always changing and can be modified. Therefore, he does not consider them comparable to Islamic texts. In <i>Muzaffar 'Iqbāl</i> 's view, the Islamic tradition, relying on the approach of complementarity, can create and guide a comprehensive civilization and provide a pattern of progress in the new era.	
		
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Introduction

Before the serious confrontation of the Islamic world with the Western civilization from the 18th century onwards, Muslim thinkers and people did not feel a conflict between the Islamic religion and other aspects of life, including society, business, professions, etc. Parallel to the expansion of Western civilization to other parts of the world, the conflict between religion and development, which had a long history in the Christian West, became a problem for other cognitive and religious systems that did not suffer from such a problem. In other words, the emergence of the epistemic system of modernism and its epistemological requirements have caused conflicts in Eastern societies, including the Islamic world, such as the conflict between religion and development and efforts to resolve it. In recent years, major issues have been raised among researchers that have made attention to the issue of the relationship between religion and development more serious,

including the discussion about the possibility and necessity of religious science and compiling the Islamic pattern of progress (*Ref: Parsania, 2015; Golshani, 2018; Nasr, 2003*).

Although various kinds of research have been conducted on the relationship between science and culture during the last decade (*Ref: Parsania, 2015; Golshani, 2018*), as well as the relationship between science and religion (*Ref: Bagheri, 2008; Golshani, 2018; Rezania, 2018; Haught, 1995*), but the relationship between religion and development has received less attention. Meanwhile, the conflict and challenges between material and secular civilizations as well as religious and spiritual civilizations have reached their peak and become clearer.

This study seeks to the relationship between religion and development from the perspectives of Muslim thinkers, which can strengthen the theoretical foundation of the Islamic pattern of development. As the main question, are there serious inconsistencies between the epistemological

propositions of science and the epistemic propositions based on human rationality and revelation teachings? Is it possible to take seriously the development made by human hands, including experimental science and new technologies, and to focus on revelation teachings? We will pay attention to the answers to the above questions from the point of view of *Muzaffar 'Iqbāl*.

Theoretical Foundations and Research Background

The relationship between religion and development is usually placed under the discussion on the relationship between science and religion among Western researchers and under the relationship between intellect and religion in the Islamic world.

To analyze the relationship between development and religion, it is necessary to briefly discuss the relationship between science and religion in the West. In the Middle Ages, religion had absolute superiority and science did not have a wide circle that could cause a serious challenge to religion.

According to *Barbour* the companionship of science and philosophy with religion and the harmony of the views of thinkers and philosophers, nature's service to man, and man's service to God are among the characteristics of the Middle Ages that no serious conflict between science and religion is observed (*Barbour, 1997: 18; Alizmani, 2001*).

The first sparks of the conflict between science and religion were struck in the 17th century since the new science of the 17th century was different from the experimental science of the Middle Ages. In addition, mathematical reasoning and experimental observation were considered the most important methods of gathering data from epistemological propositions. Accordingly, with the revelation of the secrets of nature by new science and the inadequacy of the concept of God that the church presented, needing God was less felt, so the first sparks of the conflict between science and religion were ignited (*Mohiti Ardakan, 2013: 29-42*).

William James, an American philosopher and psychologist, considered the 18th century a rationalist age, which entered the field of religious truth with the foot of rationality, in such a way that all aspects of life, including human progress, were considered dependent on empirical reason (Ref: *Carroll, 2018*).

In the 19th century, the conflict between science and religion was formed in different ways in the West. In addition to the relationship between religion and science, the relationship between religion and progress was also considered. *August Kent* talked about societies passing through divine and philosophical stages and entering the scientific and educational period so that the progress and development of mankind were considered dependent on the supremacy of experimental science over religion and philosophy, as well as religion as an obstacle to progress and development. *Darwin's* species exchange theory is one of the other types of conflict between

science and religion in this century. (Ref: *Rezania, 2018*).

In the 20th century, the interaction between science and religion was discussed and development as a product of science concerning religion was investigated. At the beginning of this century, *Freud* considered religion a type of neurosis and the most important enemy of science, and logical positivism emerged by calling metaphysical propositions meaningless (*Golshani, 2021:130*).

However, in the continuation of the 20th century, in existentialism and the differentiation of the language of religion in the philosophy of linguistic analysis, religion was introduced as completely distinct from science, not conflicting with it (*Barbour, 1997: 144*). In the second half of the 20th century, the failure of the development paradigms and the weaknesses of science-based progress in individual and social life, the conflict between religion and science, and the resulting development became weaker. The modernization

theorists considered religion and tradition serious obstacles to the development of countries. However, at the end of the 20th century, the thinkers of the new modernization paradigm such as *Giddens* did not consider tradition and religion as obstacles to development, but rather as one of the factors for the development of countries.

After the Middle Ages, significant progress in natural sciences from the 17th to the 19th century in the West provided the context for the conflict between science and religion. From the 19th century, discussions related to human growth and development were raised with the works of thinkers such as *Comte* and *Marx*, and the idea that religion not only has no role in the development of man and society but also is the main obstacle became popular. In the 20th century, various interactions between science and development and religion were proposed, including the distinction between development and religion and the complementarity of development

and religion (*Ref; Razania Shirazi, 2022; Sajidi, 2001*).

Muzaffar 'Iqbāl has also addressed this issue in his works. In the definition of science from the perspective of Islam, he stated:

Science is an organized study of nature. Since it was developed in Islamic civilization, could not treat nature and its study as an alien being to Islam (Ref: Iqbal, 2019).

He argued with the Qur'an, verses of chapter *Noor*, that nature, e.g., everything between the heaven and the earth, obeys the divine command and acts according to it, and the nature that the Qur'an described, instead of being a self-standing, automatic or random entity, is a structure. It is a development whose parts are interconnected, compatible, integrated, and vibrant, and in terms of ontology, all of them are dependent on the Creator, and in their way, they praise and glorify Him (*Ibid*).

Few researches have been done about the relationship between

Islam and development to explain the pattern of progress. Most of the research has examined the relationship between science and religion. In *Muzaffar 'Iqbāl*'s view, considering what is happening in the Western world, more reliance is placed on explaining the relationship between religion and science, but based on his research, especially in the book *“Islam and Science”* (2019), the pattern he considered was also extracted in the relationship between religion and development. However, in the following, we will explain some research that is closer to the problem of this article in some aspects. *Mansouri* (2008) in an article entitled *“Critical Considerations on Facing the Problem of Science of Religion and Development”* concluded that the use of recent achievements in philosophy, sociology, and historiography of science, in critically understanding the past scientific tradition and paying attention to them is necessary to make policy according to the needs of the country. According to his

belief, scientific activity is a collective activity, and elitist policies without restraint will lead to technocracy, which considers the country's stability and well-being to depend on a few interests. Scholars of religious sciences should also carefully monitor the scientific achievements, foundations, and metaphysical tools of science and the various results of its application in society with more obsession and sensitivity than Western theologians.

Haji-Ahmadi (2005) has written a paper entitled *“Religion and Economic Development, Understanding or Conflict”*. Based on the findings within the mentioned research, we come across concepts that are incompatible with economic development. An exact examination shows that there is no such change, and what is presented as incompatible concepts is caused by their misunderstanding. Thus, the relationship between religion and economic development is understanding, not conflict, as this topic has been widely discussed and accepted in

philosophical and theological contexts (*Rezania, 2013: 94*).

Regarding the conflict between religion and development in its current sense, *Muzaffar 'Iqbāl* has an important placement from the thinkers' perspectives.

Dr. Muzaffar 'Iqbāl, born on December 3, 1954, in Lahore, Pakistan, is a Pakistani-Canadian chemical and Islamic thinker and author. From the beginning of his studies, he has been concerned about the Islamization of sciences, that's why he started scientific and cultural activities since he got his doctorate. The result of *Muzaffar 'Iqbāl*'s research is nearly 23 volumes of books and dozens of articles in three languages namely, Arabic, Urdu, and English.

Iqbal is the editor-in-chief of a publication on science and civilization from the perspective of Islam and Islamic sciences. His most recent project is the publication of the first encyclopedia of the Qur'an by Muslims. An article about Islamic sciences published in the *New York Times* quoted *Iqbal* saying that new science

has nothing to say about the purpose of life, while science in the Islamic world was inseparable from the purpose. In the book *Islam and Science*, consisting of eleven chapters, he examined the scientific movement in Islam and its signs, the connection between Islam and science, the destruction of the tradition and its causes, the transmission of the Islamic tradition and its transformation, and the end of colonialism, as well as the scientific interpretation. In this article, we will pay attention to the analysis and search for the pattern of progress and development in the works of *Muzaffar 'Iqbāl*, emphasizing the blessings of Islam and science.

Methodology

This study benefitted from an analytical documentary and library method. First, most of *Muzaffar 'Iqbāl*'s works were studied. Then, according to the objectives and questions of the research, some texts were extracted relating to development and religion in terms of meanings and themes.

Then the extracted texts were compared with each other to find the logical connection within. Finally, they were chosen and analyzed, finding that contained themes were related to religion, development, and progress, and there was compatibility and logical connection among them.

Theoretical Foundations of *Muzaffar 'Iqbāl*

Muzaffar 'Iqbāl was initially a chemist and scientist, but his concerns are in the field of Islamic studies such as "Islamic rational tradition" "Islamic history", "philosophical and metaphysical aspects of the relationship between Islam and science", "Islam and the West" and "Islam and modernity". He actively engaged in scholarly research and study within the mentioned spheres. He believes that the Islamic civilization emerged and the conflict of ideas was raised, including both Muslims and non-Muslims, just as the questions that are raised about creation and the atom as the general philosophy of the material

world and the constituents of all parts are raised. Muslims accept this permanent world that exists in this sense, and nothing other than Islamic schools believe in this permanent existence of the world. In the philosophy of creation, it is said that we created everything, as well as humans, we find meaning in the universe and the world that continues to exist, and this perception was the first challenge. *Muzaffar 'Iqbāl*, especially in the book *Islam and Science*, described various Islamic traditions and efforts, emphasizing the products and successes achieved (*Iqbal, 2019: 122*).

He also believed that in the realm of God, man has a real relationship with his Creator, but in the realm of humans, we act self-centered. We need people to return to their schools of thought according to Islamic laws because the center of wisdom and humanity is the Islamic school of thought. Islamic civilization has everything, but we have to tell those who think of colonialism how to live. All schools of thought

have entered with a colonial approach, whereas Islamic countries and nations must solve this problem through the field and university, and this is a long-term process since we are surrounded by non-Islamic paradigms. Of course, along with this approach, it seems that *Muzaffar Iqbal* could not fully and clearly show in his books and research exactly which of the scientific works of Islamic civilization have been used other than gaining motivation from religious texts.

In the books, *Islam and Science or Philosophy of Religion and Science*, *Iqbal* not only did not fully express his claim but also no new word or research even found within, needing for completion. All the contents of his works are taken from others' research while no new points are found. The role of Islam in natural and unnatural sciences is undeniable, but a complete analysis of this fact in the works of *Muzaffar Iqbal* such as his recent books needs more completion.

Explaining The Islamic Pattern of Progress in *Muzaffar Iqbal*'s Approach

The thinkers of the differentiation approach do not consider a distinct place for religion in the field of development, because religion and development are two distinct aspects of life, in the best case, there is no conflict between them because they follow different logic. The conflict approach seeks wisdom, but to achieve this goal, many development achievements are set aside. The concept of development in today's world is linked to advances in experimental sciences, productivity, nature utilization, employment, health, well-being, and longevity. The development has made these improvements in the shadow of changing the view of man.

The conflict that some thinkers like *Nasr* believe between religion and development originated from here, restoring the sacred to human life puts aside many of the achievements of development (*Ref: Nasr, 2003*).

Seemingly, some thinkers like *Muzaffar 'Iqbāl*, who believe in the approach of evolution between religion and development are the founders of the Islamic pattern of progress based on facts. On the one hand, they believe that the pattern of external development is an imitation that does not bring about real progress in Islamic society because it causes much dependence and lags behind human evolution and the progress of society. On the other hand, for those who believe in the evolution approach, the pattern of Western countries is not the criterion of action, but their development achievements are of interest. This approach sees religion as serving society. Religion in cooperation with development, in addition to correcting the disadvantages of development, can guide society and lead people and society toward evolution. According to *Muzaffar 'Iqbāl*, Islam can make the Islamic nation flourish once again under the shadow of Islamic tradition (*Ref: Iqbal, 2019*).

In general, in the approach of evolution, religion should be examined in the field of society by taking the achievements of development. It is an advanced, justice-oriented, and prosperous society. As stated, this approach should answer important questions and become a research program.

A Critique Against *Muzaffar 'Iqbāl*'s Approach

Muzaffar 'Iqbāl seeks to express a new definition of religion so that it enables religion to move in the direction of worldly interests and prosperity. He seeks to show that Islam is not only behind in the competition between human and divine schools to build this world and create worldly technology and civilization but is more complete than all of them. Updating the religion, which from his point of view is true Islam, means turning the religious concepts, values, and teachings to the new sciences to gain the benefit of a good world, and even our hereafter will be prosperous in this way. However, ideologies

are subject to dogmatism and stereotypes. The proponents of the complementary approach, including him, have not been able to explain well how development and religion complete each other and what should be done when facing conflicts. In this respect, Peterson said:

If religion and development are considered in such a way that they can produce contradictory results, then how can the view of completion explain a single and unified reality (Peterson et al, 2012: 377).

Additionally, the lack of attention to the Shiite scientific movement is evident in his two books namely, *Islam and Science* and *Formation of Islamic Science*. The discussion demands that the views of all Islamic schools and important services in the field of science be raised. It seems that this point has been paid less attention in the mentioned two works. For example, in addition to the infallible Imams (PBUT), the

students of those nobles, including the late student of Imam Sadiq (PBUH), *Jabir Ibn Hayyan*, watered from the fountain of Imamate and made Islam and Muslims proud, but in the utter disbelief of *Muzaffar Iqbal*, his scientific activity was partial. In this respect, he said:

Among the group of scientists of the first centuries, Jaber bin Hayyan is a prominent figure. But the fact that Jabir's collection of works and writings, which are many and varied, covers a wide range of topics, shows that there must have been a growing scientific tradition much before him, because such mature and complete works cannot be a person's life will appear (Iqbal, 2019).

It seems that *Muzaffar Iqbal* is doubtful about attributing all of *Jabir's* works since he said, "In recent years, *Paul Kraus*, with his opinion that the authorship of the collection of *Hayyan's* works is a group he attributes the authors and his

work is a list of manuscripts and the author has put the texts in a comprehensive order. *Muzaffar 'Iqbāl* expresses the views of Shia scholars who have performed the most important services throughout history. For instance, *Seyyed Hassan Sadr*, the author of the book *Ta'sis al-Shi'a li-'Ulum al-Islam* proved that the foundations of Shia have been transmitted in many sciences.

In the middle of different approaches, the main question raised is how to provide an explanatory framework and pattern for such research projects by taking advantage of the strengths of the three approaches. Although we do not intend to present this pattern here, it is suggested that it contains several following characteristics:

1. It is better to distinguish between the development resulting from science and religion, intending to preserve the special features and concerns of each, thereby:

First of all, not considering this distinction should not lead

to the interference and confusion of the goals, concerns, and preoccupations of each of them. Secondly, it should not lead to the removal of one of them or their complete adaptation at the very beginning of the research project.

2. The primary distinction should not lead to the interruption of interaction and dialogue between the two. Interaction and constructive dialogue between these two come as follows:

- Do not lead to a fundamental conflict and break the relationship.
- Provide the context for the third characteristic.

3. To prepare the way for the completion approach with clear criticism: In other words, by providing the possibility of dialogue between development and religion, let's achieve a theoretical pattern about the relationship between religion and development, which is not just claiming the relationship and stating a few examples.

Research Findings

Dealing with science in Islamic society has always received special attention. This article shows that the production and expansion of science is dependent on authentic Islamic sources i.e. The Qur'an, Sunnah, and Hadiths, while Islam does not conflict with science. Other nations have influenced their progress and benefited from the scientific resources of other civilizations. However, Muslims have produced science under the shadow of Islam and its teachings, so that over several centuries, various sciences such as mathematics, astronomy, chemistry, physics, medicine, and so on have made significant progress. By encouraging and inciting Muslims to study science, Islam has provided the basis for their scientific development and has allowed the use of other people's scientific progress. Islam asks Muslims not to be consumers of other people's scientific advances, but to be producers of science themselves.

Unlike some Western theorists, including *Goldzihar* who said that there was no scientific activity in Islam. He explicitly stated that science came to the Islamic world through the translation of Western texts, but it was not welcomed and returned to Europe again, causing progress and scientific revolution in Europe. (*Iqbal, 2019*)

But we should consider that Muslims were not just users, rather they produced science and knowledge themselves and created a new civilization, even Westerners in scientific productions from tradition have used Islamic sciences.

In this case, *Muzaffar 'Iqbāl* has stated in his works that what we have from historical texts and scientific sources has proven that Muslims have always studied scientific topics, especially mathematics, astronomy, and philosophy. It has been proven that in Islamic civilization, the production of science was a definite matter, and this shows that Islamic culture could create a science

production movement. Hence, *Muzaffar Iqbal* is considered among those who believe in the complementarity between science and religion. He emphasized the continuous dialogue between the two to explain the epistemological propositions of both. There is no doubt that from the point of view of Islam, man has a noble position. Man is the end of existence i.e. the goal for creation of nature is the perfection of man. The true evolution of man passes through the world, but the world is not the destination and end of man. In Islamic society, attention is paid to both the world and the hereafter. It means that the path to human happiness passes through this world.

Accordingly, *Muzaffar Iqbal* has expressed in his works, including *Islam and Science* and *The Formation of Islamic Science*, an extensive discussion about the relationship between Islam and science and the formation of Islamic science and its impact on Western science and its influence as

well as different branches of science that are directly related to Islam., and empirical studies

Some of the results of the opinions of Muzaffar Iqbal and Muslim thinkers:

The production and expansion of science is dependent on authentic Islamic sources
Islam does not conflict with science.
Other nations have influenced their progress and benefited from the scientific resources of other civilizations.
Muslims have produced science under the shadow of Islam and its teachings.
By encouraging and inciting Muslims to study science, Islam has provided the basis for their scientific development and has allowed the use of other people's scientific progress.
Muzaffar Iqbal has discussed in his works, that in Islam, what we have from historical texts and scientific sources has proven that Muslims have always studied scientific topics, especially mathematics, and astronomy.

Conclusion

Despite a group of traditionalists trying to question the legitimacy of the development, science, and technologies of the new world and make the claim that Islam has more appropriate answers

for the blissful life of man and that traditional science with the help of revelation and infallible reason is more effective, but it can be concluded that the pattern of development is not necessarily destructive of ethics, family, environment and most importantly, truth and history. Such a development that takes place in the shadow of Islamic tradition by using the strategy of parallel dialogue and explanation between science and religion has no complete conflict with the Islamic worldview.

The distinguishing thought is that the revelatory and narrative propositions and the sciences that have been formed to explain these propositions are valuable and prescriptive sciences that have been formed to guide mankind and achieve his happiness, and every religion must be responsible for this purpose. But experimental sciences, especially human experimental sciences, and the development formed from these sciences have been formed for the empirical description and explanation of

the social world and people's material well-being. Therefore, religion and development are not in conflict with each other but are related to two independent areas, each of which has its function.

Another approach to the relationship between religion and development i.e. the opinions of *Muzaffar 'Iqbāl*, which we named as the complement, unlike the other two approaches, believes that new human development, which is based on experimental sciences, is not incompatible with religion. Of course, an undistorted and non-regressive religion and the teachings of religion cover the defects and weaknesses that exist in this type of development and progress, including the loss of meaning in life and the unquestioning rule of instrumental rationality. Many components in Islam show the lack of conflict between these two realities. Therefore, religion complements human development.

Muslim thinkers showed that effective and fruitful

sciences are not the only sciences that have been obtained from a sensory and experimental basis.

Nowadays, it has become evident that development is not necessarily based on the same basis as the *Renaissance* standard bearers and then the experimental philosophers of the sect claimed, while they removed the supernatural and religious teachings from the circle. In the end, the paper presented multiple characteristics. The first characteristic is to consider the distinction between the development resulting from new science and technology and religion. The second characteristic is to avoid drawing a decisive border between development and religion to deny the interaction between them and to provide the possibility of an enriching dialogue with the strategy of explaining the epistemological propositions between the two. In the end, it is not enough to simply claim the relationship and view of complementarity between the

two and mention a few examples, we need an explanatory theoretical pattern.

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PAPER DERIVED FROM THESIS

Ali Şafāei Hāeri's Approach to Philosophical Counseling

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ARTICLE INFO		ABSTRACT
<p>Article History: Received: 29 October 2023 Revised: 20 December 2023 Accepted: 25 January 2024</p>		<p>SUBJECT & OBJECTIVES: This study discusses some main approaches in philosophical counseling and explains <i>Ali Şafāei Hāeri's</i> approach based on his works.</p> <p>METHOD & FINDING: This fundamental and qualitative study adopted a theoretical descriptive-analytical method. <i>Ali Şafāei Hāeri's</i> approach can be called a truth-oriented self-transformation approach based on logical and refined thinking. The difference between his approach and others is that he draws a coherent thought system in which each sub-approach has a specific place. Moreover, he does not consider human life confined to short-term material life.</p> <p>CONCLUSION: In his approach, thinking should be freed from deviations, and human knowledge should start from immediate perceptions by raising fundamental questions. In the right raw materials, deliberation is done, the power of thought makes conclusions, and the results are compared with the power of reasoning and emulation. The power of perfectionism determines the best goals and the best way to reach them while man chooses with his own free will. Using these cognitions, man reaches the correct worldview and understanding based on the truth about human beings, existence, creator, purpose, and role of humans. These bits of knowledge are developed through reminders and exercises, and the philosophical advisor plays his role in all these stages.</p>
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Introduction

Throughout history and thousands of years ago, many thinkers, including prophets (*The Qur'an, 5:76*), philosophers, and some thinkers, have used philosophical thinking to answer the most fundamental human questions, solve life problems, and guide people. The movement of philosophical practice was founded in Germany in the early 1980s by *Gerd Achenbach*. Indeed, he was the first to establish an association with the same name for this activity and considered it a separate field (*Lahav, 2021*). According to some scholars, this movement is rooted in the Socratic tradition (*Nagaraj, 2022*).

Theoretical Foundations and Research Background

Currently, helping people to examine their lives and to understand how their manner of living is good is considered a kind of philosophical counseling (*Raabe, 2001*). Philosophical counseling is a type of counseling that makes a person's worldview understood, criticized, and examined. A worldview is a person's general attitude toward life (*Sharaf, 2021*). In the past several decades, philosophers have turned to

using philosophical counseling methods for everyday problems and troubles such as decision-making, interpersonal conflicts, job dissatisfaction, the search for meaning, etc (*Lahav, 1993*). Now, some believe that counseling has become the most widespread cultural trend at the turn of the new millennium (*Frunza, 2022*).

According to *Shlomit Schuster*, philosophers do not use therapeutic methods and do not diagnose. The philosophical practitioner initiates a didactic philosophical process in their interlocutor, enabling the interlocutor to become an authentic thinker and ultimately arrive at philosophical answers themselves (*Schuster, 1991*).

Ran Lahav also believes that what makes philosophical counseling philosophical is that it helps the counselee in philosophical self-explorations (*Lahav, 1996*).

In the field of philosophical counseling, there are various approaches, most of which are based on the philosophy and worldview of Western thinkers.

However, since anthropology is based on the divine worldview and the Islamic worldview, there is a comprehensive approach to man, and man is not limited to a material and short life in this world, we were interested in extracting the approach followed by an expert thinker in the field of Islamic instructions about philosophical counseling and developing a model of philosophical counseling based on it.

As an Islamic thinker, *Ali Şafāei Hāeri* has many works in the fields of philosophy, Islamic education, family (*Şafāei Hāeri, 2009*), and other fields related to philosophical counseling. Among Islamic thinkers, *Ali Şafāei Hāeri* is known as one of the best experts in Islamic education. In addition, he has written valuable philosophical books such as critical books including the criticism of schools of philosophy, the ideal evolution, existentialism (*Ibid, 2019a*), the criticism of the ideal evolution, Marxism (*Ibid, 2019b*), a critique of the philosophy of religion, God in philosophy, the

hermeneutics of the Qur'an and the tradition (*Ibid, 2004*), and many other books.

Research Method

This fundamental and qualitative study adopted a theoretical descriptive-analytical method. In a descriptive-analytical study, the researcher describes issues as they are presented in books and writings and at the same time analyzes the issues based on his/her scientific ability (*Alavi, 2017*).

The data in this study were collected using library techniques and a review of books, articles, software, and websites. The collected data were analyzed through categorization, analysis, inferences, and explanation.

Main Approaches to Philosophical Counseling

1. A General Classification

According to *Ran Lahav*, there are two dominant approaches to philosophical counseling, namely critical thinking (problem-solving) and refinement. Most of the philosophical counseling perspectives fall under these two categories.

A more common approach in the philosophical practice of the world is the critical thinking approach. The main idea behind this approach is that philosophy is a critical examination of fundamental issues. It is possible to use this thinking tool to help clients analyze and solve their life problems, behavior, beliefs, and emotions (*Lahav, 2021: 100*).

The most popular function of critical thinking is problem-solving, which refers to helping clients define and solve their problems in life. Thus, this subset of critical thinking can be called a problem-solving approach to philosophical counseling (*Ibid*).

Another group of thinkers believes that philosophical thinking can be used to enrich and deepen our lives. In this approach, philosophical counseling is considered not an attempt to solve personal problems but a journey to gain wisdom and obtain more meaning.

Counseling in this approach is a continuous process and counseling does not end after

solving the client's problems. This approach to philosophical counseling can be called the refinement approach. (*Ibid, 102*)

2. Philosophical Counseling and Self-Transformation

Ran Lahav believes that his approach to philosophical counseling (self-transformation) belongs to the second group, i.e. the refinement approach (*Ibid, 103*).

Lahav believes that one of the main ways to do this is through philosophical reflection. Philosophical reflection is a free-thinking and unrestricted exploration of the root of the basic issues of life without considering pre-accepted assumptions (*Ibid*).

Ran Lahav believes that philosophical exercises can connect us to the guiding principle within us and allow us to be wise and peaceful people who are actually in harmony with the universe (*Ibid: 104*).

We usually follow fixed, automatic, and superficial emotional patterns in our lives. *Lahav* calls this form of life a limited, dry, and superficial set

around the person. Like the allegory of *Plato's* cave, the prisoners do not realize that they are confined to a small part of their lives (*Lahav, 2021: 105*).

Lahav calls the person's understanding of life, the person's surrounding world or "worldview" for short. A worldview is the implicit "philosophy of life" of every person.

According to transformative philosophers, self-transformation is the same as going beyond one's surroundings or coming out of *Plato's* cave and communicating with the inner dimension and cultivating it (*Ibid, 2016*).

3. Truth Versus Self-Interpretation (David A. Jopling): Originality of Truth in Philosophical Counseling

Ran Lahav and others claim that clients' ways of answering basic questions cannot be evaluated by the counselor at their face value, but only to find out whether they reflect the client's independent choice of self-expression.

Jopling argues that this view makes the distinction between self-knowledge and self-deception

problematic. When clients are given interpretative and normative authority, and when personal, pragmatic, and aesthetic considerations take precedence over truth value, then clients often tend to provide the most convenient moral interpretation that fits their current needs. *Jopling* defends the view that "truth" is important in philosophical counseling. Philosophical counselors, then, bear an important burden of responsibility to help their clients achieve accurate, defensible, guiding, and "truth-oriented" self-understanding (*Ref: Jopling, 1996*).

4. Philosophical Counseling as Psychotherapy (Jon Mills)

Gerd Achenbach insists that there is a clear line between philosophical counseling and psychotherapy. *Lahav* also believed that philosophical counseling is not psychotherapy (*Cohen & Zinech, 2013*).

However, *Mills* believes that philosophy cannot be separated from psychology because philosophy itself is a psychological activity (*Mills, 2001*).

According to *John Mills*, if philosophical counseling reduces its activity to the level of advice and guidance or teaching philosophical thinking and reasoning, this is no longer counseling, but a private class teaching philosophy or logic and will have an educational nature. However, he states that not all forms of philosophical practice are psychotherapy (*Mills, 2001: 125*).

5. Logic-Based Therapy (LBT) Approach and Its Advantages (*Elliot D. Cohen*)

Logic-based therapy (LBT), which is a relatively new form of rational emotive behavioral therapy (REBT), is a psychological method that assumes people's behavioral and emotional problems are mainly caused by irrational beliefs that they have accepted (*Cohen & Zinech, 2013*). *Cohen* believes that corresponding to each of the main fallacies, there is a transcendent virtue that overcomes it. (*Ibid: 132*)

LBT counselors help clients formulate arguments, then help them look for illogical premises

and conclusions that they have argued to confuse themselves (Cohen & Zinech, 2013).

6. Philosophical Self-Help and Self-Diagnosis Approach (Non-Clinical Practice) (*Shlomit C. Schuster*)

Schuster believes that the relationship between the philosopher and the client and their intellectual interactions is more important than recognition. With the help of a philosophical counselor, the client understands and receives something that can be temporarily called "philosophical self-diagnosis" (*Ibid: 147*).

There are two types of self-diagnoses in philosophical counseling:

1. Clients who have a certain level of self-knowledge, but need dialogue tools to analyze such knowledge and find new solutions.
2. Clients who have vague complaints and need help to clearly state their problem (*Schuster, 1998*).

7. Approach To Understanding the Unique Self and Others Through Dialogue (A More Non-Clinical Approach)
(*Maria Davenza Tillmanns*)

According to *Maria*, philosophical counseling is never about solving problems. She believes that life is inherently problematic. Rather than focusing on solving problems, *Tillmanns* emphasizes learning about life through conversation (*Tillmanns, 2005*).

Tillmanns does not consider philosophical counseling as an activity that is more focused on rationality (*Ibid: 156*).

Buber also emphasizes the necessity of talking with another because he believes that it is through the process of engaging with another that we can meet our inner context and we should not seek to understand the context before interacting with another because such action will only cause mistrust (*Ibid*). *Buber's* idea contrasts with many psychological and sociological theories that emphasize the importance of creating structures for understanding (*Ibid: 158*).

8. Clarifying Emotional Life (An Eclectic-Philosophical Approach to Psychotherapy)
(*Brian T. Rutter*)

According to *Rutter*, people often experience emotions that do not have a clear understanding of the meaning and context of their emergence, as well as how they ultimately affect their daily lives. *Rutter* talks about *Rogers'* reflection of emotions and how the counselor's mirroring of clients' emotions illuminates the client's emotional experience.

Rutter also shows how *Rogers'* reflexive view of emotional life can be extended to include *Martin Heidegger's* ideas about being in the world (*Rutter, 2021*), and how the client's emotional world be reconstructed in the treatment room during a bilateral and hermeneutic process between the client and the therapist (*Cohen & Zinech, 2013*).

9. Other Approaches

Carl R. Rogers (*Rogers cited in Frunza, 2022: 101*), and *Sandu Frunza* consider clients as dialogue partners in philosophical counseling as clients often turn to

philosophical counselors to solve their problems, grow personally, create a better world, and achieve existential peace. The client does not come to philosophical counseling as a patient. However, having therapeutic expectations is not wrong as dialogue has a strong healing power in itself (*Frunza cited in Frunza, 2022: 100*).

According to *Sandu Frunza*, one of the main values of Western culture is love, and counseling should also consider the client's culture. The importance of love in personal growth, understanding existential problems, and solving various metaphysical crises faced by the client is evident in all human dimensions (*Scruton cited in Frunza, 2022: 111*).

Ang and *Wayne Dyne* also believe that solving the problems that a person may have in most cases has not only a philosophical component but also relates to the culture in which he/she lives (*Dyne cited in Frunza 2022: 101*).

According to *Marinoff*, it is less likely to have an anti-psychiatry attitude, but philosophical counseling and the philosopher

do not need to implement a treatment plan or intellectual and behavioral rules. People need dialogue, not diagnosis (*Marinov cited in Frunza, 2022: 101*).

In his analysis, *Foucault* introduces us to *Socrates*, who tells the youth not to despair because they have not come to learn all the secrets of wisdom, but advises self-care and states: Know yourself (*Foucault cited in Frunza, 2022: 103*).

Nietzsche's solution, under the pressure of relativism, leads the client to the idea that everything is only interpretation and that one can have real access to the reality of his/her life as it is constructed in the interpretation (*Nietzsche cited in Frunza, 2022: 103*).

***Ali Şafāei Hāeri's* Approach to Philosophical Counseling**

1. A Truth-Oriented Self-Transformation Approach Based on Refined Logical Thinking

In short, *Ali Şafāei Hāeri's* approach is truth-oriented self-transformation based on

thinking, which starts from immediate cognitions and reaches to a deeper knowledge of oneself and one's talents and knowledge of the origin and other types of knowledge from immediate and direct perceptions (insights) which are understandable for everyone. The outcome is genuine knowledge based on truth. The mind should be refined and freed along with thinking before reaching knowledge to avoid intellectual deviations. According to *Ali Şafāei Hāeri's* counseling model, fundamental questions are asked about the key components during contemplation.

During counseling and after the client's self-transformation and reaching true knowledge, the counselor or instructor should remind the client to avoid forgetfulness and neglect.

Ali Safaei Haeri considers thinking to be the cornerstone of human education and growth. Accordingly, his philosophical counseling focuses on contemplation, thinking, and free reasoning. Contemplation

means providing the necessary raw materials and conducting the necessary studies for thinking, and thinking means concluding raw materials and abstraction and generalization. Reasoning also means evaluating and comparing the goals and solutions reached through thinking. These outcomes are achieved through thinking free from whims, prejudices, habits, imitations, etc.

Ali Safaei Haeri emphasizes the three factors of fostering thinking, freedom, and character in childhood. Fostering thinking can develop the ability to reason and infer well in adulthood. Moreover, strengthening freedom helps the child learn to accept his/her mistakes in the face of a better idea. Finally, strengthening character and self-esteem in childhood helps the person not retreat from sound ideas with the influx of false thoughts in adulthood, even if they are the mainstream (*Şafāei Hāeri, 2016*).

2. Self-Transformation After Intellectual Maturity

Ali Safaei Haeri believes that deliberation, thinking, and reasoning are the foundations

of human guidance, and a therapist or philosophical counselor has the three following main duties;

- 1- Refining or freeing thought and cleaning it from deviations,
- 2- Education or training,
- 3- Reminding, as will be discussed below.

- **Deliberation**

Deliberation is to provide raw materials for thinking and inference. It involves exploring the problem, incident, or scene that happened and evaluating the signs that have emerged. Raw materials include contemplation in nature, incidents, humans, destinies, and even various studies. Deliberation means careful contemplation and learning from incidents through a holistic and top-down view (*Şafāei Hāeri, 2007b: 105*).

- **Thinking**

It is thinking that brings a person to know himself/herself, his/her capital, talents, his/her work, and his/her role, and to know existence, the world, and God. Using the superior power of thinking, humans can conclude

and reach great results from their limited information (*Ibid: 115*).

Humans have commonalities with animals in senses, perceptions, feelings, emotions, memory, and intelligence. Intelligence is the ability to understand the situation, thinking is the power to conclude, and reason is the power to evaluate, compare, or measure.

Despite some commonalities between humans and animals and the animals' rich emotions, an animal cannot draw conclusions based on its perceptions and discover unknowns through knowns. The animal cannot abstract and generalize and cannot reproduce information and draw conclusions.

Moreover, an animal cannot evaluate its information and measure it consciously. Furthermore, an animal cannot choose consciously. Guided by its instincts, an animal can find the best option. This is not an informed choice, but an instinctually guided action.

Human is forced to have free will since his/her internal composition and structure have created this free will inside him/her. The conflicts and competition of

instincts with the power to conclude and evaluate lead to self-awareness and choice (free will) that are formed deterministically in humans (*Şafāei Hāeri, 2007b: 114, 115*).

- **Reasoning**

Reasoning is the power of evaluation and comparison. It means evaluating the goals and finding ways to achieve them. The thought arranges the raw materials that were thoughtfully packed inside us, sucks their juices, and throws out their excrement (*Ibid: 116*).

Then, it concludes experiences and knowledge and discovers new findings and unknown knowledge. Afterward, reasoning evaluates and compares the goals and solutions discovered through thinking and chooses the best ones.

After choosing the best goal, the perfectionist instinct makes the human move forward. Thus, he/she is freed from the previous path and chooses a new goal freely (*Ibid: 59*).

3. The Three Main Duties of a Counselor Towards Clients

Refinement (purifying and freeing the thought), education (training),

and reminding (advice) are the duties of a philosophical counselor towards the clients.

- **Refining And Freeing the Client's Thoughts from Deviations**

Although thinking underlies development, there are some even with a great power of things who fail to find the truth and thus are deviated or disappointed. Sometimes, thinking is influenced by habits, prejudices, imitations, interests, and instincts. Thus, humans should be freed from these distortions to think logically (*Ibid: 73,74*).

A counselor's role is to free thoughts from the constraints of education, heredity, environment, etc., and inform clients about contradictions (*Ibid: 60*).

If a container is contaminated, it will spoil the sweetest drinks poured into it. Thus, contaminated thoughts must be cleansed so that the truth can be perceived well.

Curiosity and truth-seeking powers are effective in freeing thoughts from prejudices, instincts, and personal interests.

Curiosity moves the thought to seek the truth, and truth-seeking controls the thought so that it does not go astray. Promoting self-esteem and a sense of self-worth in the clients prevents adhering to unreasonable habits and imitations.

Moreover, some teachings, such as recognizing the greatness of humans and their talents, knowing the vastness of existence and the ways ahead of humans, knowing the pain and sufferings of the world, knowing God's mercy, etc., are among other solutions for freeing and refining humans (*Şafāei Hāeri, 2007b: 73-80*).

- **Education**

Instead of leaving the client in dangerous trials and errors, a knowledgeable counselor can guide him/her through effective instructions. Thus, the client can consciously make effective decisions.

Thus, a counselor's role is to teach the right way of thinking and perception (*Ibid: 60-61*).

Following *Ali Şafāei Hāeri's* approach, a wise counselor can help clients come up with a correct understanding of themselves and their talents, goals, and existence

by asking fundamental (not superficial) questions. As long as man is unknown to himself, he cannot understand his goals, how to live, and how to die.

A person who can find answers to fundamental questions about their existence and talents, being humans, human needs, the purpose of life, and so on can realize the purpose of life and their role and function in life.

The counselor must prepare raw materials for the vast human thinking and must teach the clients how to effectively think, draw conclusions, and interpret incidents in their lives (*Ibid: 93*).

- **Reminding**

Humans need to confront contradictions, competitions, and enemies for their growth and achievements because these hidden and obvious enemies result in conflicts and these conflicts contribute to developing skills in humans.

However, these internal and external competitors and enemies devour our funds and diminish our talents. These internal and external forces help us know a friend from an enemy because a

true friend loves for our own sake but any enemy pursues his/her interests by interacting with us.

Moreover, human sensual desires sometimes lead them to a destructive and harmful path. The devil also deceives humans with temptations, incitement of instincts, and embellishment of the worthless manifestations of the world, wasting their lives and intellectual and spiritual assets. Some people may show sympathy for us, but they demand more in return and seek to take advantage of us to serve their interests.

A wise counselor must warn a person who is looking for growth and reaching the desired goal in life and remind him/her of things that may hinder his/her development and also procrastination (*Şafāei Hāeri, 2007a & 2007b: 100*).

The counselor's warnings can help a person better understand their great spiritual assets, unfathomable existence, human hardships, divine grandeur, enemies, deaths, pains, and sufferings. However, such warnings can lead to further developments and accomplishments if they are welcome and accepted by the client.

A person who has gained knowledge through thinking, this knowledge induces desire, inclination, and love, leading to action. However, some prearrangements should be made for further development. Some practices are also needed to promote practical skills. Thus, timely warnings and reminders can lead to effective action (*Ibid, 2007b: 103*).

- **The Necessity of Knowing the Client's Emotional State in Counseling and Education**

A good counselor should identify different emotional states of clients and ask questions that induce their stream of thought so that the clients are encouraged to seek the truth. *Ali Safaei* has introduced several emotional states and the way to address them, which are beyond the scope of this paper.

4. An Overview of *Ali Şafāei Hāeri's* Approach

The main focus of *Ali Şafāei Hāeri's* approach to philosophical counseling is on the client's free-thinking and self-transformation. However, the

client's flow of thoughts should be freed from distortions by asking fundamental questions or helping him/her to induce his/her flow of thoughts by asking thought-provoking questions. Clients should also be instructed on how to engage in rational thinking and making inferences through self-transformations. They should also learn how to formulate logical assumptions through contemplation of raw data.

For instance, asking key questions can help the client to learn more about human character, talents, and capabilities. Such knowledge helps the client discover the governing laws as all humans have some restrictions and they are subjected to and dominated by a set of laws. Understanding human subjugation helps to decipher the starting point of the universe. Every human may select a unique starting point for the creation. However, this starting point/origin cannot be rationally composite as a composite thing requires several components and is affected by such components that may have some existential

precedence. Furthermore, the origin cannot be restricted or demarcated by some boundaries as such an origin is dominated and governed by a set of laws. In simple terms, the origin should be endless and such endlessness requires endless knowledge and power (*Şafāei Hāeri, 2007b*).

Further, knowing human talents and composition can help us realize that human beings cannot stay stagnant and that they always need to move forward. A look at human composition shows that his actions involve movement. But in what direction? A direction not lower, not equal, but higher. And what direction is higher and more perfect than that infinite, needless, merciful, merciful one?

An analysis of numerous human talents shows that man is not restricted to this limited world, and if he were, he would not need so many talents. Thus, humans did not have intellectual powers for this material well-being in the world. As we know, bees can

provide the best welfare and social life with their instincts. Man is beyond this limited world and persists, and to move in a higher and superior direction against these complexities of the laws of existence and the infinite extension of existence, he needs a guide, ruler, messengers, and their orders and instructions.

For a person to be able to think rationally and know their goals based on the truth, they must be freed from distracting issues and restraints. The person should even be freed from this freedom itself, because a seemingly free person is sometimes trapped by lust, sometimes trapped by others, sometimes trapped by limited rationality, and sometimes trapped by ego. What is this freedom? The person is still trapped by many things. Thus, being trapped by restricted things will lead to loss and destruction.

A person who considers himself free from everything is inevitably forced to choose and make a decision based on some criteria in life; freed from past desires, he is now

forced to choose voluntarily. He may choose based on his impulses and instincts and may make a decision based on the limited intellect of some other thinkers, and sometimes based on his restricted intellect, which does not encompass the whole creation, and there is a possibility of making a wrong decision. This type of freedom is also a trap and the person may get trapped in many things. Thus, he must be released from this freedom. This type of freedom is "variable captivity" to fallible ego and the intellects that may not be sympathetic to us, and if they are, there is a high probability of making mistakes and incompatibility with the laws of the whole universe.

Thus, it would be better if free humans were freely the servants of the unlimited absolute ruler so that they could be happy and achieve real peace and joy in this complex and connected world. This would save the person from many difficulties and hardships. The goal is not only

to develop talents, but the counselor must guide the developed talents in the best direction. (*Şafāei Hāeri, 2021*)

5. Self-Transformation from Ali Safaei's Perspective

The difference between the type of self-transformation proposed by *Şafāei Hāeri* and those introduced by others is that in this type of self-transformation, the counselor does not trap the client with his/her limited intellect or leave him/her alone with some philosophical thoughts. Rather, by raising key questions and awakening curiosity and truth-seeking, the counselor encourages the client to start from immediate knowledge and reach deep knowledge.

Indeed, *Şafāei Hāeri* takes us out of our limited surroundings through self-transformation, but he does not leave us there to be trapped in another cave.

By asking key questions, *Şafāei Hāeri* makes the clients familiar with their real needs and when the clients understand their needs, they try to fulfill them. A person starts making

efforts from the moment he sees great needs in himself. Thus, he must be freed from obstacles and chains. Then he can find himself and understand his role, his relations with the creation and the community, and harmonize himself with the creation. (*Ibid: 197*)

Philosophical counselors who have reached truth-based philosophical values can take care of the client when searching for the truth and self-transformation, and where they see the client trapped, they can prevent them from being trapped again in the shackles of superficial and limited desires by asking fundamental questions.

This is true that a counselor should not impose their views on the clients, but having a neutral attitude toward the wrong answers means ignoring the achievements of humans from thousands of years of thinking.

It does not matter if the client has or does not have the same choices as the counselor. Rather, what is important is that the client becomes aware and

comes to know himself/herself. Finally, s/he is free to choose the path of growth, perfection, bliss, and eternal and infinite pleasure or select a limited, transitory, and superficial path. The most important thing for the client is to make a conscious choice. Imposing opinions and forcing a person to do something leads to human metamorphosis.

Humans, having the power of thinking and evaluation and striving for perfection, which originates from their construction and composition, cannot be satisfied with restricted accomplishments. Thus, humans start taking actions out of necessity and instinctually in search of a more perfect truth.

The counselor can clarify goals by paving the way for inducing a spontaneous flow of questions within the client by asking basic and precise questions. The counselor sometimes warns or reminds mistakes of clients.

A person's possessions are not a criterion, because the possessions require efficiency, and efficiency has no title because it needs to

be calculated. The motto of the school of existence which is very popular states that a person is nothing but action. However, it should be noted that a person is nothing but the direction of their action. The most important thing is the motivation or the driving force of actions and goals (*Şafāei Hāeri, 2007b: 232*).

According to Şafāei Hāeri, by thinking, a person gains knowledge, and this knowledge leads to affection and love, and affection and love lead to action followed by thinking, and this process repeats over and again (*Ibid: 43,44*).

Conclusion

Overall, it can be argued that *Ali Şafāei Hāeri's* approach is an integrated system and a coherent and continuous stream of thought, and a type of self-transformation based on free and refined thinking and reasoning that gives authenticity to the truth and emphasizes definite and immediate knowledge gained through raw information through explorations and studies. In addition, this thinking flows by

asking questions or by providing the context for asking questions by the counselor. However, thoughts must be freed from all kinds of prejudices, sensual desires, and imitations. In this approach, intellectual raw materials are extracted from immediate cognitions and are developed in other cases. After the client gains solid and definite knowledge and is in the process of correcting tendencies and behaviors, the counselor warns the client so that s/he does not go astray. Using methods, the counselor can identify the client's mental state and ask questions according to the client's needs and start the movement and flow of thought.

According to religious and divine teachings, human life is not limited to a few years of life and man continues living even after death. Thus, a philosophical counselor, even though may have a different belief, should consider the possibility of eternal life after death and help the client consciously and freely achieve deep philosophical knowledge

and a thorough worldview based on the truth that feeds on direct and definite knowledge. The counselor should not impose his/her ideas on the client and not confine the client to the thoughts of a few philosophers so that the client is trapped by the ideas expressed by philosophers. The counselor should expose the clients to contradictions so that s/he chooses the best alternatives through thoughtfulness, free will, and his/her instinct for perfectionism. Moreover, the counselor should guide the client, teach him/her logical thinking, and provide the adequate intellectual materials needed by the clients.

The common inner call of all human beings in *Ran Lahav's* view, which leads man to leave the peripheral cave, communicate with the inner dimension, and discover the truth, is similar to the concept of human perfectionism and idealism in the books of *Ali Şafāei Hāeri*. In addition, the inner dimension can be considered as the divine nature and construction of human beings. That part of his approach that

highlights the formulation of thinking and reasoning has some similarities with the LBT approach.

Ali Şafāei Hāeri also offers several solutions to understand the mental states and moods of clients through their perceptions and reactions, which can be considered somewhat similar to the approach of clarifying emotional life, although it has some differences.

However, a comprehensive attitude toward humans and existence is one of the distinctive points of this approach with many approaches. Moreover, the emergence of thinking i.e., free-thinking refined from deviations, from immediate knowledge, which a person can understand easily, and obtaining knowledge by giving authenticity to the truth followed by constant evaluation and comparison and informed and free decision-making are the key components of his approach to philosophical counseling, which is different from other philosophical counseling approaches.

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Author Contributions

The first author has been responsible for collecting, examining, and analyzing different views of philosophical counseling, as well as analyzing *Ali Şafāei Ḥāeri's* view and comparing it with other approaches. The second author has been very influential in choosing the research topic and conducting the research. The third author provided suggestions for completing the study and its educational requirements.

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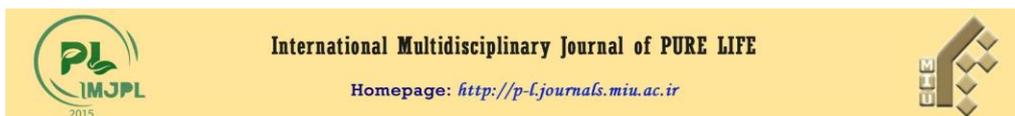
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ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Extremist Thought in The New Media and Its Impact on Society (Case Study: Defense Network of The Companions and Mothers of The Believers)

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT	
<p>Article History: Received: 26 Januray 2024 Revised: 20 March 2024 Accepted: 23 April 2024</p>	<p>SUBJECT & OBJECTIVES: Extremist thought in the new media and its impact on society, showing the role of this media, in how they employ the contents of the Islamic values and concepts, within the framework of forming a specific intellectual trend, that aims to influence the vision and convictions of individuals. This analysis also uncovers the most famous electronic communication networks, influencing the extremism and deviation of thought among Arab youth, by analyzing the path of their emergence and formation. Revealing the distortion and misinformation in the media discourse, directed through the network for the defense of the companions and mothers of the believers.</p> <p>METHOD & FINDING: The study relied on precise research tools, such as the technique of quantitative content analysis, the use of the framing method, and the questionnaire also are adopted. The treatment required several research approaches, such as historical, descriptive, and analytical ones. Additionally, using statistics, opinion polls, and numbers fall within the inductive approach. The comparative approach was also used when comparing theory and practice in a case study. The study showed the failure of these extremist sites to distort the image of religious thought and to deviate human societies from their nature, faith, and morality.</p> <p>CONCLUSION: The concepts and values broadcast by these media outlets do not bear the characteristics of thought that make them fall within Islamic thought. Those are thoughts that deviate from the values of Islam.</p>	
<p>Key Words: <i>Sectarianism</i> <i>Extremist Thought</i> <i>Terrorism</i> <i>New Media</i> <i>Network of Companions</i> <i>Defense</i></p>		
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Introduction

Since the beginning of 2010, a political event has occurred in some Arab countries, such as Syria, accompanied by indications of the emergence of social media, which promotes certain ideologies, some of which are very rigid, to the point that they reject any alternative point of view, including followers of other ideologies such as secularism, religion, or different systems of thought like secularism which itself can become exclusionary by marginalizing alternative, non-secular visions of the world.

This cancellation brings to mind what we read in the history of the ancients, about personalities who practiced this exclusion of others, such as contemporary thinkers who adopted extremist ideas in the Arab and Islamic world like *Sayyid Qutb (Tarebiq, 2017)*, *Sheikh Muheiseni (Haddad, 2023)*, and recently *Sheikh Yusuf Qeradawi*, who still years before his death the source of *Fatwas* (verdicts) for Islamic State militants in Iraq and Syria. “ISIS” as a *Takfiri* group (*Fadhli, 2013*), presents many extremist ideas as well.

The importance of this research lies in studying the intellectual contents of the concepts broadcast by social media to influence humans and society, which reveals their backgrounds, in addition to revealing the extent of their compatibility with the principles of the divine message by which they characterized the titles of their topics.

The points mentioned above raised a set of questions required by studying this case, and constitute a natural entrance to crystallize the research problem, which will start from the following main question: What thought is created by Islamic social media?

Notably, it emanates more following questions:

1. What are the reasons behind the spread of this extremist ideology?
2. What are the concepts included in their intellectual and religious topics?
3. How did extremists use these media to support their ideas, goals, and ideological orientations?
4. What are the sources relied on to support and document its ideological and intellectual topics?

5. What are the nomenclatures used in the topics, dialogues, and debates?
6. Do the dialogues present intellectual issues as matters of disagreement among Islamic sects?
7. What about the image of Islam? Does it fall within the framework of contemporary Islamic thought?
8. Was this media of intellectual extremism able to divert Muslims from their true religious compass?

In this context, researchers aim to explore the impact of social media on recipients. by comparing and analyzing diverse content across these platforms and observing the expressions, and frameworks used in texts as part of a case study. Additionally, they quantitatively analyzed the content to gain insights into its broader context and meaning.

Research Method

This is analytical research that describes, interprets, and analyzes within a precise methodology in analyzing the content of the intellectual issue, starting with selecting the sample with its time

limits and ending with an analysis of the nomenclature used in the programs. Remarkably, the limitations of the objective study are from 2011-2023.

The sample was chosen from among the media for the network defense of companions and mothers of the believers, due to their abundance of Islamic topics that infuse concepts and values, that require uncovering them and setting their goals.

Theoretical Foundations and Research Background

The Qur'anic method was based on non-extremism and dialogue with good advice, and this is what was confirmed by the words of the Noble Messenger, in forbidding religious extremism where He said, "*Beware of extremism in religion*". Extremism, as we see in the world, is the abundance of temptations and shedding. Bloodshed, stoking sectarian strife, and blindly following false *Fatwas* are conclusive evidence of sectarian fanaticism and lack of acceptance of the other (*Khamis, 2013*).

These words of the Noble Messenger require defining a few keywords, that distinguish the forbidden extremism from the moderation and tolerance that is encouraged by our true religion, e.g., sectarianism, extremism, and severity, as well as difficulty and alienation.

The origin of extremism is in thought, but it has been linked to violence by degrading the sanctity of violators (*Kamel, 2002, 1-5*).

Extremist thought is a deviation from the intellectual rules, values, standards, and behavioral methods common in society, expressed in isolation, negativity, and withdrawal, or by adopting different values and standards, the defense of which may amount to a tendency toward violence, in an individual form or organized group behavior to bring about change in society, and forcefully imposing opinions on others (*Gundi, 1989: 7*).

Terrorism involves the use or threat of violence and seeks to create fear, not just within the direct victims, but among a wide audience (*Jenkins, 2024*).

New media, is any media including newspaper articles, blogs, music, and podcasts that are delivered digitally, from a media or email to mobile phones and streaming apps, as well as any internet-related form of communication (*Girolimon, 2023*).

Defense Network of Companions is one of the Syrian opposition networks that treat an Islamic religious issue as intellectual, belief, and political. In another definition, it is a preaching channel that explains the belief of the *'Ithnā 'Ashariyya* (Twelver Shi'ism) with evidence, proofs, and documents through debates and programs.

Historically, the Middle Ages were characterized by bloody conflicts of religious origin (*Zamil, 2020: 2*), fueled by intellectual extremism and fanaticism that destroyed human life and society, especially in the Jewish and Christian areas in Europe (*Rayyan, 2020, Vol. 2: 73-85*). In the East, Islam was not immune from such conflicts. Intellectual extremism was manifested in its most severe form

during the centuries of the Islamic Caliphate (*Tarebiq, 2017*).

Extremism, in all its forms, continues nowadays under religious slogans disguised as thought and Islam. For example, Islam did not know expressions such as apostasy, heresy, and other *Takfiri Fatwas* before *Ahmad ibn Hanbal*. In this respect, *Shorbagy* said,

They supported these statements with texts from the books of jurisprudence that they have proved it with verses from the Qur'an and Sunnah (Shorbagy, 2018).

We may find here the best clarification of the essence of intellectual extremism that turns into violence and terrorism. In this regard, *Saleh* said,

The first thing on which intellectual terrorism is founded in the actual practice of revisionist Islamic tendencies, is determining the legal position of individuals and societies, by prosecuting actions and words based on invented principles, and prior

convictions that end with the issuance of a ruling of innovation, or disbelief is imposed on the person to whom it was directed (Salah, 2008).

Hence, intellectual extremism which destroys life and society began in the modern sense through the *Salafist* system, which initially relied upon spreading its thought by holding meetings of a secret nature, in which elite academics and thinkers participated to attract young minds through multiple methods (*Kinkar, n.d.*), the most recent of which was contemporary means of communication (network), the international information (internet). Despite its many advantages, it provides many disadvantages that contribute to its exploitation in dangerous and extremist fields, some of which come as follows:

- Connecting millions of entities, organizations, and individuals in one global network.
- Making the process of knowledge exchange a mutual process between the publisher and the user or recipient.

- Ease of use and deployment.
- Low cost (*Kinkar, n.d.*).

Adam Hoffman in the article “*The Islamic State’s Use of Social Media; Terrorism’s Siren Song in the Digital Age*”, said,

This use of social media has enabled “ISIS” to present its narrative apart from traditional media (print, television, radio, design) the image it wishes to see reflected in global public opinion (Hoffman, 2016).

This historical background between the past and the current age answered many questions raised in the introduction of the research about the emergence of intellectual extremism, its development, and sources, leading to the era of modern technology and how it was exploited in expanding. What concerns us is the intellectual extremism that we have seen on some social media, which has historical origins that were revealed by the emergence of the *Kharijites*, separatist sects, and their issuance of many extremist *Fatwas* (verdicts) (*Shorbagy, 2018*).

Digital Technology and Intellectual Invasion

The rapid developments in communication technology led to a parallel development in the form and content of media messages, which contributed to increasing the audience’s interaction together and achieved immediate resonance so that it became possible to measure the negative or positive impact of the contents (*Hosseini, 2016*).

What is this technology? How is it transformed from a platform for disseminating knowledge and communication among people, which is an environment that allows individuals and groups to communicate their voice and the voice of their communities to the entire world, to a network that injects concepts, values, and thoughts that suit those in charge of it in the process of systematically penetrating minds with soft war tools?

Henry Kissinger said,

The revolution in the world of communications and information is the first in history that brought such a large

number of individuals and processes to the same communication tool, in translating and tracking their movements in a single technological language (Kissinger, 2015).

It means it is working on espionage and spreading extremism at the same time. Reports indicate that there are more than 30,000 fake accounts with fake names on Facebook, belonging to individuals and officers from the security and intelligence services of the Israel regime who are fluent in all languages of the world. It is an attempt to reach the largest segment of Facebook users in the Arab world and the meaning of the sentence *“If the page is in Arabic, the target is the Arabs” (Abu Nahl, 2017).*

So, how did the *Takfiri* system benefit from exploiting this technology to spread its extremist ideology that destroys human life and society, and through what platform?

The intellectual invasion of the East, specifically Islamic thought, has invaded the new

and traditional media in the past decades. With the emergence of social media networks, this invasion has turned into media because of its effective influence in changing the culture and values based on the behavioral and intellectual orientations of the members of society browsing it. This has contributed to the emergence of extremist ideologies within online communities that have become a source of great concern, as these communities are led by influential figures, especially with the emergence of platforms that promote intellectual extremism that destroys human life and society.

The language of violence, hateful speech, and extremism in the debates and programs of these platforms, the *Defending the Companions and Mothers of the Believers Network* is one of them on the *YouTube* platform which has produced a generation of fanatical youth who reject any other thought that has reached the limits of extremism. Thus, to measure the extent of influence, researchers should study the process of repeatedly publishing

the information. This repetition, desired by the web creators, aims to make these details accepted by individuals, even if the source and content are inaccurate (Hassan, 2019). This implies questioning the goal of the publisher or media owner for publishing false information to recruit possible browsers to adopt an extremist ideology, and this is demonstrated by the interaction rate that appeared in the table measure whether by view, like, or comment. To obtain accurate answers about the involvement of these sites in fanning

the spirit of nervousness and extremism through the ideological headlines they present, we chose research form questions in a pilot study that was distributed among a random sample of 100 male and female respondents to find out the facts and verify the stability of the metrics for followers of the *Defense Network* programs and debates to evaluate interaction as shown in the following table:

Table 1. Cross-Cutting Intersecting Ratios with Social Media and Interaction

Social Media	Interaction Level: Cognitive/Interactive		Interaction Forms: Like/Comment/Share			Level Of Impact: Immediate Followed by Commitment	
Facebook	4	8	7	5	6	5	3
Twitter	7	18	13	11	8	35	7
YouTube	14	49	0	27	23	34	16
Total	25	75	20	43	37	74	26

These results showed that the *YouTube* platform ranked first among the visual media used and social networking sites in displaying debates and programs presented by the *Defense Network* followed by the Twitter blog in attracting those who openly express hostility to a specific Islamic doctrine and support the violence to which they are exposed based on *Takfiri Fatwas* that were broadcast by the network. On the aforementioned platform, *YouTube* recorded a rate of 49%, compared to *Twitter*, which received 18%, while *Facebook* did not exceed 8%, these percentages seem to be normal in the circumstances of the spread of new media platforms that have played a major role in spreading sectarian strife and incitement.

It was recorded that a high rate of extremism in 2010-2015 led to violence and intellectual extremism, the origin of which was primarily the debates and dialogues that were broadcast on social media (*Morjan, 2017*), which instilled hatred, murder,

bloodshed and intellectual extremism, especially the mass executions that the whole world watched on *YouTube* in 2015, the individuals belonging to certain sects, consider to be enemies and infidels, so it is necessary to punish them with death based on the extremist ideology, which was published under Islamic titles and intellectual debates, such as *Defending the Companions and Mothers of the Believers* network through its channels.

YouTube's lack of seriousness in deleting extremist material played a pivotal role in the occurrence of terrorist acts because of the extremist and inflammatory thought broadcast on its platform (*Morjan, 2017*), in which the *Countering Extremism Project* documented 1348 videos on *YouTube*, that garnered thousands of views for an extremist group in 2018, which is still using the platform to publish videos with extremist content, despite *YouTube* implementing the removal decision (*Yamani, 2019*).

Analyzing The Contents of Dialogues and Debates of Islamic Thought, Between the Method of Advocacy and Practice

After investigating several webs, such as the *Network for the Defense of the Companions and Mothers of the Believers* and other pages for religious figures, it became clear that they broadcast the same content, that raised controversial issues among Islamic sects to influence individuals and attract them through the publication word, voice, and image to achieve sectarian political goals.

This matter led us to investigate and clarify, whether there is a role for this media in distorting religious thought or has been able to divert human societies from their faith and moral nature, characterized by mercy through the propaganda methods used, whether through speech or expressions that stimulate the instinct of intellectual extremism, and adds to its owners a certain religious feature characterized by being Jihadist

and the implementation of the provisions of Sharia.

This is new insight into immediate media memory, of what the peoples of the Arab region, and their different religious and sectarian backgrounds were subjected to including killing, displacement, injustice, persecution, and enslavement by those groups that imitate, and are guided by the ideas of their leaders that impersonate Islam, and call for applying God's law on the earth. Furthermore, they broadcast *Takfiri Fatwas*, against anyone who opposes or disagrees with them.

The questions that lead us to the problem of the study are: What thought is created by Islamic social media? And are these contents included under the name of contemporary Islamic thought?

The *Defense of the Companions and Mothers of the Believers* is a network that specializes in resolving the conflict among the Islamic sectarians. Its programs of dialogues and debates, especially the virtual ones, represent the largest percentage of

media influence in any society, as they are the primary gateway to influencing public opinion, and crystallizing its ideas in a way that is consistent with the goals envisaged for managing.

So, we present some practical titles that were broadcast in more than one episode, and on more than one occasion and year, within the concept of contrast or contention such as titles that enter the deep of Islamic beliefs. Notably, the focus is on the repetition of a certain idea to instill a certain concept of intellectual extremism, here are some of them that the paper analyzes and compares:

- Who was right, Imam Ali (PBUH) or *Muawiya*? It hosts a figure to talk about a controversial issue, spoken by *Othman Khamis* about the wars between Imam Ali (PBUH) and the Companions.

In this debate, *Khamis* said that the Qur'anic verse about the Holy Prophet with the believers when they pledge allegiance to you under the tree (*Ref: The Qur'an, 48: 18*), gives the meaning of inner

righteousness. Imam Ali (PBUH) was the closest one to the truth and they were the closest to falsehood, but in the end, they were all on the truth!

Some dangers in *Khamis's* presentation come as follows:

- The infallible Imam in the rank of public
- Marginalizing the essence of the wars that were waged to protect Islam from deviation
- Wasting the truth and distracting the follower's mind by overlapping more than one title during the main topic, as if what is meant is indoctrination, which consists of slips that the mind absorbs without discussion. On one hand, *Khamis* summarized the war of *Jamal* and *Nahrawan*, describing them as all the efforts between Imam Ali (PBUH), the Companions, and others. On the other hand, he asked God to forgive them all. Since they believed that they were the truth, they should not be mentioned but with goodness, because the Qur'anic verses and narrations mentioned them as pure.

Their inner being is like the Qur'anic verse which said,

*“Muhammad, the
Apostle of Allah, and
those who are with him
are hard against the
faithless and merciful
amongst themselves”
(The Qur'an, 48: 29).*

Then *Khamis* quoted a narration from the Holy Prophet in which He praised Imam Hasan's peace and did not praise Imam Ali in the fight! Although *Aisha* cried until her veil was wet because of what happened in the days of the *al-Jamal* war, at last Imam Ali was the closest to the truth.

So, this thought is based on confusion and contradiction which aims to the following cases:

- Falsifying and distorting facts
- Providing followers with lies and deception in twisted ways
- Showing affection for the honorable Ahl al-Bayt (PBUT)
- Directing the individuals to accept falsehood and not distinguish truth, by establishing a culture of being satisfied with everyone, and asking for forgiving them, even by declaring war on their Imams.

By analyzing the frames and nomenclature of these programs, we find that the content contained, at the level of frames, many expressions that constitute concepts and foundations in the exclusionary and *Takfiri* direction of the other such as denial, infidelity, and accusation. As for the level of nomenclature, we find expressions about concepts such as sectarianism and polytheism, and these frameworks and labels enter through the process of extracting the implicit meanings carried by the text.

The observation was made during the dialogue, the interaction and participation rates were recorded by followers of “ISIS” believers and other Islamic sects around the globe as an indicator of the impact that such content has on the Arab and Islamic environment and its danger to future youth and upcoming societies.

The process observed the number of views, likes, and comments, reflects the level of demand for ideological and intellectual topics, and its level of influence (influence score).

Table 2. Cross-Cutting Programs with Frameworks, Names, And Interaction Standards

Episode title	Frame	Nomenclature	No of views	Like	Comment
Iranian Agents, What Do They Want?	Conspiracy, Atonement	Safavid, Safavid Party, Sectarianism	78369 k	477	53
The Qur'an, Memorizing and Agreeing It	Denial, Accusation	Grudges, Sectarianism	1.421.426	12 k	2.2 k
Eye On Yemen	Incitement, Threat	Safavids, Sectarianism, War	211 k		OFF
Who Was Right, Ali or Muawiya?	Fabrication	War, Equating Falsehood with Truth	1.2 M	N/A	OFF

The letters “OFF” and “N/A” are striking in these numbers. The comment counter “OFF” means it was closed due to its content being extremist and deviating from the platform's rules. If this indicates anything, it means that the level of fanaticism and extremism noted in the comments counter, despite the low level of viewing and the lack of likes in the interaction counter.

It indicates what the community of followers has reached regarding intellectual extremism, such that they automatically reject others without the need to follow the

content. We find that the admiration meter on the debate “*Who was right, Ali or Muawiya?*” is recording N/A, which means that the value is not available for display, either because the influencer i.e., the managing director for the network, decided to maintain his privacy, or because he is unable to provide accurate calculations, or refrain according to proportions, and thus influence his style of thinking and discourse. Furthermore, this explanation means that the amount of interaction with the debate, was not in the interest of the goals intended

for its presentation, despite it achieving one million and two hundred views (1.2 M).

All these points mean that there are dangers in the role of this media and its contribution, to spreading extremism against Islam and the Islamic nation that resulted from this discourse, which can be summarized in the following three points:

1. Characteristics of extremism and terrorism
2. The impact of extremist discourse on Islamic followers
3. The geographical area of the spread of intellectual extremism and terrorism

In the statement of the third point above, the questionnaire was distributed to a random sample of 100 respondents, in the geographic area that was exposed to high-level extremist discourse, specifically in Syria, which was subjected to a sectarian war of genocide, in terms of evaluating the interaction and extent of its impact with the media, and the reflection of its inflammatory dialogue especially on the ISIS's and extremist sects' followers such

as groups affiliated with the *Al-Tahrir* army, *Al-Nusra*, and *Jund Al-Sham*.

How to Confront

Since the new media constituted the main tool in strengthening the arm of extremist groups, these groups needed to seek to establish media rooms through which they could carry out polarization and recruitment operations. Since the sixties of the last century, they have used all available means to achieve their goals (*Kinkar, n.d.*), the most recent of which was the invasion of modern technology and exploitation of it to spread their extremist religious belief and approach, can be said that this media is a double-edged sword and a weapon that spreads a torrent of extremism thought concepts that destroy human life and society, in addition to the values that are alien to our Muslim societies, as well as an extremist approach to thinking and behavior.

So, confronting intellectual extremism begins by establishing a solid base that

constitutes the sum of the supposed ways to confront such a challenge. Therefore, the responsibility falls first on society in all its categories, and then on its official institutions especially "Education" to develop educational and religious curricula through which they play distinct roles in fostering intellectual security and protecting youth from intellectual deviations, in a way that simulates the requirements of contemporary life and openness to other opinions, accepting other religions, sects and coexisting with them based on the fact that they are at the core of the teachings of Islam and do not conflict with it as propagated by those with the extremist and *Takfiri* approach.

Conclusion

The "*Defending Companions and Mothers of the Believers*" network presented titles of intellectual religious debates that represent points of disagreement through the research approach to the most prominent concepts that are presented on social media.

This constituted a necessary knowledge introduction to understanding the paths adopted by the network's management in the structure of topics, their axes, and aspirations, which attempted to combine the consolidation of the doctrinal and religious aspects and reject the opinions that conflict with them, the best evidence for this state may be the contents presented by the program "*The Authenticity and Preservation of the Qur'an among All Muslims*" that reflect the reality of their goals and their *Takfiri* discourse.

By following the debates, it became clear that hate speech is widespread in the *Salafist* community, as it is considered its approved ideology and a major source of religious extremism, and this constitutes a major problem in contemporary religious discourse in the Arab and Islamic worlds. Extremism was not limited to the soul-stirring content of dialogues of thought and belief but to create a youth society that adheres to the *Salafist* doctrine and is hostile

to any other confronting extremism in all its forms, especially intellectual ones, constitutes thought that disagrees with it.

A motive and a basic rule require developing a strategy with an integrated system for how to deal with this approach which has been documented by history and we have seen in the criminal practices of some extremist groups that falsely call themselves Islamic, such as “ISIS” and other extremist groups. Some recommendations come as follows:

1. To introduce a law that regulates the media’s performance in dealing with extremist speech.
2. Urging all official and civil society institutions to confront extremism.
3. Activating the role of the media in spreading moderate Islamic thought.
4. Promoting reliable and unrestricted media alternatives for internet followers, such as moderate Islamic knowledge and authentic Islam networks.

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