# FOUNDATIONS OF ISLĀMIC PSYCHOLOGY

## From Classical Scholars to Contemporary Thinkers

G. Hussein Rassool and
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# Foundations of Islāmic Psychology

*Foundations of Islāmic Psychology: From Classical Scholars to Contemporary Thinkers* examines the history of Islāmic psychology from the Islāmic Golden Age through the early 21st century, giving a thorough look into Islāmic psychology's origins, Islāmic philosophy and theology, and key developments in Islāmic psychology.

In tracing psychology from its origins in early civilisations, ancient philosophy, and religions to the modern discipline of psychology, this book integrates overarching psychological principles and ideas that have shaped the global history of Islāmic psychology. It examines the legacy of psychology from an Islāmic perspective, looking at the contributions of early Islāmic classical scholars and contemporary psychologists, and to introduce how the history of Islāmic philosophy and sciences has contributed to the development of classical and modern Islāmic psychology from its founding to the present. With each chapter covering a key thinker or moment, and also covering the globalisation of psychology, the Islāmisation of knowledge, and the decolonisation of psychology, the work critically evaluates the effects of the globalisation of psychology and its lasting impact on indigenous culture.

This book aims to engage and inspire students taking undergraduate and graduate courses on Islāmic psychology, to recognise the power of history in the academic studies of Islāmic psychology, to connect history to the present and the future, and to think critically. It is also ideal reading for researchers and those undertaking continuing professional development in Islāmic psychology, psychotherapy, and counselling.

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**G. Hussein Rassool**
**Dedicated to Idrees Khattab ibn Adam Ibn Hussein Ibn Hassim Ibn Sahaduth Ibn Rosool Ibn Olee Al Mauritiusy, Isra Oya, Asiyah Maryam, Idrees Khattab, Adam Ali Hussein, Reshad Hassan, Yasmin Soraya, BeeBee Mariam, Bibi Safian & Hassim.**

**Mugheera M. Luqman**
**Dedicated to my father, Abdul Qavi Luqman, my mother, Asiya Madani, my brothers, sisters and my wife and sons.**

**Abu Hurayrah reported the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) as saying: "If anyone pursues a path in search of knowledge, Allāh will thereby make easy for him a path to paradise; and he who is made slow by his actions will not be speeded by his genealogy" (Sunan Abi Dawud).**

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IN THE NAME OF ALLAH

THE GRACIOUS, THE MERCIFUL.

Praise be to Allāh, we seek His help and His forgiveness. We seek refuge with Allāh from the evil of our own souls and from our bad deeds. Whomsoever Allāh guides will never be led astray, and whomsoever Allāh leaves astray, no one can guide. I bear witness that there is no god but Allāh, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger (Sunan al-Nasa'i: *Kitaab al-Jumu'ah*, Baab kayfiyyah al-khutbah).

- *Fear Allāh as He should be feared and die not except in a state of Islām (as Muslims) with complete submission to Allāh* (Ali-'Imran 3:102).[1]
- *O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, Who created you from a single person, and from him He created his wife, and from them both He created many men and women, and fear Allāh through Whom you demand your mutual (rights), and (do not cut the relations of) the wombs (kinship). Surely, Allāh is Ever an All-Watcher over you)* (Al-Nisā' 4:1).
- *O you who believe! Keep your duty to Allāh and fear Him and speak (always) the truth)* (Al-Aĥzāb 33:70).
- *What comes to you of good is from Allāh, but what comes to you of evil [O man], is from yourself* (An-Nisā 4:79).

The essence of this book is based on the following notions:

- The fundamental of Islām as a religion is based on the Oneness of God.
- The source of knowledge is based on the Qur'ān and Hadith. (*Ahl as-Sunnah wa'l-Jamā'ah*)
- Empirical knowledge from sense perception is also a source of knowledge through the work of classical and contemporary Islāmic scholars and research.
- Islām takes a holistic approach to health. Physical, psychological, social, emotional, and spiritual health cannot be separated.
- Muslims have a different worldview or perception of illness and health behaviour.
- There is a wide consensus amongst Muslim scholars that psychiatric or psychological disorders are legitimate medical conditions that are distinct from illnesses of a supernatural nature.
- Muslims believe that cures come solely from Allāh (God) but seeking treatment for psychological and spiritual health does not conflict with seeking help from Allāh.

It is a sign of respect that Muslims would utter or repeat the words "Peace and Blessing Be Upon Him" after hearing (or writing) the name of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ).

## Note

1 The translations of the meanings of the verses of the Qur'ān in this book have been taken, with some changes, from Saheeh International, *The Qur'ān:* Arabic Text with corresponding English meanings.

# Preface

In the last two decades there has been an expansion of the literature on Islāmic psychology, psychotherapy, and counselling in the development of theoretical framework, application of therapeutic psychosocial and spiritual interventions. However, there is a dearth of suitable books tracing the history of Islāmic psychology from the Islāmic Golden Age through the early 21st century, providing students and professionals a thorough look into Islāmic psychology's origins and key developments in its evolution, from classical scholars to contemporary thinkers.

Islām's heritage and socio-cultural-scientific achievements in a period in the history of Islām, traditionally dated from the 8th century to the 13th century is known as the Islāmic Golden Age. This is a truly remarkable period in human history with the inauguration of the House of Wisdom (*Bait-al-Hikmah*) in Baghdad, which was a public academy, intellectual centre, and a library. For many centuries, psychology was shaped by ancient Greek, until a new Islāmic psychology emerged. The emergence of "Islāmic psychology" was a result Muslim religious motivation, the quest for knowledge, and the socio-political factors. During the height of Islāmic civilisation, Islāmic scholars were discussing psychiatry, psychology, psychotherapy, and their connection to holistic spiritual, mental, and physical health. There are several early works of Islāmic scholars that have contributed to what is now known as Islāmic psychology, identified in Arabic as *Ilm al-Nafs*, which means the "science of the self or psyche." Although Islāmic psychology had some influence on the Hellenic trait of looking at philosophy, spirit, and mind together, the Islāmic scholars also started to develop a practical approach to psychology. Intervention strategies in psychotherapy, cognitive behaviour therapy, classical conditioning, environmental therapy, and music therapy were developed and used to treat patients with psychosocial issues. An understanding of the origins and historical contributions of the study of Islāmic psychology would provide an orientation of where Islāmic psychology came from, what is its present status quo, and where it is going.

Many Islāmic scholars played a role in psychology history which have been omitted and absent in Western-oriented literature. These include the scholarships from both classical and contemporary scholars including the work of Islāmic theologians, philosophers, physicians, and modern contemporary Islāmic psychologists. The classical scholars included Al-Kindī, Ibn Miskawayh, Ibn Rushd, Al-Fārābī, Al-Rāzī, Al-Balkhī, Ibn Sīnā, Al-Ghazâlî, Ibn Taymiyyah, Ibn Qayyim al Jawziyyah, Ar-Rāghib Al-Aṣbahani, Ibn al-Jawzī, Ibn Khaldūn, and Ibn Rajab. The 19th–21st century Islāmic scholars include Allāmah Muhammad Iqbāl, and Malik Badri and others.

*Foundations of Islāmic Psychology: From Classical Scholars to Contemporary Thinkers* examines the history of Islāmic psychology from the Islāmic Golden age through the early 21st century, giving the readers a thorough look into Islāmic psychology's origins, Islāmic philosophy and theology, and key developments in Islāmic psychology. This book integrates materials from philosophical, theological, psychological origins to the historical development of Islāmic psychology. In tracing psychology from its origins in early civilisations, ancient philosophy, and religions to the modern discipline of psychology, this book integrates overarching psychological principles and ideas that have shaped the global history of Islāmic psychology. The book aims to examine the legacy of psychology from an Islāmic perspective, looking at the contributions of early Islāmic classical scholars and contemporary psychologists, and to introduce how the history of Islāmic philosophy and sciences has contributed to the development of classical and modern Islāmic psychology from its founding to the present. This book also aims to engage and inspire students to recognise the power of history in the academic studies of Islāmic psychology, to connect history to the present and the future, and to think critically and historically. This book can be used independently or as a supplement with readers, this brief text is intended for undergraduate and graduate courses on the history of Islāmic psychology.

# Acknowledgements

# Section I

# Foundation and Revival of Islāmic Psychology

# 1 Foundation of Islāmic Psychology: The "Dodo Bird" Revival

## Introduction

Muslim scholars have produced a very rich scholarly legacy on human psychology since the rise of the Islāmic civilisation and for more than 14 centuries. There was a decline in Islāmic scholarship after the decline of the Islāmic Golden Age. However, during the past four decades or more, there has been an Islāmic awakening (*aṣ-Ṣaḥwah l-ʾIslāmiyyah*) motivated by a desire to return to the fundamental of Islāmic teaching and practices based on the Qur'ān and Sunnah, and the work of Islāmic scholars. The Islāmisation of Knowledge movement gained momentum in the 1970s due to the global re-awakening of Islāmic consciousness, the rise of the plight of the Muslim Ummah due to colonisation, secularisation of the educational system, and the concern of Muslim scholars towards the adoption of Western-oriented values and life-styles by Muslims. The decolonisation and desecularisation of knowledge, particularly in psychology, proliferated by the "Islāmisation of Knowledge" movement is no exception. Rassool (2021) maintained that "The emergence, current conceptualisations and the status of Islāmic psychology should be viewed in their broader context, namely, the Islāmisation of Knowledge (IOK) movement" (p. 4). There was an urgent need to "Islamise" the social sciences, including the discipline of psychology.

However, secular and "soulless" contemporary psychology has been promoted on a global scale and its dominance has remained unchallenged in most academic institutions in the developing world, especially in majority of Muslim countries. In addition, many Muslim psychologists educated in mostly Western universities, or even in their own countries, have remained in a "psycho-secular" bubble and turned into clones of Muslim Freud with all the psychobabble of Oedipus and Electra complex and psychosexual development, and followed blindly their "Master Voice" (Rassool, 2021, p. 3). Moreover, the indigenous Muslim psychologists acculturated by the Orientalist approach to psychology have also internalised values which are alien to both their own culture and Islāmic traditions. This chapter examines the concepts of colonisation, globalisation of psychology, and the revival of psychology out of the monocultural perception of psychology.

## Colonisation and globalisation of psychology

Psychological knowledge has been increasingly criticised for their "Orientalist" and "Eurocentric" perspectives and biases due to colonisation and globalisation. There has been a propagation of the literature focusing on the decolonisation of psychological

science (Adams et al., 2015; Dudgeon & Walker, 2015; Lacerda, 2015, Adams et al., 2018; Gómez-Ordóñez et al., 2021). Mignolo (2010) preferred the use of the term "coloniality." The term refers to a whole system of thought, a mentality, and a power structure to be universally applicable and there is "no modernity without coloniality" (p. 3). The three fundamentals of coloniality include the coloniality of knowledge, the coloniality of power, and the coloniality of being (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013a, 2013b). There is the view that psychology is a global enterprise. As a concept, globalisation is the new façade of colonisation and is opened to the same criticism that it relies on knowledge-based cultural supremacy as ideological supports. That means that globalisation may have replaced colonialism, like "old wine in a new bottle!" Psychologists generally adopt a generalist view that human behaviour and experiences are, to some extent, universal. What is certain, however, is that psychology and applied psychology can no longer be dissociated from the global context that frames the lives of the global communities.

In relation to the effects of globalisation on psychology, one can identify its effects on the individual Muslim psychologists' world view and identify the shaping and dissemination of both psychological knowledge and clinical practice. This is not dissimilar to the effects of globalisation on mental health (Kirmayer & Minas, 2000). This is reflected in the statement that

> Psychological globalization embraces every country throughout the world and is crystalised as 'The Three Worlds of Psychology'. In this theory, the United States is considered the first world because to date it is the major producer of psychological knowledge that is exported to both the second world of psychology (e.g., England, Canada, and Australia) and the third world of psychology (i.e., developing countries such as Nigeria, Cuba). This theory presumes that each of the three worlds has an unequal capacity to produce and disseminate psychological knowledge that shapes the field of psychology. (Lawson et al., 2007, p. 8)

For a meta-theoretical perspective in Latin American psychology see Burton & Kagan, 2005; Burton & Gómez Ordóñez, 2015; Comas-Díaz & Torres Rivera, 2020; liberation psychology from an Islāmic perspective see Ali-Faisal, 2020; Mohr, 2019; cross-cultural psychology see Adams & Salter, 2007; Adams, 2012; Stigler et al., 2012; and endogenous and exogenous indigenisation of psychology see Enriquez, 1993; Sinha, 1994. However, there is some relevance for liberation psychology, cultural psychology, and indigenisation approaches in the IOK in the psychological sciences.

## Challenges of decolonisation strategies

However, there are still challenges within the field of liberation psychology in its application to "Islām and Psychology" movement. The critiques will be levelled at liberation psychology by utilising sources from an Islāmic perspective derived from the Qur'ān, Sunnah, and classical scholars. One of the main criticisms is the view that liberal psychology bases its work around Latin-America's geo-socio-political dimension focusing of social issues. These socio-political issues include oppression, poverty, war, forced relocation, genocide, political repression, gender, and race. The liberation psychology movement (Martín-Baró, 1994) was inspired by liberation theology (Gutiérrez, 1988), and the critical pedagogy of Freire (1993). However what Martín-Baró was

arguing is having a paradigm shift in psychology, but his conceptualisation was focused upon the practice of psychology in Latin America. Whether liberation psychology applies equally to different regions and countries on a global scale is debatable, especially in Muslim majority countries, with different political, psychosocial, and religious identities. In addition, liberation psychology is based on liberation theology which is Jesuit-Christian-based theology. Although there are some common grounds between Christian theology and Islāmic theology in an attempt to address the problems of poverty and social injustice, there exists still a wide diversity in approaches between the two theologies about how best to serve a wide range of individuals and communities.

One of the claims of liberation psychology is the application of "conscientization" as the process through which "individuals develop a greater capacity to reflect, interpret, and act for the promotion of positive change" (Dykstra, 2020, p. 9). This statement is quite welcoming as it is no surprise that reflection, contemplation, and action are much-emphasised themes in the Qur'ān. In fact, Allāh, the Almighty, encourages us to frequently engage in this type of contemplation so that, as individuals, we can promote positive change. In the Qur'ān, The Almighty "repeatedly exhorts us to reflect, ponder, give thought, reason, consider, and discern. It simply consists of thinking about our present world and beyond and striving to attain deeper faith and self-improvement through it" (Awais, 2021). Allāh says in the Qur'ān:

آياته.. الف ممدوة بداية الكلمة. كما يرجى اضافة اسم السورة ورقمها (ص 29)

- *[This is] a blessed Book which We have revealed to you, [O Muḥammad], that they might reflect upon its verses and that those of understanding would be reminded.* (Sad 38:29 – Interpretation of the meaning)

Dykstra (2020) also viewed psychology as "an ethical-political endeavour. Its practices are influenced by and influence our societies" (p. 9). This ethical-political dimension is echoed in the work of the late Fazlur Rahman, a scholar of Islāmic thought. Rahman (1980) argued that in its initial phase Islām was moved by a deep rational and moral concern for reforming society. Islāmic ethics differ from the Western concept as the sources of ethical and moral values from the Qur'ān, and from the practices of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ). The Qur'ān is abounding with clear messages pertaining to ethical values (*akhlaq*), which transcend the limitations of time, place, and tradition. The best example of ethics is in the life of the Prophet (ﷺ) himself. When Aisha (May Allāh be pleased with her), Mother of the believers, was asked about the character of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ), Aisha said, "Have you not read the Qur'ān?" I said, "Of course." Aisha said, "Verily, the character of the Prophet of Allāh was the Qur'ān" (An-Nasa'i).

The point of reference for moral good and for distinguishing right from wrong is exemplified in the contents in one of the chapters of the Qur'ān, entitled "The Criterion" (Furqan: 25). Thus, "Islām's beginnings are thus rooted in the idea of the divine command as a basis for establishing moral order through human endeavour" (Nanji, 1991, p. 2). The Qur'ān affirms the ethical dimensions of human and social life by redressing injustice in economic and social life. This is encouraged at both individual and community level through the process of *Zakat* (compulsory almsgiving, 2.5% of their wealth must then be given) and *Sadaqah* (charity). Nanji (1991)

maintained that "Ethical criteria that can govern issues of economic and social justice and moral strategies for dealing with questions of poverty and imbalance have taken up the greater share of Muslim attention in ethical matters" (p. 11).

Justice has an important position in Islām and is one of the important principles of Islām's ethical system. According to Al-Raghib al-Isfahani, "Justice means equality. The fair treatment of people, the quality of being fair or reasonable and the legal system used to punish people who have committed crimes" (p. 236). In relation to justice, it is narrated by Abu Sa'id al-Khudri that Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) said: The best fighting (*jihad*) in the path of Allāh is (to speak) a word of justice to an oppressive ruler (Abu Dawud (a)). In another Hadith about justice, it is narrated by Abu Hurairah that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said,

> There is a *Sadaqa* [charity] to be given for every joint of the human body; and for every day on which the sun rises there is a reward of a *Sadaqa* (i.e., charitable gift) for the one who establishes justice among people. (Bukhārī (a))

The need to overcome oppression is also found in a hadith of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ). It is narrated by Ali ibn Abu Talib that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "If only one day of this time (world) remained, Allāh would raise up a man from my family who would fill this earth with justice as it has been filled with oppression" (Abu Dawud (b)).

Similar to liberation psychology, critical psychology focused on the psychology of the individual and the community in social and political contexts. Parker (2007) identified a few different criticisms placed against critical psychology. The criticism includes that critical psychology is "European" (p. 10); "makes everything into a political issue" (p. 5); "only concerned with social psychology" (p. 4); "focused on theory with limited methodology" (p. 6); "interested in qualitative research" (p. 8); "has nothing to offer to people in distress" (p. 9). Similar criticisms may be applied to liberation psychology with some minor exceptions.

## Critiques of Islāmic liberation psychology

In a paper by Mohr (2019) entitled "Liberation Psychology from an Islāmic Perspective Some Theoretical and Practical Implications of Psychology with a Telos of Justice," she discussed the Islāmic relationships with liberation psychology,

> including psychological approaches that are consistent with Islāmic assumptions and conceptualizations of the self, human rights in relationship to the principle of *tawhid*, environmental justice, and an analysis of pathologies of violence in relationship to the Muslim community and the human community. (p. 1)

This section of the chapter will refute the arguments about the proposal for an Islāmically grounded liberation psychology.

Mohr, a counsellor in the mental health field, approaches liberation psychology from a Muslim perspective with the aim of harmonising liberation psychology and Islām. Mohr suggested that an Islāmic liberation psychology approach would be based on "*Tawhid* as the overarching metaphysical principle, and justice as the practical implementation" (p. 2). The author maintained that an Islāmically grounded liberation psychology "would involve practicing *Tawhid* in affirming all persons' full

humanity and cultivating a personal and community approach to wellness that prioritises right relationship to the environment" (p. 2).

Finally, a liberation psychology approach could also entail the problems of violence in the Muslim community in relation to colonialism, imperialism, and racism. Mohr suggested that liberation psychology is highly relevant for Muslim mental health and can be used as a theoretical framework that are consistent with Islāmic assumptions in rejecting oppression, and it also addresses the impact of violence on individuals and communities.

Mohr stated that "Liberation psychology from an Islāmic perspective, then, involves working from psychological approaches and paradigms that are informed by indigenous cultural values and concepts" (p. 6). How can this approach be applicable in practice is beyond conception. Does this mean that a liberation psychology from an Islāmic perspective is based on indigenous cultural values and concepts? Muslims are not a homogeneous group of communities. They are heterogeneous communities with a diversity of ethnic, race, and cultural values and are bonded together by Islāmic beliefs and practices. Indigenous cultural habits and patterns of behaviour have nothing to do with Islāmic beliefs and practices. Islām is a global religion and thus promotes a universal Islāmic culture rather than the monogenesis culture. The claim by Mohr that "Islāmic psychological approaches need to take seriously the concept of *Tawhid* and work to be aligned with this basic principle," (p. 7) is tautologous. Most approaches of Islāmic psychology are based on the *Tawhid* paradigm, and this is well documented in the literature.

However, there are many controversial and unsubstantiated statements made by Mohr which needed further critical examinations and refutations. Mohr argued that the implications of *Tawhidic* principles should be based on human rights and ecological justice. Mohr proposed that

> For an authentically Islāmic approach to liberation psychology, the overall conception of the human person needs to be consistent with Islāmic values and with the goal of justice. Explicitly affirming and embracing the full humanity of Liberation Psychology from an Islāmic Perspective women, the poor, people of colour, and the LGBTQ community is a core piece of an Islāmically informed liberation psychology. (p. 7–8)

The importance of *Tawhid* for women's rights is the central point for many Muslim women writing on the topic of gender justice (Wadud 1999, 2006). Amina Wadud, an American Muslim theologian and Professor Emeritus of Islāmic Studies, made international headlines in 2005 when she led Friday prayers at a mixed congregation in New York, which caused controversy in some spheres of the Islāmic world. Mohr is supportive of Amina Wadud's (1999, 2006) hermeneutic Interpretation of the Qur'ān with the identification of justice as a central principle of God's relationship to creation. She maintained that

> The idea that there are hermeneutical principles which can guide the reading of the Qur'ān and open up possibilities for feminisms which differ from traditional and more patriarchal readings of the tradition is almost universal among Muslim women writing on gender justice. (p. 8)

She went on to suggest that

> there is currently a huge movement globally for a progressive Interpretation of Islām, for a world where the views of progressive Muslims are valued and set the standard for the way that Muslims and Muslim-majority states view major social issues. (p. 9)

She also suggested that "applying Tawhid, working from a liberation psychology orientation, means honouring the experiences of women, LGBTQ people, and all people," and "for an Islāmic psychology to be a liberation psychology, it must include an emphasis on human rights" (p. 9).

Ali-Faisal (2020) has also proposed Islāmic anti-patriarchal liberation psychology framework "to guide psychological knowledge production and application within contexts in which some or most people identify as Muslim." The author recommended three essential tasks of liberation psychology;

> The first task requires the privileging of Muslim voices, with Muslims being conceptualised as diverse, racialised peoples. The second task involves challenging the internalisation of colonial ways of thinking among Muslims. The final task asks researchers and practitioners to recover Islāmic histories of scholarship, Muslims' sense of community, and queer and feminine ways of being. Together, these tasks can provide an adaptable guide for psychological knowledge production and application for Muslims in a wide variety of contexts. (p. 343)

Ali-Faisal (2020) argues that Islāmic anti-patriarchal psychology begins by challenging the "patriarchal Interpretations of Islām through re-reading the Islāmic texts" (p. 351). This is the genre of Islāmic "liberated" psychology as espoused by both Mohr (2019) and Ali-Faisal (2020).

Does Islāmic psychology need a theoretical framework based on a liberation psychology from an Islāmic perspective? To answer this question, we need to revert to the Qur'ān and Sunnah. Allāh says in the Qur'ān

ٱلْيَوْمَ يَئِسَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ مِن دِينِكُمْ فَلَا تَخْشَوْهُمْ وَٱخْشَوْنِ ۚ ٱلْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ
نِعْمَتِى وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ ٱلْإِسْلَٰمَ دِينًا (المائدة 3)

> • *This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favour upon you and have approved for you Islām as religion.* (Al-Ma'idah 5:3 – Interpretation of the meaning)

According to the Tafsir of ibn Kathir: this day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My favor upon you, and have chosen for you Islām as your religion.

> This, indeed, is the biggest favour from Allāh to this *Ummah*, for He has completed their religion for them, and they, thus, do not need any other religion or any other Prophet except Muhammad. This is why Allāh made Muhammad the Final Prophet and sent him to all humans and Jinn. Therefore, the permissible is what he allows, the impermissible is what he prohibits, the Law is what he legislates and everything that he conveys is true and authentic and does not contain lies or contradictions.

There is also an authentic Hadith echoing what Allāh, the Almighty, has said: It is narrated by Tariq bin Shibab that Some Jews said, "Had this Verse been revealed to us, we would have taken that day as *'Id* (festival)." 'Umar said, "What Verse?" They said: "This day I have Perfected your religion for you, Completed My Favor upon you And have chosen for you Islām as your religion" (Qur'ān 5.3) 'Umar said, "I know the place where it was revealed; It was revealed while Allāh's Messenger (☙) was staying at 'Arafat" (Bukhārī (b)).

These sources of knowledge confirmed that the religion of Islām has been completed and there is no need to add new narrative. Shaykh Salih Fawzan stated that this verse

> contains a testimony from Allāh, the Perfect and Most High, that this religion is complete and that it covers everything of benefit to the servants and that it contains a solution for all of their issues and problems until the Establishment of the Hour. And that is suitable for every time and place; they do not need any other legislation after it or any other book to come down or any other messenger to be sent after the Messenger (☙).

Why is there the need to include human rights, environmental justice, fighting the effects of oppression or liberating the "oppressed" Muslim women when both the Qur'ān and hadiths confirmed the completion of the religion of Islām?

In relation to human rights, it is worth noting that the first written Constitution of Medina (also known as The Medina Charter or the Charter of Medina) was drafted and declared by Prophet Muhammad (☙) in the year 622 AD. This remarkable political-constitutional document and the first written constitution of democracy in human history was meant for the ten thousand-strong multi-religious citizens of the state of Medina, including Jews and other non-Muslims and their non-Muslim allied tribes. The Constitution

> guaranteed the protection of human rights, the protection of women rights, social rights, cultural rights, religious freedom, and the rights of minorities living in the state. It declared Medina a State of peace and security, free from every kind of violence and terrorism. Prophet Muhammad (☙) subsequently established the first Islāmic state. (Tahir-ul-Qadri, 2012, p. 5)

In relation to the oppression of women, at the social level, the Qur'ān and Sunnah emphasise equity and parity between men and women, their functions in marriage, family, and society, and include a concern for ameliorating the status of women. This was achieved through the

> abolition of pre-Islāmic practices such as female infanticide and by according women new rights. Among these were the rights of ownership of property, inheritance, the right to contract marriage and to initiate divorce, if necessary, and to maintain one's own dowry. Polygyny, the plurality of wives, was regulated and restricted, so that a male was permitted to have up to four wives, but only if he could treat them with equity. (Nanji, 1991, p. 4)

It has been suggested that there is no textual ruling in the Qur'ān and in the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allāh (☙) and in the consensus of scholars to deprive women of

public and political rights as well (Abd al-Ḥakīm Ḥasan, 1983, p. 296); and that women were not excluded from public life (Kamali, 2002, p. 72).

In fact, there is no need to have a liberation psychology from an Islāmic perspective as proposed by Mohr. With the advent of Islām, humankind was liberated from oppression, violence, injustice, infanticide, exploitation of women, etc. Abdu-Rahman and Sultan (2018) suggested that Islāmic liberation theology emerged when the Qur'ān was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). The Qur'ān seeks to liberate people from all kinds of sufferings and in different ways (socio-economic and theological). Islām denounced injustice and oppression and condemned the prevailing social system of Makkah. With the message of the Qur'ān, Islām proclaimed liberation, freedom, justice, and equality. It was stated that "all people are equal before God and there is no entity that deserves to be worshipped but He (God) (Qur'ān, 2:255)." In many ways, the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) liberated humankind from oppression and strive for the construction of a just society that imparts collectivistic, holistic orientations and includes human rights, equity, fairness, equality, fraternity, and justice. The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ)

> worked for the liberation of the oppressed, the poor, the needy and the ignorant. In his project of liberation, he was not just a prophet, teacher, and philosopher, but also an activist who sacrificed his life for justice and equality. (Abdu-Rahman & Sultan, 2018)

## Evolution of Islāmic psychology: The Dodo Bird Revival in the 21st century

In the last five decades, there has been an "Islāmic awakening" (*aṣ-Ṣaḥwah l-ʾIslāmiyyah*) or Islāmic revival (*Tajdīd*) in the evolution of a modern Islāmic psychology based in Islāmic traditions. This is coined as the "Dodo Bird Revival" by Rassool (2019). The Islāmic revival in psychological sciences has emerged, owing in large part to popular disappointment with the secular psychology without a soul or "soulless" psychology, though the word "psychology" implied the study of the soul or spirit. In addition, the role of spirituality, religious experiences, and ethical behaviours are beyond the Western scientific paradigm. This alienation of religion within the paradigm of "soulless" psychology means that "religious ideas, practice, and organizations lose their influence in the face of scientific and other knowledge" (McLeish, 1995, p. 668). Though there is a lack of rapprochement between the nature of the relationship between psychology and spirituality, "it has not undone the relationship altogether. Religion still matters for many people, including psychologists, at some level" (Reber, 2006, p. 194).

What is of interest here is the quest for the "Islāmisation of Knowledge" particularly contemporary Islāmic psychology evolved when Professor Malik Badri gave his first public lecture on the Islāmisation of psychology in the main auditorium of the University of Jordan in 1965. He was confronted with a barrage of ridiculing questions and statements including: "Islām is a religion and psychology is a science."

> Do you speak of Islāmic physiology, *fasiq* botany or *kafir* physics? Then why talk about Islāmic psychotherapy or secular psychology? Science struggled for many

years to reach maturity and to rid itself from the captivity of philosophy and religion; do you want psychological sciences to backslide to ancient religiosity or to antiquated philosophy? (Badri, 2020, p. 22)

Most Muslim psychologists, acculturated with Freudian psychoanalytic theory and fixated with psychosexual development and defence mechanisms, were reluctant to adopt the Islāmisation of psychology philosophy. Those Muslims were "still dubious about Islāmisation or who still believe that psychology is a pure science are probably being more Western in their thought than the Westerners themselves" (Badri, 2020, p. 23). The "Lizard Hole" analogy is applicable here. Badri (2015), while presenting his paper "Muslim psychologists in the lizard's hole" at an international conference, stated that

> The way the lecture was received by Muslim psychologists astonished me. The 'lizard's hole' title comes from the famous Hadith of the Prophet (ﷺ) that prophesied that in the future, Muslims are going to blindly emulate the ways of life of the Jews and Christians. He said [the Prophet] that they will follow them even if they get themselves into a lizard's hole. (p. 167)

The climate for the integration of Islāmic ethics and psychology now is very much more conducive than four or five decades ago. Since the 1970s, a worldwide Islāmic psychology revival has emerged, owing in large part to popular disappointment with the secular nature of mainstream, globalised psychology which is largely culture bound and disregards the spiritual dimension of man; the demographic shift in the increase of indigenous, immigrants, and Muslim refugees in mainly Western countries and Australasia with mental health problems; the awakening of the *Ummah* (Muslim communities) to return to the fold of Islām; the development of research in Islāmic psychology; the promotion of ethical intelligence; the contributions of modern Islāmic scholars, academics, and clinicians to the tentative development of conceptual and theoretical framework of Islāmic Psychology; and the increase in the number of publications of books and other resources in Islāmic psychology and sciences.

Historically, Islāmic Psychology or *'ilm al-nafs* is the science of the *Nafs* ("self" or "psyche") Islāmic psychology or *'ilm al-Nafs* or the science of the *Nafs* (soul or self) is the philosophical study of the soul from an Islāmic perspective. It is acknowledged that definitions of Islāmic psychology are not a homogeneous academic entity. In reality, there will be multiple definitions of Islāmic psychology based on the school of thought, orientation, and worldview of the author(s). Some definitions are clearly defined, at times too comprehensive to be operationally used, and others are an amalgam of psychology and Islām. A few definitions can easily be labelled as "old wine in a new bottle" (Rassool, 2021, p. 13). If Islāmic psychology is considered to be holistic in approach, thus diversity in definitions and approaches will be on the agenda of both academics and clinicians. In the context of this book, the following definition will be used. The definition is that

> Islāmic Psychology is the study of the science of the soul, mental processes, and behaviour according to the principles of empirical psychology, rationality, and divine revelation from the Qur'ān and Sunnah.

Rassool (2021) suggested that "In the conceptualisation of Islāmic psychology, aspects of the soul, cognitive, affective and behavioural processes are studied within the

evidenced-base paradigm (compatible with Islāmic beliefs and practices) and Islāmic sciences" (p. 16).

The issue of divergences in thought and conceptualisation is apparent in the infantile contemporary Islāmic psychology in academic, educational, and clinical practice. Rassool (2020b) has identified three schools of thoughts that have emerged in "Islām and psychology movement": Orientalist approach, Integrationist approach, and the *Tawhid* Paradigm approach. The Orientalist group with minimalist Islāmic traditions embedded within their framework, instead of decolonising psychology, (Seedat, 2020) is re-colonising psychology by their Western-oriented liberation psychology. The Integrationist group focused on a mixture of orthodox psychology, blended with Sufi ideologies and practices, and Islāmic traditions. Finally, the *Tawhid* Paradigm approach based on the Qur'ān and Sunnah embedded with the framework with the theory and practice of secular psychology is congruent with Islāmic beliefs and practices. However, Rassool (2021) noted that all the three approaches claim that they are in line with the traditions of *Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jamaa'ah* (those who adhere to the Sunnah and who unite upon it, not turning to anything else, whether that be in matters of belief ('*Aqeedah*) or matters of actions which are subject to *shar'i* [*Shari'ah*] rulings (Islām Q&A, 2001)). Despite being "sprinkled" or tinged with Islāmic terms and concepts, conceptual framework, clinical and educational practices, it is doubtful whether their *Aqeedah* (creed) is in accordance with the traditions of *Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jamaa'ah*.

The evolution and development of 21st-century Islāmic psychology has been enabled by both individual scholars and organisational determinations. A selected classical and contemporary scholars contributing to the evolution and development of Islāmic psychology will be presented in the forthcoming chapters. The International Association of Muslim Psychologists (IAMP), located in Indonesia, was founded in 2006 by the late Professor Dr Malik Badri. The aim of IAMP is to make and unite peaceful, prosperous, and happy people of the world who live their life in accordance with the true nature of human being. To achieve this, IAMP sets the mission to promote a body of knowledge based on scientific investigations through human endeavours grounded in Islāmic teaching. The focus of IAMP is to develop and empower the future generations through the study of Islāmically and culturally adapted psychology. Over the years, the IAMP had run its 8th Intensive Course on Islāmic Psychology in Indonesia, and it was also involved in various national and international conferences promoting Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy. Recently, the IAMP signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Islāmic Science and Research Academy (ISRA) at the Mission of Hope's Australian Muslim Mental Health Conference in Sydney. There are other organisations and academic institutions that have been involved in the Islāmic psychology movement and contribute, directly and indirectly, to the development of Islāmic psychology. These include the International Association of Islāmic Psychology; Society for Advancement of Muslim Psychology (Pakistan); the Indian Council on Islāmic Perspective in Psychology (India); the Kulliyah of Islāmic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences, International Islāmic University Malaysia (Malaysia); the International Institute of Islāmic Thought (Global); the Khalil Centre (United States); the Islāmic Psychology Professional Association (United Kingdom); and the Centre for Islāmic Psychology/Riphah Institute of Clinical and Professional Psychology, Riphah International University (Pakistan).

## Conclusion

The past decades have seen an explosion of literature on the soul-searching for an agreed definition, theoretical or conceptual model of Islāmic psychology, and its clinical application.

Various definitions and attempts to develop a theoretical model, organisational development, and a model of the soul have been met with a degree of success. Despite the revival of Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy, secular hegemony psychology is still evident in the academic and professional development of Muslim psychologists. The emergence, current conceptualisations, and the status of Islāmic psychology should be viewed in their broader context, namely, the IOK movement, and also the Muslim scholars, both classical and contemporary, who made major contributions to the development of modern-day psychological theories and practices from an Islāmic perspective. A new narrative on the development and a revival of the science of the soul (*Ilm an Nafs*) is being expounded. What the scholars and institutions have done is to provide an alternative to the historical narratives in the development of psychology. This may be labelled as the process to "democratise the generation of knowledge" (Watkins & Shulman, 2010, p. 270) in the integration of Islāmic revealed knowledge and the psychological sciences.

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# 2   The Golden Age of Islām

## Introduction

Islām's heritage and socio-cultural scientific achievements is a period in the history of Islām, traditionally dated from the 8th century to the 14th century, and known as the Islāmic Golden Age. The phrase "Islāmic Golden Age" was coined by the 19th-century "Orientalist" movement (Said, 1978), and it is regarded as a period of Islāmic Renaissance. This Golden period occurred during the reign of the Abbasid Caliph Harun al-Rashid, the fifth Caliph of Islām of the Abbasid dynasty. The Islāmic Golden Age came to an end when the Mongols invaded and thrashed Baghdad, the capital of the Abbasid Caliphate, under the leadership of Hulagu Khan (Kennedy, 2016). The end of the age is variously given as 1258 with the Mongolian Sack of Baghdad, or 1492 with the completion of the Christian Reconquista of the Emirate of Granada in Al-Andalus, Iberian Peninsula. However, there is a dispute about the period of the Islāmic Golden Age as some historians have suggested that this Golden Age occurred between the 7th and 14th centuries.

Three main Islāmic dynasties shaped the development of the Islāmic Golden Age: (1) the Abbasids in Baghdad (750 CE–1258 CE); (2) the Fatimids in Cairo (909 CE–1171 CE); and (3) the Umayyads in Córdoba (929 CE–1031 CE) in the West. During the period of the Islāmic Golden Age, in addition to Bagdad (Iraq), other Islāmic capital cities, such as Cairo (Egypt), and Córdoba (Spain-Andalusia), became cultural and intellectual centres where theologians, scholars, scientists, artists, writers, philosophers, mathematicians, physicians, and philosophers excelled in scholarship, experimentation, and discovery. During this period, Europe was still in darkness and contributed comparatively little to human intellectual discourse until a period of awakening with the emergence of the Renaissance period (from the 14th to 17th centuries). Some scholars would argue that this European Renaissance might not have occurred without the contributions, innovations, influences, and emulations from the Muslim scholars (Sarton, 1927).

What is remarkable, in the annals of history, is "The accomplishments made by Islāmic scholars, philosophers, humanists, and scientists in all areas of the arts and humanities, the physical and social sciences, medicine, astronomy, mathematics, finance, and Islāmic and European monetary systems over a period of many centuries" (Renima et al., 2016, p. 25). This is a truly remarkable period in human history with the in-auguration of the House of Wisdom (*Bayt al-Hikmah*) in Baghdad, which was a public academy, intellectual centre, and library. Many significant developments were witnessed in many fields such as philosophy, medicine, geography, algebra, astronomy, physics,

chemistry, and astronomy. The aims of the chapter are to present a brief overview of the Golden Age of Islām and to highlight the contributions of the Islāmic classical scholars' contribution to the development of Islāmic psychology.

## House of Wisdom (*Bayt al-Hikmah*)

The House of Wisdom is also known as the Grand Library of Baghdad or *Khizanat al-Hikmah* (Library of Wisdom). The historian Al-Qifti called it, *Khizanat Kutub al-Hikmah* (Storehouse of the Books of Wisdom). The *Khizanat al-Hikmah* was initially built by Caliph Haroun Al-Rashid (ruled 786–809 CE) that

> included manuscripts and books collected by his father and grandfather about various subjects in the arts and the sciences and in different language. Three decades later, the collection had grown so large that his son, Caliph Al-Ma'mun, built extensions to the original building turning it into a large academy named *Bayt al-Hikmah* that housed different branches of knowledge. Later, he added numerous other study centres to allow more scholars to pursue their research, and an observatory in 829. (1001inventions.com)

It has been proposed that the House of Wisdom may also refer to either a major Abbasid public academy and intellectual centre in Baghdad or to a large private library belonging to the Abbasid Caliphs during the Islāmic Golden Age (Al-Khalili, 2011). Despite the controversy over its functions and existence as a formal academy, it remained one of the greatest intellectual academies in history. The House of Wisdom and its extensive library's contents were destroyed in the Siege of Baghdad in 1258.

The House of Wisdom had many functions as the world's pre-eminent centre of knowledge and learning of international significance. It is worth noting that the Abbasid Empire had a highly educated and exceedingly mobile society. Those who frequent the House of Wisdom were multinational, multicultural, cosmopolitan amalgam of scholars, translators, scientists, scribes, authors, men of letters, writers, authors, and copyists with diverse religio-cultural backgrounds. These scholars were assembled and mandated to gather and translate all of the world's classical knowledge, manuscripts and books in various scientific subjects and philosophical concepts and ideas, to Syriac and then to Arabic Persian and later into Turkish language. These diverse communities of scholars made significant and lasting contributions to Islāmic intellectual and scientific achievements who had a significant influence in the development of the European Renaissance. Among the academy's prominent scholars were Abu Yusuf Yaqub Ibn Ishaq Al-Kindī, known as Al-Kindī, who received the honorific title "*Faylasuf al-Arab*" (the philosopher of the Arabs) commissioned the transition of Aristotle; Hunyan ibn Ishaq, who translated Hippocrates; Al-Khwarizmi who developed algebra and algorithms; and Mūsā ibn Shākir contributed knowledge in mathematics and astrology. Other names associated with the House of Wisdom include

> Hunayn (Ophthalmology); Banu Musa bin Shakir Al-Munajjim (the Astronomer); Yahya bin Abi Mansour Al-Munajjim Al-Ma'mouni (the Ma'moun Astronomer); Muhammad bin Musa Al-Khawarizmi; Sa'eed bin Haroun Al-Katib (the Scribe); Hunayn bin Ishaq (Isaacs) Al-'Ibadi; and his son Ishaq; Thabit bin Qurra; and 'Umar bin Farrukhan Al-Tibar. (1001inventions.com)

*Table 2.1* Notable scholars related to the House of Wisdom

| Scholars | Contributions |
| --- | --- |
| Ibn Sīnā, Persian philosopher and physician | Author of The Canon of Medicine, medical text in the Islāmic World and Europe until the 19th century. |
| Al-Ghazâlî, Persian theologian | Author of *The Incoherence of the Philosophers*. |
| Al-Kindī, Philosopher and mathematician | First Arab philosophers, combining the ideology of Aristotle and Plato. |
| Ibn Rushd, Andalusian philosopher | Famous for his commentary on Aristotle. |
| Al-Jahiz, Author and biologist | Known for Kitāb al-Hayawān and numerous literary works. |
| Muhammad al-Idrisi, Geographer | Contributed to the Map of the World. |
| Al-Khwarizmi, Persian Polymath | Head of the House of Wisdom. |
| Abu Maʿshar, Persian astrologist | Translated the work of Aristotle. |
| Maslama al-Majriti, Spanish mathematician and astronomer | Translated Greek texts. |
| Hunayn ibn Ishaq, Mesopotamian scholar and philosopher | In charge of the House of Wisdom. Translated over 116 writings by many of the most significant scholars in history. |
| Jabir Ibn Hayyan | Practical metallurgy |
| Omar Khayyam, Persian poet, mathematician, and astronomer | Famous for his solution of cubic equations. |
| Ismailal-Jazari, Physicist and engineer | Author of *The Book of Knowledge of Ingenious Mechanical Devices* in 1206. |
| The Banu Musa brothers | Remarkable engineers and mathematicians. |
| Al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf ibn Maṭar, Mathematician and translator | Translation of Euclid's works. |
| Yahya ibn Adi, Syriac Jacobe Christian philosopher, theologian and translator | Translation. |
| Yusuf Al-Khuri, Christian mathematician and astronomer | Hired as a translator by Banu Musa brothers. |
| Yahya Ibn al-Batriq, Astronomer | |
| Sahl ibn Harun, Philosopher and polymath | |
| Abu Bishr Matta ibn Yunus, Physician and scientist | |
| Thābit ibn Qurra, Mathematician and astronomer | Reformed Ptolemaic system. Considered the founding father of statics. |

Source: Adapted from The Spiritual Life (2021).

A selected scholars related to the House of Wisdom is presented in Table 2.1. It is reported that the House of Wisdom was

> much more than an academic centre removed from the broader society. Its experts served several functions in Baghdad. Scholars from the *Bayt al-Hikmah* usually doubled as engineers and architects in major construction projects, kept accurate official calendars, and were public servants. They were also frequently medics and consultants. (The Spiritual Life, 2021)

During the Abbasid period, a large number of libraries emerged throughout the Islāmic Caliphate based on the House of Wisdom in Baghdad. These libraries included

*Dar al-Hikmah* (Cairo) founded by the Fatimid Caliph Al-Hakim bi-Amr Allāh (Fatimids dynasty) in Cairo in 1005. The Aghlabids' House of Wisdom was founded in Raqqada by Amir Ibrahim Ibn Mohammad al-Aghlabī. The Aghlabids Emirs from the Najdi tribe of Banu Tamim, ruled most part of the Magreb and parts of Southern Italy, nominally on behalf of the Abbasid Caliph. Their capital was in Kairouan (Tunisia). The Andalusian House of Wisdom was founded in Andalusia (Spain) by Umayyad caliph, Al-Hakam al-Mustansi. In

> the 12th century, Toledo in Andalusia (Muslim Spain) became the focus of another huge translation effort, this time from Arabic to Latin. Arabic works and translations of important ancient Greek texts came to light, and Christian, Jewish and Muslim scholars flocked to the city to translate ancient Greek and Arabic treaties to Latin and then into European languages. (1001inventions.com)

In addition to Bagdad's House of Wisdom, the other Houses became intellectual centres for the arts, science, philosophy, medicine, and education.

### Rise and decline of the Islāmic Golden Age

There are many reasons for the success of the Islāmic civilisation during the Abbasid dynasty for the development of cultural, economic, and scientific flourishing. The principles and ideals of Islām were practised, according to the Qur'ān and Sunnah. The quest for knowledge was based on the various Qur'ānic injunctions and *Hadith* which placed values on education and emphasised the importance of acquiring knowledge. Islāmic scholars regarded the pursuit of knowledge itself as an act of divine worship as Islām goes beyond a set of religious doctrines. Fidanboylu (2011) suggested that during the Golden Age of Islām,

> the nature and context of the Qur'ān was studied by the Muslim scholars. They realised that there was a relationship between creation, nature and man who led to the better understanding of the Almighty Allāh. They [scholars] started to search and experiment deeper in order to understand the Almighty Allāh and his phenomenal creation. (p. 2)

The religious rulings played a vital role in influencing the Muslim scholars in their search for knowledge and the development of the body of knowledge in diverse disciplines. As Islām promotes equality, fairness, justice, and tolerance, there were tolerance and respect for the contributions of ethnic and religious minorities.

   The Abbasid Caliphs and the Islāmic empire heavily patronised scholars in the arts, architectures, and sciences. It has been reported that the investment for the Translation Movement is estimated to be equivalent to "about twice the annual research budget of the United Kingdom's Medical Research Council. The best scholars and notable translators, such as Hunayn ibn Ishaq, had salaries that are estimated to be the equivalent of professional athletes today" (Montgomery, 2012). Due to the tolerance of other religious adherents and multi-culturalism, Christians, from the Church of the East (Nestorians), contributed to Islāmic civilisation by translating works of Greek philosophers and ancient science to Syriac and afterwards to Arabic (Britannica, T (a)). For example, the Arab Nestorian Christian translator, scholar,

physician, and scientist Hunayn ibn Ishaq led the House of Wisdom (Britannica, T (b)). There were also a contingent of scientists originated from Persia, who contributed immensely to the scientific flourishing of the Islāmic Golden Age. Lewis (2004) observed that the Persian contribution to Islāmic Golden Age is of immense importance and "culturally, politically, and most remarkable of all even religiously" (p. 44).

With the introduction of new technology such as the use of paper, this innovation transformed the sphere of learning and knowledge. Though paper was invented in China around the first century, it was

> Muslim merchants traveling the Silk Road in the eighth century who first brought the light, thin, pliable stuff west. And it was through Islāmic culture in North Africa that paper arrived in medieval Europe, where it took on an explosive life. (Cotter, 2001)

Many paper mills were built in Baghdad, and from there, the industry spread to Damascus, Egypt, and Morocco from where it reached Spain in various parts of the world.

The decline of the Islāmic Golden Age was due to several events. Due to the expansion of the Islāmic State in Middle East, Persia, and the Maghreb regions, it became more and more difficult to overcome the political challenges throughout these regions. Slowly, the Abbasid dynasty's power weakened in the face of independent governors, called Emirs, and a military that controlled the Caliphs. Internal strife between Muslims in the vast Islāmic State resulted in the Fatimid dynasty to break away from the Abbasids in 909 and created separate line of Caliphs in Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, and Palestine until 1171 CE. In addition, a separate kingdom around Khorasan in northern Persia was created. Eventually, the government could no longer protect all the reaches of land of the Islāmic Empire. During this same period, the European Crusades (1097–1291) weakened the Islāmic Empires' powers, and consequently Cordoba fell to Spanish Christians in 1236. With the sacking of Bagdad, in 1258, by Hulagu Khan the accomplishments of the House of Wisdom and the Islāmic Golden Age were brought to a cruel halt. The extensive collection of books and manuscripts of the House of Wisdom, mosques, homes, and hospitals were all destroyed. It is reported that "for days afterwards the river ran black with the ink of books and red with the blood of scholars" (Bengoechea, 2016). Though lacking in political and military powers, the Abbasid dynasty continued to claim authority in religious matters until after the Ottoman conquest of Egypt in 1517.

Coupled with the loss of much of the Islāmic State and the internal strife by various Muslim factions, the anti-rational Ash'ari School was established. During the Abbasid dynasty and in the reign of the Caliph Al-Ma'mun and after, the *Mu'tazilite* theology was adopted. The school of *Mutazillite* was influenced by Greek philosophy and they believed in the concept of free will and religious ideologies based on rationalism. That is, God could be understood through rational enquiry, and that belief and practice should be subject to reason. The *Mutazillite* should be viewed as the rationalist school of philosophical thought. The *Mu'tazilites*' basic premise is that the injunctions of God are accessible to rational thought and enquiry. One of the most contentious questions in Islāmic theology is the notion by the *Mu'tazilites* that the *Qur'ān*, albeit the word of God, was created rather than uncreated. The *Ash'arism* philosophico-religious school of thought developed as a response to the *Mu'tazilites* as

an attempt not only to purge Islām of all non-Islāmic elements which had quietly crept into it but also to harmonise the religious consciousness with the religious thought of Islām. It laid the foundation of an orthodox Islāmic theology or orthodox *Kalam* [science of discourse], as opposed to the rationalist *Kalam* of the *Mu'tazilites*. (Abdul Hye, 2003)

According to Valiuddin (2003),

> The *Mu'tazilites* and the Sunnites differ mostly from one another in five important matters: The problem of attributes; the problem of the beatific vision; the problem of promise and threat; the problem of creation of the actions of man; and the problem of the will of God.

However, in contrast, the Ash'arite theology, which replaced the *Mu'tazilite* theology, has a more traditional position that the Qur'ān is uncreated. The Asharites reject the Mu'tazilites' views about free will. The Ash'arites' position is that although humans have some freedom of thought and action but only God has the power to create actions. The *Mu'tazilite* doctrines are regarded as heretical by the majority of Sunnites of *Ahlu-Sunna-Wal-Jamaah* as this approach continues to be influential among those Shi'ites in Iran and the Zaydis in Yemen (Binyāmîn & Qāsim, 1996).

## Philosophers, physicians, and theologians

During the Golden Age of Islām, there were diverse scholars from the field of philosophy, medicine, and theology/spirituality contribution to the development of Islāmic sciences and psychology. The birth and evolution of ʿ*Ilm al-Nafs*, or "knowledge of the soul" was mooted during the period of the Islāmic Golden age. It has been suggested that

> Muslim philosophers considered the quest for knowledge as a divine command, and knowledge of the soul, and particularly of the intellect, as a critical component of this quest. Mastery of this subject provided a framework within which the mechanics and nature of our sensations and thoughts could be explained and integrated and offered the epistemological foundation for every other field of inquiry. (Ivry, 2012)

Thus, many of these classical scholars were driven by the Islāmic theological sources, in addition to intuitive and rational sources, in their quest for the study of the soul.

A brief overview of the state of philosophy at this particular period in time would provide the context to the philosophical perspective in their contributions to the development of psychology. It has been suggested that philosophy (*falsafa*) in the Islāmic Golden Age "was elaborated as a systematic investigation of problems connected with society, life, nature and sciences in a global religious vision" (Renima et al., 2016, p. 31). Under the Abbasid dynasty in the 9th century, two main approaches in intellectual discourses were prevalent: *Kalam* (Examination of Islāmic theological questions, using the logic and reflections) and *Falsafa* (Interpretations of Aristotelianism and Neoplatonism philosophies into Arabic). The theological school of *Mu'tazilism as* the rationalist school of Islāmic theology was in vogue during this

period. It is within this context that arise the contributions of some of the Muslim philosophers, with their *Mu'tazilite* background and embedded in the Aristotelian and Neoplatonic traditions. Their inspirations, visions, and intellectual discourse were influenced by the theological school of *Mu'tazilism*.

In relation to the physicians' perspective, one of the branches of science in which Muslims most excelled during the Islāmic Golden Age was Islāmic medicine. The issue of research, especially medical research and educational developments, was supported by The House of Abbasids. Hospitals known as *Bimaristans* (Persian word for hospital) were built throughout the Islāmic State. The first hospital was built in Baghdad and by the end of the 9th century, several other hospitals were built in Cairo, Mecca, and Medina, as well as mobile medical (community) units for rural areas. In the *Bimaristans*, males and females were cared for and treated; had outpatient facilities; and services were offered to the poor. The medical treatment was free, supported by *waqf* (endowments) and government patronage (Sonn & Williamsburg, 2004, p. 52). Islāmic civilisation had a pioneering approach concerning mental health and psychiatry. The first psychiatric hospitals were founded in Arabic countries in Baghdad 705 CE (during the kingship of the caliph El Waleed ibn Abdel Malek), Cairo 800 CE, and Damascus 1270 CE. Many of the hospitals, house libraries, classrooms, central courtyard with pool, and the patients were benevolently treated using baths, drugs, music, and activities. In contrast, the first psychiatric asylum in the Western Europe, the Bethlem Hospital in Bishopgate London, was founded in the 13th century (Forshaw & Rollin, 1990). The important Islāmic figures in medicine are Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn Zakariya al-Rāzī, Abū Zayd Ahmed ibn Sahl Al-Balkhī, Abū Alī Al-Husayn Ibn Sīnā. Those physicians produced rich authoritative, multivolume medical books. It has been suggested that those physicians adopted the Hippocratic organic psychiatry (Biological psychiatry), but they also applied psychosocial therapeutic methods (Dubovsky, 1983).

Many Islāmic theologians were instrumental in the development of the nature of Islāmic psychology because the discipline of *Ilm an Nafs* was linked to Islāmic theology and the religiosity of the soul. Awaad et al., (2020) suggested that "Muslim theologians contributed to the development of an 'Islāmic psychology' through their work in three fields:

- Islāmic creed
- Islāmic law
- Islāmic spirituality" (p. 74).

There are many polymaths, scholars, and theologians who made significant contributions to Islāmic sciences and directly and indirectly enable the development of Islāmic psychology. It is not within the scope of this chapter to include all of them. The following theologians' contributions which include Al-Ghazâlî, Ibn Taymiyyah, Ibn Qayyim, Ar-Rāghib Al-Aṣbahānī, Al-Jawzī, Ibn Khaldūn, and Ibn Rajab will be addressed in Section II of the book.

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# 3 Islāmisation of Knowledge in the Evolution of Islāmic Psychology

## Introduction

The intellectual Muslim movement of pre- and post-colonial era questions the validity of the structure of contemporary knowledge based on Western culture, values, and civilisation. In addition, contemporary or post-colonial knowledge is embedded with secular and materialistic values. The Muslim Intellectual movement is an Islām-related way of thinking that has been continuously re-established throughout Islāmic history (Dzilo, 2012). The process of shifting from a Western knowledge-based paradigm to one based on Islāmic beliefs and practices is known as Islāmisation. This is generally referred to as Islāmicisation or Islamification. Mohd Kamal Hassan (2013) prefers to term it Islāmicisation rather than Islāmisation. Haque (2018) suggested that "all these terms refer primarily to the attempts of shifting the Muslim society to Islāmic beliefs and practices" (p. 1).

The movement known as the IOK proposed the methodological improvement and developmental process of Islāmic thought and education. The IOK movement identified that Islāmic knowledge and education should be accessible to everybody as a core subject and required by all those who hold the duty of *Khilafah* (vicegerency) and Ubudiyah (servitude). In addition, Islām must be understood as a comprehensive religion dealing with all aspects of human lives and activities (physical, social, economic, political, cultural, or spiritual). It is unlike any other religion (Al-Faruqi, 1989, p. 17).

This chapter examines the concepts of Islāmisation, knowledge, and IOK and the IOK movement in the evolution and development of modern Islāmic psychology. It proposes that the concept of IOK is not to be taken in the literal meaning of the term "Islāmisation" as it is used in everyday religious or political contexts.

## Islāmisation

In a general sense, the concept of Islāmisation has been widely used to relate to the decolonisation of education or knowledge and return back to knowledge based on the Qur'ān, Sunnah, and the scholars. Islāmisation is "synonymous, with the term Islāmic Revivalism (Renaissance) which is defined as a reform-oriented movement driven by a conscious change in Muslim thought, attitude and behaviour and characterised by a commitment to revive Islāmic Civilization" (Al-Tamim, n.d., p. 6). There are several perspectives of Islāmisation proposed by contemporary scholars including Muhammad Kamal Hassan, Isma'il Raji al-Faruqi, Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, Sayyed

Hossein Nasr, and others. The next section is a review of the concept of Islāmisation through the work of eminent scholars.

## Mohd Kamal Hassan

Professor Dr Mohd Kamal Hassan is a renowned Islāmic scholar and an ardent advocate of the IOK movement. He was born on 26 October 1942 in Pasir Mas, Kelantan, Malaysia. He completed his first degree in Islāmic Studies from Universiti Malaya (UM) in 1965 and completed his Masters and PhD (1975) degrees from Columbia University, New York. He was involved in both the establishment of the International Islāmic University Malaysia (IIUM) and the formation of the Kulliyyah of Islāmic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences in IIUM. His works are based on philosophy, religion, social issues, and education. Currently, he works as a Distinguished Professor at the International Institute of Islāmic Thought (IIIT), Kuala Lumpur, IIUM. The establishment of the IIUM in 1983 paved the way for the IOK movement. IIUM started with the philosophy of integration of human knowledge (*Ulum al dunya*) and religious knowledge (*Ulum al-din*). IIUM has the mission of IIICE which refers to Integration, Internationalisation, Islāmisation, and Comprehensive Excellence. This mission statement lays down the foundation and rationale for pursuing the mission of Islāmisation of human knowledge for Kamal Hassan (Muhsin, 2015).

According to Muhammad Kamal Hassan, "Islāmicisation" is to provide an alternative to the secular knowledge of the Western and modern civilisation. Hassan (2013) has argued that Islāmisation implies "the conversion of knowledge to Islām" and, in contrast, the term "Islāmicisation" "has a connotation of a process of conforming things to Islāmic principles or being in harmony with the teachings of Islām" (Hassan, 2013, p. 43). In this context, knowledge, particularly in social sciences and humanities, is loaded with secular values. In addition, Western thoughts can easily lead to more crises and misunderstandings in its knowledge system (Hassan, 2009). The rationale for "Islāmicisation" includes

- Firstly, it denotes a process of conforming to Islām or being in harmony with the religion instead of being understood by others as a process of conversion to Islām.
- Secondly, "Islāmicise" conveys a lot of meaning, some of them are "connected to Islām," "in agreement with Islāmic principles," and lastly, "complies with the teaching of Islām."
- Finally, the word conveys the idea of embracing something accepted by our religion's values and standards.

## Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas

Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas was born in Bogor, Java, Dutch East Indies on 5 September 1931. He is a Muslim polymath including being a philosopher and historian. He is well knowledgeable in traditional Islāmic sciences and equally competent in theology, philosophy, metaphysics, history, and literature. He is the pioneer in proposing the idea of IOK. He was educated at Royal Military Academy Sandhurst in England. His alma mater includes the University of Malaya, McGill University M.A and PhD, and an Honorary Doctor of Arts D. Litt. by University of Khartoum,

Sudan. He was awarded the Iqbal Centenary Commemorative Medal (Pakistan), conferred Fellow of the Imperial Iranian Academy of Philosophy and Commander of the Order of Loyalty to the Crown of Malaysia. He is the author of 27 works on various aspects of Islāmic thought and civilisation. His notable works include *Islām and Secularism*, *Historical Fact and Fiction*, *The Concept of Education in Islām: A Framework for an Islāmic Philosophy of Education*, *Prolegomena to the Metaphysics of Islām*. Al-Attas' philosophy and methodology of education have one goal: Islāmisation of the mind, body, and soul.

Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas is one of the visionary scholars who proposed "Islamising" the secular knowledge. Al-Attas suggested that "Western educational system is no longer relevant to the Muslim world as it is problematic, unjust, and brought chaos in man's life" (Ali, 2013, p. 112). He defined Islāmisation as "the liberation of man first from magical, mythological, animistic, national-cultural tradition, and then from secular control over his reason and his language" (Al-Attas, 1978, p. 41). Al-Attas maintained that Islāmisation means "the deliverance of knowledge from its Interpretations based on secular ideology and from meanings and expressions of the secular" (cited in Al Migdadi, 2011, p. 37). According to Al-Attas, "The purpose of higher education is not, like in the West, to produce the complete citizen, but rather, as Islām, to produce the complete man, or the universal man…" (Ali, 2013 pp. 113–114). The problem with Western concept of knowledge is that it "creates confusion, scepticism, and it elevates doubt and speculation. To them, human reasoning is the true guide to man's success in life" (Ali, 2010, p. 119).

## Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi

Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi was born on 1 January 1921 in Jaffa, Palestine. He and his wife were murdered on the 27th of May 1986 in Wyncote, Pennsylvania, US. He studied at the French Dominican College Des Freres (SLTA), American University of Beirut (B.A.), Indiana University's Graduate of School of Arts and Sciences (M.A.), Harvard University (M.A.), Indiana University (PhD), Al-Azhar University (Post-Graduate). Al-Faruqi Studied Islām from his father and a local mosque. His father was an Islāmic judge and when Israel occupied Palestine, he and his family left for Beirut. He worked as a Registrar of Cooperative Societies (1941–1945) and left for United States in 1948 for further studies. He was the founder of the IIIT and the Association of Muslim Social Scientists (AMSS). He wrote over 100 articles for various scholarly journals and magazines in addition to 25 books of which the most notable being *Christian Ethics: A Historical and Systematic Analysis of Its Dominant Ideas*.

Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi is regarded as the doyen of the IOK. Al-Faruqi (1989) defines Islāmisation as: "a framework for human life, civilization, and human transformation. It determines the purpose of every activity, struggle, action, and Islāmic social organization. It gave human life purpose and charts its course" (p. 87). He further adds that

> Islāmisation represent the truth, the justice, the transformation, and the reformation that concerns all Muslims. Its care and concern, by definition, extends to all human beings. It seeks to bestow dignity and honour upon all humans living on this earth. Islāmisation is the call that divinely based civilisation has addressed to the present world which is torn apart with disaster looming large and clear. (p. 84)

The *Ummah*, according to Al-Faruqi, was ruined by the Western's dualistic education system adopted by colonised and independent Muslim world (Ali, 2010, p. 125). The inherent problem and malaise with the Western-imposed dualistic system of knowledge is the rejection and alienation of the association of knowledge with *Tawhid* (Unicity of God and Godliness). *Tawhid* is the integral constituent of the religion which unites all its parts (p. 125). He believed that the process of Islāmisation should not be an individual activity but a collective one. University based on Islāmic ethics and traditional thoughts needs to be established for the further enhancement of society's fundamental value. Al-Faruqi suggested that the disciplines, including humanities, social, and natural sciences, should be redesigned and reformulated and integrated with Islāmic beliefs and practices.

## Summary of the ideologies of the three scholars

In summary, Abdul Rashid and Manaf (2014) suggested that despite the use of different terminologies, the three scholars incorporate one philosophy, "which is to redefine modern concept of knowledge and rebuilding it into a new science, which incorporates the essence of religion in its core" (p. 2). Whatsoever concept is made operationalised, it is important to note that some scholars have a preference for other terms including decolonisation, desecularisation, dewesternisation, and relevantisation. There are a lot of commonalities with those concepts. Al-Tamim (n.d.) suggested that "they all share the same essence, which is to bring all contemporary knowledge to be consistent with the Tawhidic paradigm" (p. 9).

## Knowledge from an Islāmic perspective

<div dir="rtl">

ٱقْرَأْ بِٱسْمِ رَبِّكَ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ
خَلَقَ ٱلْإِنسَـٰنَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ
ٱقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ ٱلْأَكْرَمُ
ٱلَّذِى عَلَّمَ بِٱلْقَلَمِ
عَلَّمَ ٱلْإِنسَـٰنَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ يرجى اضافة اسم السورة ورقمها ( العلق 1-5)

</div>

- *Recite in the name of your Lord who created. Created man from a clinging substance. Recite, and your Lord is the most Generous – Who taught by the pen. Taught man that which he knew.* (Al-'Alaq 96:1–5– Interpretation of the meaning)

Knowledge is highly valued in Islām as a theoretical and practical subject. Throughout the Qur'ān, Allāh, the Almighty, repeatedly calls on the believers to seek knowledge and to reflect on the creations of the world and its accessories. It is observed that "Muslim scholars also realised that understanding the complexities of the universe, its order, harmony, perfection and functioning, brought people close to God and His message" (Zaimeche, 2003, p. 4). Allāh says in the Qur'ān:

<div dir="rtl">

وَسَخَّرَ لَكُم مَّا فِى ٱلسَّمَـٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا مِّنْهُ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَـٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ( الجاثية 13)

</div>

- *And He has subjected to you whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth – all from Him. Indeed, in that are signs for a people who give thought.* (Al-Jathiyah 45: 13 – Interpretation of the meaning)

In another verse, Allāh, the Exalted, informs us that when he had created Prophet Adam (May Allāh be pleased with him), He taught him knowledge (*ilm*).

وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ ٱلْأَسْمَآءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَنۢبِـُٔونِى بِأَسْمَآءِ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ
قَالُوا۟ سُبْحَٰنَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَآ إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَآ ۖ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ
قَالَ يَٰٓـَٔادَمُ أَنۢبِئْهُم بِأَسْمَآئِهِمْ ۖ فَلَمَّآ أَنۢبَأَهُم بِأَسْمَآئِهِمْ قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُل لَّكُمْ إِنِّىٓ أَعْلَمُ غَيْبَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَأَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُونَ وَمَا كُنتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ (ٱلبقرة 31-33)

- *And He taught Adam the names – all of them. Then He showed them to the angels and said, "Inform Me of the names of these, if you are truthful." They said, "Exalted are You; we have no knowledge except what You have taught us. Indeed, it is You who is the Knowing,1 the Wise." He said, "O Adam, inform them of their names." And when he had informed them of their names, He said, "Did I not tell you that I know the unseen [aspects] of the heavens and the earth? And I know what you reveal and what you have concealed."* (Al-Baqarah 2: 31–33 – Interpretation of the meaning)

Regarding the above verses, Ibn Kathir in his exegesis suggested that "And He taught Adam all the names (of everything) Meaning, the names that people use, such as human, animal, sky, earth, land, sea, horse, donkey, and so forth, including the names of the other species." Ibn Abi Hatim and Ibn Jarir reported that ʿAsim bin Kulayb narrated from Saʿid bin Maʿbad that Ibn ʿAbbas was questioned (And He taught Adam all the names (of everything)) "Did Allāh teach him the names of the plate and the pot" He said, "Yes, and even the terms for breaking wind!"

In the Islāmic paradigm of knowledge, it is divine revelation from the Creator that becomes the primary source of knowledge and understanding. Utz (2011) suggested that

> Revelation is the foundation upon which all knowledge is built; it is perfect and complete. This reflects the Muslims' firm and unwavering belief in their scripture (the Qurʾān) as the final revealed word of Allāh, a conviction that is unique to Islām. (p. 39)

However, giving more significance to revelation does not mean that Muslims ignore or neglect evidenced-based science and reason. Al Migdadi (2011) shed some more light to this issue by suggesting that

> The two fields of which man should have some knowledge and understanding are: the 'Unseen' world (*alam al-ghayab*), i.e., all that is beyond the reach of a created being's perception (the world of angels, the Jinn and the Hereafter); and the 'Seen' world (*alam al- shahadah*) which is all that can be witnessed by a creature's senses or mind. (p. 11)

There are a number of Hadiths that focus on seeking and attaining knowledge. It was narrated from Jabir that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: "Ask Allāh for beneficial knowledge and seek refuge with Allāh from knowledge that is of no benefit" (Ibn Majah (a)). Abu Hurairah said: "I heard the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) saying: 'This world is cursed and what is in it is cursed, except the remembrance of Allāh (dhikr)

and what is conducive to that, or one who has knowledge or who acquires knowledge'" (Ibn Majah (b)). It is narrated by Zayd ibn Thabit: I heard the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) say:

> May Allāh brighten a man who hears a tradition from us, gets it by heart and passes it on to others. Many a bearer of knowledge conveys it to one who is more versed than he is; and many a bearer of knowledge is not versed in it. (Abu Dawud)

It is narrated by Abu Hurairah: that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: "Whoever takes a path upon which to obtain knowledge, Allāh makes the path to Paradise easy for him" (Tirmidhi).

The Islāmic scholars also contributed to the intellectual discourse on knowledge. Al-Raghib al-Asfahani defines knowledge (*'ilm*) as

> Knowledge is the comprehension (*idrak*) of something in accordance with its true nature (*bi haqiqatihi*). It is of two kinds. The first is the comprehension of the essence of something (this is what the scholars of logic call 'perception'). The second is the judgment of the existence of something that exists or the denial of something that does not exist (this is what the logicians call 'confirmation'). (p. 17)

Al-Attas (2000, cited in Hashim & Rossidy) viewed the epistemological definition of knowledge,

> with reference to God as being its origin, is the arrival in the soul of the meaning of a thing or an object of knowledge; and with reference to the soul as being its interpreter, knowledge is the arrival of the soul at the meaning of thing or an object of knowledge. (p. 25)

Both definitions of knowledge suggest that knowledge is more than comprehensions and is not absolutely based on the product of the human intellect and sensory experiences but is also based on revealed truth.

## Islāmisation of Knowledge

The IOK is an intellectual movement that gained momentum in the 1970s with the rise of the plight of the Muslim Ummah, the secularisation of the educational system in Muslim majority countries, the global re-awakening of Islāmic consciousness, and the concern of Muslim scholars towards the adoption of Western-oriented values and lifestyles by Muslims. In support for IOK, Ali (2013) maintained that

> Contemporary Islāmic revivalists have convincingly argued for the need for comprehensive Islamization of all dimensions of private and public life. But according to them, this goal cannot be achieved until and unless contemporary secular knowledge and modern Western educational system are Islamized. (p. 14)

It seemed that the priority is to "Islamise" knowledge and the post-colonial educational system. Haque (2018) suggested that IOK

is an attempt to reconcile between Islām and modernity without compromising Islāmic ethical and intellectual principles. This philosophy is apolitical and aims to bring change in the Muslim thought process. This is geared mainly in spheres of learning and education encouraging Muslims to evaluate and practice knowledge from Islāmic epistemological perspective. (p. 2)

Though Ismail Raji al-Faruqi presented the theoretical and practical outlines in his "Islamization of Knowledge: General Principles and Work Plan" in 1982, it seemed more likely that it was Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas who coined the term "IOK".

According to Al-Attas, the aim and objective of Islāmisation of contemporary knowledge is to protect Muslims from corrupted knowledge and to make provision for authentic knowledge and bring them to proper acknowledgement and recognition of God. Islāmisation of contemporary knowledge will result in peace, goodness, and justice and strengthening of the faith (Al Migdadi, 2011, p. 9). He suggested two steps to Islamise contemporary knowledge. The first is the "isolation process" that is where Western-oriented knowledge, culture, and civilisation need to be filtered. The second step is that the existing body of knowledge should be integrated with Islāmic elements (Islāmic sciences and ethics).

Al-Faruqi (1989) characterises IOK as "Recasting knowledge according to Islāmic tenets. It includes various activities including removing dichotomy between modern and traditional systems of education and producing university level textbooks" (pp. 13, 48). He believed that this segregation or disintegration of knowledge accounted for the decline of the Muslim Ummah and is the breeding ground for the Muslim malaise. Al-Faruqi called for bridging the gap between religious and secular knowledge. Al-Faruqi proposed the redesigning disciplines such as the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences on the foundation of the Islāmic worldview and principles of ethics and morality. He argued that "There can be no doubt that Islām is relevant to all aspects of thinking, of living, of being. This relevance must be articulated unmistakably in each discipline" (Al-Faruqi, 1989, p. 5). In his work plan, "Islamization of Knowledge: General Principles and Work Plan," Al-Faruqi proposed the following steps to achieve the objectives of IOK. This is presented in Table 3.1.

In summary, Al-Faruqi proposed that there should be an awakening of Muslim thinkers and scholars in order to instil the spirit of Islāmic thoughts. This is a kind of ideological reformation into Islāmic thinking. Academicians, scholars, thinkers, and the youths need to master modern disciplines and the critical assessment of their methodologies, research findings, and theories from an Islāmic perspective. There is a need for the mastery of the works of classical and contemporary scholars, including the sciences of Hadith and Fiqh; and the mastery of contemporary knowledge and science disciplines and the relationship between Islāmic sciences and Western thought.

Al-Faruqi (1989) also viewed that IOK aims to "produce university level textbooks recasting some twenty disciplines in accordance with the Islāmic vision" because of the backward and lowly contemporary position of the Ummah in all fields, political, economic, and religio-cultural (Ahsan et al., 2013, pp. 34–37). There should be priorities for scientific research and the development of methodology to restore the Islāmic sciences and character of Islām based on revelation and reason. The disciplines for IOK include the behavioural sciences, economics, administration, communication sciences, etc. There is also the need to prepare academic cadres through educational fellowships, professorial appointments, postdoctoral studies, student stipend and

*Table 3.1* Steps to achieve the objectives of IOK

| Objectives of IOK | Strategies |
| --- | --- |
| Creation of understanding and awareness | Ideological reformation into Islāmic thinking.<br>Academic undertaking and encouragement to raise the spirit of inquiry in the minds of Muslim academics and thinkers. The start of a revivalism in Ummah. |
| Crystallisation of Islāmic thought | Academicians, scholars, thinkers, and the youth to study the contents of Islāmic thought.<br>Methodology of integrating Islāmic thought with contemporary contexts.<br>Mastering the basic principles of Islām including its early history and a thorough understanding of the problems of the present age, its sciences, resources, and challenges to crystallise the Islāmic thought. |
| Mastery of the legacy | IIIT publications, encyclopaedia of (a "thousand selected") legacy works and avoiding works that represented deviations, backwardness, and extremism that afflicted the Ummah and are responsible for their decline.<br>Mastery of the works of scholars and representing them in a computer-coding system, categorizing materials of basic sources in legacy and contemporary knowledge to allow for some kind of classification and focus on sciences of Hadith including criticism of text and chain of authorities, sciences of Fiqh, etc.<br>Create specialised legacy series covering different disciplines. |
| Mastery of contemporary knowledge | IOK cannot be achieved without proper knowledge of modern sciences.<br>Islāmic sciences influenced Western thought and how their scholar's individual contemplation over the centuries led them to organise materials and knowledge for all disciplines.<br>Reason for failure of Muslim society is Muslim's acceptance of secular knowledge without any critical appraisal. |
| Textbook for the disciplines | Writing of textbooks by discipline-specific scholars. |
| Priorities for scientific research | Five-year plan for development of methodology to restore the Islāmic sciences and character of Islām based on revelation and reason.<br>The methodology he proposed could be utilised to meet the requirements of contemporary challenges to the Ummah. Social sciences where efforts should be placed for Islāmisation of the disciplines: behavioural sciences, economics, administration, communication sciences, etc. |
| Preparation of academic cadres | IIIT needs to prepare well-trained and adequately prepared personnel to spearhead the IOK movement.<br>Such cadres, he proposed, should be prepared through educational fellowships, professorial appointments, postdoctoral studies, student stipend, and postdoctoral theses.<br>Undergraduate students should be trained along the same lines. |

Source: Adapted from Al-Faruqi (1989).

postdoctoral theses to spearhead the IOK movement. Al-Faruqi noted that "The only Director of the process of Islamization is Allāh and its manual of operation is Islām itself – Islāmic ideals and Islāmic norms … Islamization represents truth, justice, transformation and reformation that concern all Muslims" (p. 84).

According to Ragab (1995), Islāmisation refers to the "Integration of Islāmic revealed knowledge and the human sciences." In this context, IOK also refers to the Islāmisation of contemporary or present-day knowledge. Yusuf (2015) maintained that IOK "is an attempt to fashion out an Islāmic paradigm of knowledge based on the Islāmic world view and its unique constitutive concepts itself from *Tawhid* (unicity and sovereignty of God)" (p. 69). He proposed a methodology for IOK as presented in Table 3.2.

In Table 3.2 Ragab (1995) identified two approaches to understand the nature of the process of the methodology in IOK. The first approach, "engagement approach," is the integration of Islāmic based knowledge with modern social sciences. The second approach, the "disengagement approach," completely rejects the integration of Islāmic and western traditions of scholarship. Mughal (2015) suggested that the

> Proponents of disengagement approach assert that dearth in basic ideas and the structure of modern social science would not let it play any substantial role in this process. That is because this knowledge is based on materialistic and secular world view of Western civilization. (p. 8)

In relation to the example of the study of the founder of modern sociology, Auguste Compte, it is worth pointing out that how Compte perceived this discipline. Compte sees sociology as the "basis of a revolutionary new religion, with Compte as its first and principal prophet" (Olsen, 1968, p. 16), "where Man would be the object of worship instead of God. Its priests would be the scientists" (Rajab, 1996).

Ragab (1995) suggested that modern social science has a lot to offer with regard to the research methodologies, analytical tools, and theory building mechanics. In addition,

> Social scientists can instantly start the process of utilisation of the Qur'ān and Sunnah, and the Islāmic legacy derived from them immediately. It is my contention that specific social science disciplines (especially psychology, sociology, anthropology, education, communication, social work, and psychotherapy) can very productively use Islāmic (*Shari'ah*) sciences at their current level of development. (Rajab 1999, p. 34)

## Other scholars in Islāmic reformation/movement/concept

There are other scholars who must be credited, directly or indirectly for their demands in the decolonisation of knowledge and for the *tajdid* (awakening) of the Muslim Ummah in relation to the revival of Islāmic education. Some of the scholars include Jamaluddinn Afghani (1838–1897); Muhammad Abduh (1849–1905); Sheikh Al Hadi (1867–1934); Ashraf Ali Thanvi (1873–1943); Allāmah Muhammad Iqbāl (1879–1938); Syed Abul A'la Maududi (1903–1979); and Seyyed Hossein Nasr (1933–). In this section, we will focus on two of these scholars: Syed Abul A'la Maududi and Seyyed Hossein Nasr.

*Table 3.2* Rajab's methodology for IOK

| Phase I: Integral Theorizing | Strategies |
| --- | --- |
| Survey and rigorous assessment | Identification of all conceptual frameworks and research findings. |
| | Distinctive Islāmic epistemology and ontology especially as it relates to God, man, and society. |
| | Sifting out concepts, empirical generalisations, and observations which stood the test of that rigorous critique. |
| Survey and rigorous assessment of relevant Islāmic revealed knowledge | Identification of all verses of the Qur'ān and the Sayings of the Prophet (PBUH) which pertain to the subject. |
| | Acceptable exegeses and authentic selected hadiths. Searching the works of prominent Muslim scholars past and present. |
| | Develop a theoretical framework based on the combination of insights gained from the Qur'ān and Sunnah and appropriate Islāmic scholarship. |
| | Unified "integral" theoretical framework which combines insights from both Islāmic revealed knowledge sources and valid human experience. |
| | Rearrangement of all valid research findings and social science concepts which withstood the verification and assessment process. |
| Phase II: Validation of the integral theoretical framework through rigorous research and practice | Hypotheses generated from the integral theoretical framework should be tested in "total reality" which includes both the empirical and the non-empirical aspects of the world. |
| | Testing and validation could take place in well-designed pieces of research, and in controlled practice episodes within the helping professions (such as social work and counselling). |
| | If hypotheses derived from the integral theoretical framework are confirmed, our confidence in that framework increases. |
| | If the hypotheses were rejected, that means either (a) that our research methods and our practice procedures are wanting; or (b) that our understanding or Interpretation of revelation included in Phase I is incorrect and needs reformulation. Corrective action should be taken either way. |
| The engagement approach | Mastering modern social science scholarship (theories, methodologies, empirical findings). |
| | Serious examination of its explicit or implicit underlying ontological, axiological, and epistemological assumptions. |
| | Rigorous criticism of all of the above from the Islāmic perspective. |
| | Integration of whatever measures up to the above, with pertinent insights generated from Islāmic sources. |
| | Examination of the validity of this integrated knowledge with reference to the real world. |

*(Continued)*

*Table 3.2* (Continued)

| Phase I: Integral Theorizing | Strategies |
| --- | --- |
| The disengagement approach | The proponents of this approach would argue that the flaws in the basic logic and structure of modern social science renders it useless, if not outright dangerous, for the Islāmisation effort. |
| | They would convincingly argue that modern social science is the product of the "modern" era of the predominant Western Civilisation, an era that is basically materialist, secular, and anti-religion. |
| | They would point out that modern social science shares the same Western worldview. As a case in point, it would be pointed out that sociology was introduced by its modern founder Auguste Compte as a substitute for religious guidance – a scientific one. |
| The correct approach | The correct approach, for them, is to start with "full disengagement" from this flawed modern scholarship. |
| | We have to disabuse ourselves completely of its conceptualisations and its mental categories for us to be free to "genuinely" start from the Islāmic categories generated from the Qur'ān and valid Hadith. |
| | It is dangerous to start from "modern" preconceptions, because of the natural tendency to superimpose them upon our understanding even of the Islāmic sources. |
| | We have to be wary of the power of ready-made models, for they tend to – wittingly or unwittingly – shape our perceptions. |

Source: Adapted from Rajab (1999).

Syed Abul A'la Maududi was born in Aurangabad (then in Hyderabad, now in the state of Maharashtra, in India) into a traditional Muslim family. He was a Sunni Pakistani Islāmic reformist, a politician, journalist, theologian, and political philosopher. He founded the Pakistan Jamaat-e-Islami, an Islāmic revivalist party. Syed Abul A'la Maududi may have influenced the Egyptian Islamist Hassan al-Banna, founder of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, and most certainly influenced al-Banna's successor, Sayed Qutb. A'la Maududi believed that copying cultural practices of non-Muslims was forbidden in Islām, and that imitation was a sign of inferiority and the cultivation of a defeatist mentality. He suggested that sign of inferiority and the cultivation of a defeatist mentality has been brought about because Muslims, in general, abandoned the faith and are no better than non-believers. A'la Maududi (n.d.) stated that

> I am not asking you to become scholars, read voluminous books or spend a large part of your lives in the pursuit of knowledge. It is not necessary to study so extensively to become a Muslim. Every one of you, young or old, man or woman, should at least acquire sufficient knowledge to enable him to understand the essence of the teachings of the Qur'ān and the purpose for which it has been sent down. You should also be

able to clearly understand the mission which the Prophet, blessings and peace be on him, came into this world to fulfil. You should also recognize the corrupt order and system which he came to destroy. You should acquaint yourselves, too, with the way of life which Allāh has ordained for Muslims. No great amount of time is required to acquire this simple knowledge. If you value Iman, it cannot be too difficult to find one hour every day to devote to this. (p. 52)

For A'la Mawdudi, the IOK focused on a "critical analysis of western humanities and sciences to recast them in accordance with the teachings of Islām" (Haque, 2018, cited in Moten, 2004, p. 257). He asserted that

> Islām is not a 'religion' in the sense this term is commonly understood. It is a system encompassing all fields of living. Islām means politics, economics, legislation, science, humanism, health, psychology, and sociology. It is a system which makes no discrimination on the basis of race, colour, language, or other external categories. Its appeal is to all mankind. It wants to reach the heart of every human being. (p. 191)

It has been suggested that it is possible that

> Al-Faruqi picked up on this idea (IOK) while he was in Pakistan at the Central Institute of Islāmic Research for two years (1961–1963) and A'la Mawdudi's writings were very influential at the time and he also had a work plan. (Haque, 2018, p. 3)

Seyyed Hossein Nasr (1933–) is an Iranian philosopher and a University Professor of Islāmic studies at George Washington University, United States. He was born in Tehran, Republic of Iran. Nasr completed his education in Iran and the United States, earning a Bachelor's degree in physics from Massachusetts Institute of Technology, a Master's in geology and geophysics, and a Doctorate in the history of science from Harvard University. He held various academic positions in Iran, including vice-chancellor at Tehran University and President of Aryamehr University, and established the Imperial Iranian Academy of Philosophy. He is an emeritus professor of Islāmic Philosophy at George Washington University. Nasr is acclaimed as the world's leading representative of the Islāmic philosophical tradition and the Perennialist school of thought [founded on metaphysical truths in all religions]. Nasr (1980) relates that

> A classical and traditional Persian education in my early years left an indelible mark upon my mind as stories from the Holy Qur'ān and the poems of Sa'di and Hafiz became engraved upon the deepest layers of my soul during this period. At the same time, even these early years brought me face to face with the presence of another world view, that of the modern West, which appeared at that time at once enticing and threatening. (p. 113)

His works ran over 50 books and more than 500 papers on philosophy, religion, spirituality, science, art, architecture, literature, the environment, and inter-cultural exchange. His magnum opus is "Knowledge and the Sacred" (Nasr, 1989). Aslan (1995)

observed that "'Knowledge and the Sacred' speaks of three important subjects: the secularisation process, tradition, and the characteristics and qualities of sacred knowledge in the context of the perennial philosophy" (p. 37). Hague (2018) commented that "Nasr's work on the congruence between classical Islām and modern ecology movement is considered by some as even more basic concept of "IOK" that runs parallel to the discussion of incompatibility between the secular and Islāmic sciences" (p. 3).

## Criticism of IOK

There have been many criticisms of the IOK's project. Haneef (2009) identified writers such as Rahman, Sarder, Yasien, Butt, and Seyyed Vali Nasr who rejected Al Faruqi's work plan in their criticism. Hassan (2013) argues that the term "IOK" is vague and confusing

> because knowledge corresponds to *al- 'ilm* which is referred to in the Qur'ān as an embodiment of the highest order of Truth. Therefore, IOK is a contradiction in terms because the Quranic *'ilm* cannot be further Islamized. Instead, the aim should be to correct the knowledge derived from human rationality and reasoning, because such knowledge is subject to errors and can potentially be contradictory with Islāmic knowledge. (p. 35)

Haque (2018, citing Abaza, 2002) noted that "Islāmizing Knowledge is impossible because Allāh has created all knowledge in its best form and is already Islāmic" (p. 8). Haque (2018) also suggested that the term itself is problematic and should be changed to desecularisation of knowledge and there is no consensus among scholars on the definition and scope of Islāmisation.

   Seyyed Vali Nasr (1991) called the IOK a "burgeoning enterprise" and equals the project with the "Third wordlist world-view of sorts," which, in his opinion, "is rooted in the reassertion of Muslim religious loyalties in the face of cataclysmic changes which have torn many Muslim societies asunder" (p. 387). He argues that the project "has mostly been shaped in the spirit of a political discourse than a level-headed academic undertaking. It was pioneered by the self-styled thinkers with no expertise in the field they were trying to revolutionize" (p. 387). Seyyed Vali Nasr went on to point out that

> Rather than contributing to knowledge and furthering its cause by injecting the Islāmic world-view into the philosophy of the sciences, the Islamization project, in its current form, has created an enervating disjunctive between faith and knowledge in Islām, which is made ever more apparent with the more vociferous claims of a facile intermeshing of Islām and scientific thought. (p. 387)

He also went further to maintain that

> Before embarking upon an agenda for Islamization of knowledge, Muslims must contend with the themes, ideas and conceptions to which the adjective 'Islāmic' will be attached. The appellation 'Islamization,' implicitly, suggests that the subject under consideration has heretofore been 'unholy' and could be 'sacralized' by the writ of the Shari'ah. (p. 393)

Seyyed Vali Nasr proposed that the IOK project is a methodical enterprise but

> it does not purport to create the sciences or the social sciences anew, but to inform their outlook with Islāmic values. It is a process which begins in the Shari'ah but does not end with it. Islamization entails an intellectual revolution and not merely the implementation of religious laws. Finally, it should not begin with, rather end in, institutions and organizational expressions. (p. 399)

On the other hand, Sayed Hossein Nasr, who criticises the IOK project, preferred the use of the term Islāmic worldview instead of the term "IOK." The Islāmic worldview is religious, rational, and philosophical, it is all-encompassing and leads to oneness. Yusuf (2015) maintained that Nasr viewed IOK based on the sacred science (Scientia sacra). That is the knowledge that lies at the heart of divine revelations and traditional sciences. The Islāmisation of science, Nasr argues,

> cannot but be the integration based upon criticism, assimilation and rejection of various elements of the existing sciences into the Islāmic intellectual universe and therefore another framework than the existing modern scientific paradigm, a framework in which *tawhid* reigns supreme and where every atom of the universe is seen to be created for a purpose and in accordance with the wisdom and plan of the Creator. (Nasr, 2010, p. 7)

As an alternative to the IOK, Nasr (2010) presents some fundamental principles in shifting the paradigm of knowledge. He suggested six major steps in his model that could be employed by those who are willing to engage in the process. These steps include the following: There is a need to master the field from the Western perspective thoroughly so as to know the contradictory points as well as the consensual ones entrenched within the field; Muslim thinkers should be able to master in-depth the philosophy and methodologies of modern science; Muslim scholars must also be well-versed with Muslim intellectual tradition; in any learning discourse, language plays a significant role in knowledge dissemination; the sieving stage, the Islāmic world must use all its resources and energy at its disposal to know this science deep and wide and in its relation to religion, philosophy, and social forces, to criticise the premises and conclusions of this science in the light of the teachings of Islām; and Islāmic scholars in the course of Islāmisation process must create a new paradigm of knowledge from Islāmic sources.

## Institutional organisation of IOK

There are several institutions or projects associated with IOK movement. The Association of Muslim Social Scientists (AMSS) was founded in 1972 under the umbrella of Muslim Students Association (MSA) of North America. It is located in the same building as the IIIT and the Association of Muslim Scientists and Engineers. The aims of AMSS were to generate cooperation among Muslim scholars and social scientists seeking to unify revealed knowledge with acquired knowledge. AMSS publishes *The American Journal of Islāmic Social Sciences*, a peer-reviewed international journal, and books. The mission of the organisation: Nurturing, promoting, and providing a platform for academic studies of Islām, Muslims, and non-Muslims perspective; providing an interdisciplinary forum for excellence in research,

scholarship, and publications relating to the study of Islām, Muslims, and Muslim perspectives; organise conferences, symposiums, and lectures to debate/address social issues. The AMSS organised national and international conferences and hosted seminars, webinars, and meetings. There is also an AMSS (United Kingdom) which is dedicated to advancing Muslim scholarship; the promotion of the Islāmic position in various academic disciplines; to keep Muslim scholars informed about current conceptual, methodological, and analytical developments and promote greater inter-disciplinary co-operation, in an effort towards generating informed, critical, and creative Islāmic alternatives and opinions on topical and emerging issues of academic relevance to Muslims. AMSS (UK) has introduced two prestigious awards, namely the Lifetime Achievement and Building Bridges awards, that are intended to recognise and highlight the achievement of individuals who have made a significant contribution to Islāmic thought and promotion. In relation to the discipline of Islāmic psychology, the AMSS (UK) 2016 Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to Professor Malik Badri in recognition for a distinguished career, scholarly achievements, and exceptional intellectual works in the fields of psychology, psychotherapy, and clinical psychology.

The IIIT is a centre of excellence in educational research and Islāmic thought whose main interest is on carrying out evidence-based research in advancing education in Muslim Societies and the dissemination of this research through publication and translation, teaching, policy recommendations, and strategic engagements. The Institute was established as a non-profit and non-denominational organisation in the United States of America in 1981. The headquarters are in Herndon, Virginia, in the suburbs of Washington DC. The Mission of IIIT is to conduct and disseminate educational research to empower Muslim Societies with data-driven recommendations for transformative education policy and practice.

## Conclusion

In response to the colonisation and secularisation of knowledge, the IOK movement was mooted. IOK movement rejected the notion of a reductionist and secular knowledge that is incongruent with Islāmic thought and knowledge. Ahsan et al., (2013) remarked that the IOK project

> has been criticised, analysed, and condemned by opponents, others have hailed and glorified it as the most promising approach to pull the Ummah out of its decline. In more tangible terms, we may look at the more than three hundred or so titles of quality books in Arabic, English, and other languages as a significant contribution to the intellectual wealth of the Ummah. (p. 9)

There is no homogeneity in the implementation of the IOK project. As Dzilo (2012) maintained that the concept of "Islāmisation of knowledge is not monosemous but involves multiple approaches to the various forms of modern-world thought in the context of the Islāmic intellectual tradition, including metaphysical, epistemological, ethical and metho-dological premises regarding the modern issue of knowledge" (p. 247). This means the integration of Islāmic theology with scientific knowledge and evidence-based practice in diverse disciplines including psychology, sociology, health and medical sciences, economics, and finance. This would result in knowledge based on an Islāmic-oriented worldview. This is the context which initiated the evolution of contemporary Islāmic psychology.

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# Section II

# Classical Scholars: Philosophers, Physicians, and Theologians

# 4   Abu Yusuf Yaqub Ibn Ishaq Al-Kindī

## Introduction

Abu-Yusuf Ya'qub ibn Ishaq ibn as-Sabbah ibn 'Omran ibn Isma'il Al-Kindī, known as Al-Kindī – the "Philosopher of the Arabs" – was born about 801 CE in Kufa, Iraq. Al-Kindī is known in the West as "Alkindus." He was acclaimed as the father of Arab philosophy for his synthesis, adaptation, and promotion of Greek and Hellenistic speculative philosophies in the Muslim world. His theological orientation was from the school of *Mu'tazilism.* It is reported that "Al-Kindī's father Ishaq ibn al-Sabah, was governor of Kufa under al-Mahdi and al-Rashid and his great-grandfather, al-Ash'at ibn Qays, was a companion of the Prophet (ﷺ). Thus Al-Kindī was of noble origin and belonged to the ruling classes" (Qadi Sa'id ibn Ahmad al-Andalüsi). He was a polymath like most of the classical scholars and he was a philosopher, physician, pharmacist, psychologist, ophthalmologist, physicist, mathematician, geographer, astronomer, and chemist. He was also involved with music, logogriphs, the manufacturing of swords, and even the art of cookery.

Al-Kindī was appointed by the Abbasid caliphs to the "House of Wisdom" to oversee the translation of Greek works into Arabic (Najātī, 1993). One of Al-Kindī's main contributions to Islāmic philosophy was in the field of the formation of an Arabic philosophical terminology. Al-Kindī was adamant about the nature and value of divine revelation (*al-'Ulum al-Naqliyyah aw al-Shar'iah*) as a source of knowledge, maintaining a balance between revelation, reason (*al-'Ulum al-'Aqliyyah*), and philosophy. He clearly expressed that revelation from God was superior to human knowledge and reason (Ivry, 2012). It has been suggested that

> Al-Kindī is the first of a galaxy of great Muslim thinkers whose humanistic and scientific work helped establish the relations of Arab Muslim philosophy with earlier philosophies and with the following generations of Muslim thinkers who deal with metaphysical and scientific problem. (Atiyeh, 1966, p. viii)

For a more comprehensive account see Fitzmaurice (1971).

## Al-Kindī's books on psychology

- *Risalah Fī al-'Aql*: An analysis of the nature and divisions of the intellect written in the Aristotelian tradition.
- *Māhiyyat al-Nawm wa al-Ru'yah*: The treatise on dreams and vision.

- *Fī al-Qawl fī-al Nafs al-Mukhtasar min Kitab Aristū wa Flatun wa sa'ir al-Falasifah*: Discourse on the soul.
- *Kalām fī al-Nafs Mukhtasar Wajiz*: Discourse on the soul, written in the Neoplatonic tradition.
- *Al-Ḥīlah li Dafʿ al-Aḥzān*: The strategy for repelling sorrow.

## Al-Kindī on psychology

Al-Kindī devoted the study of the nature of the soul in his two works, Incorporeal Substances and Discourse on the Soul. He argues that "Since the soul is the essence of the living being, and the living being is a substance, the soul is also a substance. The soul is the intellectual form of the living thing" (Adamson, 2020). It has been suggested that

> the soul's other faculties work through the body, they are opposed to the soul itself since they are dependent upon the body, and the body is in competition with the soul. A problem then arises as to how it is possible to know things in the world if the senses distract the intellect, rather than inform it. (Davies, 2009)

This is elaborated by Adamson (2020), who explained that knowledge is derived from the intellect rather than the senses. Al-Kindī was the first to use the method of experiment in psychology, which led to his discovery that sensation is proportionate to the stimulus (Iqbāl, 1930). He proposed several theories on perception, sleeping and dreams, and emotional processes (Awaad et al., 2019).

Awaad et al. (2020, p. 66) cited that Al-Kindī stated that "we must, therefore, strive to be happy and refuse to be sad by directing our desires and wants to what is attainable [i.e., by adjusting our goals] and by not grieving over what we missed out on" (Al-Kindī, 'Abd al-Hādī, 1950, p. 8). Awaad et al. (2020) observed that Al-Kindī "borrows the same four-word phrase from the Qur'ān (57:23) used to describe grief over missing out" (p. 67). Allāh says in the Qur'ān:

لِّكَيْلَا تَأْسَوْا۟ عَلَىٰ مَا فَاتَكُمْ وَلَا تَفْرَحُوا۟ بِمَآ آتَاكُمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ (الحديد ٢٣)

- *In order that you not despair over what has eluded you and not exult [in pride] over what He has given you. And Allāh does not like everyone self-deluded and boastful.* (Qur'ān 57:23 – Interpretation of the meaning)

## Al-Kindī on psychopathology

On the psychopathology of epilepsy, Al-Kindī addressed the physiological reasons for the causes of epilepsy. In his *Treatise on Diseases Caused by Phlegm*, he provided the first scientific explanation and treatment for epilepsy (Prioreschi, 2020).

> When the phlegm melts and changes to a bad irritant quality, it goes forth and ascends to the brain from a certain direction, then it sinks down through the principal veins towards the heart, and by its irritant quality it deranges the place of sense, thought and recollection in the brain. It passes through the veins towards

the heart, and if the natural heat whose source is the heart is strong enough to dissolve it, it does so, and what happens as a consequence is epilepsy (*sar*). For the parts of the brain which we have mentioned, becoming injured, are overcome and cease to function. The disturbance which we see in the (patient's) body is owing to the conflict of the natural (heat) with the affection. When it prevails over it, it attacks and dissolves it. This is the meaning of the foam which is seen at the (patient's) mouth. When this occurs, his recovery is near.

Al-Kindī in his book 'Aqrabadhin of al-Kindī' (Levey, 1996) stated in the introduction:

> May God surround you with salvation and establish you in its paths and aid you to attain the truth and enjoy the fruits thereof! You have asked me – may God direct you to all things profitable – that I should outline to you the disease called *Sar*. [the falling-sickness, epilepsy]

### Al-Kindī on therapeutic interventions

Al-Kindī was one of the earliest scholars to realise the therapeutic value of music and also attempted to cure a quadriplegic boy using music therapy (Saoud, 2004). Jamal El-Din El-Qafti revealed how Al-Kindī helped a patient with musical therapy. He narrated that

> A son of Al-Kindī's neighbour became dumb. After consulting with most reputable physicians, this rich neighbour lost hope and decided to try Al-Kindī as a last resort. After consulting the boy, Al-Kindī called his music students and ordered them to play for the boy. The boy gradually became relaxed and managed to sit up and talk while music being played. Seeing this improvement, Al-Kindī asked the boy's father to consult his son regarding his business, which he rapidly did and recorded everything. However, as soon as the musicians stopped playing the boy returned to his former state. When the father requested that they should continue playing, Al-Kindī replied: "No, it was an episode in his life. No one can lengthen another person's life. Your son has fulfilled the divine term." In fact, the man's son suffered mental damage, which became so complicated that it caused his death. (cited in Saoud, 2004)

The religious use of music including chanting among the Sufis is also well established and documented. It is important to note the use of music from an Islāmic perspective. Al-Albani accepts the authenticity of the Hadiths which forbid music. It was narrated from Abu Malik Ash'ari that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said:

> People among my nation will drink wine, calling it by another name, and musical instruments will be played for them and singing girls (will sing for them). Allāh will cause the earth to swallow them up and will turn them into monkeys and pigs. (Ibn Majah)

In another version, it is narrated Abu 'Amir or Abu Malik Al-Ash'ari: that he heard the Prophet (ﷺ) saying,

> From among my followers there will be some people who will consider illegal sexual intercourse, the wearing of silk, the drinking of alcoholic drinks and the use of musical instruments, as lawful. And there will be some people who will stay near the side of a mountain and in the evening their shepherd will come to them with their sheep and ask them for something, but they will say to him, 'Return to us tomorrow.' Allāh will destroy them during the night and Strategy to Repelling Sorrows), Al-Kindī described sorrow as 'a spiritual (*Nafsani*) grief caused by loss of loved ones or personal belongings, or by failure in obtaining what one lusts after' and then added: 'If causes of pain are discernible, the cures can be found' (Tahir, 2009). He also suggested that the feeling of sorrow manifests itself when an individual fails to achieve a goal of some kind, especially goals pertaining to material gain. (Haque, 2004).

He recommended that

> if we do not tolerate losing or dislike being deprived of what is dear to us, then we should seek after riches in the world of the intellect. In it we should treasure our precious and cherished gains where they can never be dispossessed … for that which is owned by our senses could easily be taken away from us.

He also stated that "sorrow is not within us we bring it upon ourselves" (Haque, 2004, p. 361). Al-Kindī suggested the use of cognitive strategies in the treatment of depression (Awaad et al., 2020).

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# 5    Ibn Miskawayh, Ibn Rushd, and Al-Fārābī

## Introduction

This chapter focuses on three physicians, Ibn Miskawayh, Ibn Rushd, and Al-Fārābī, who made some contributions, directly and indirectly, to the development of psychology.

## Abu Ali Ahmad b. Muhammad b. Ya'kub Ibn Miskawayh

Abu Ali Ahmad b. Muhammad bin Ya'kub Ibn Miskawayh is also known as Ibn Miskawayh. Ibn Miskawayh was born in Rey, Persia (now Iran). He was a philosopher, theologian, physician, and historian and his influence on Islāmic philosophy is primarily in the area of ethics. He was very much attracted to Aristotle and Plato for philosophical ideologies. He did not aim for a reconciliation between religion and philosophy or attempt to combine them (Abd al-'Aziz Izzat, 1946, p. 349). Ibn Miskawayh worked as a librarian for a number of the ministers (viziers) of the Buwayhids during the Abbasid rule. He was the author of the first major Islāmic work on philosophical ethics entitled the Refinement of Character (*Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq*), focusing on practical ethics, conduct, and refinement of character. Miskawayh's development of ethics and moral values is directly related to the education (*ta'lim*) of the individual.

### Ibn Miskawayh's books on psychology

- *al-Saʿādah fī Falsafit al-Akhlāq* (Happiness from the Perspective of Ethical Philosophy).
- *Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq* (Refinement of Ethics).
- *al-Fawz al-Aṣghar* (The Minor Victory).
- *al-Saʿādah* (Happiness).
- *Risālah fī al-Lazzāt wa al-Ālām* (ATreatise on Pleasures and Pains).
- *Risālah fī Jawhar al-Nafs* (On the Essence of the Soul).
- *Ajwibah wa Asʾilah fī al-Nafs wa al-ʿAql* (Questions and Answers on the Soul and Reason).
- *Ṭahārat al-N*afs (Purity of the Soul).

### Ibn Miskawayh's psychology

Ibn Miskawayh can be regarded as one of the earliest educational, cognitive psychologists for his treatise on *Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq* (Refinement of Ethics or Characters).

He was interested in the education of young boys. His work on moral and positive psychology laid the foundation for many following theories surrounding altering behaviours, attitudes, and manners in gradual, concrete steps (Awaad et al., 2018; Leaman, 2001). Ibn Miskawayh was also interested in positive psychology, and how to reach supreme happiness. He stated that "The knowledgeable one who reaches this degree of supreme happiness is called 'the one completely happy', and the pleasure he attains, in this case, is an intellectual pleasure" (Ibn Miskawayh, 1959, p. 7). Ibn Miskawayh distinguished three kinds of happiness: "happiness of the soul, which is true knowledge and acting; accordingly, happiness of the body, which is health, proportionality, and beauty of the body's limbs; and happiness resulting from things outside the body, e.g., wealth, honour, family, and friends" (Wakelnig, 2020).

In the second section of *Tahdhib al-akhlaq,* he discussed the character, humanity, and the method of training young men and boys. To realise happiness and its virtues some internal and some external conditions have to be met. According to Ibn Miskawayh, the internal conditions include health, temperament, and the external conditions are to overcome his weaknesses, having the psychological conditions to achieve happiness is centred on the human's will and his ability to raise his inclinations (Jamal al-Din, 2001). Other conditions are external to the human body, to show goodness to others, including friends, children, and wealth. In addition, there are environmental factors that can shape the supreme happiness of human being. Human being is a social being, as well as being rational results in their enrichment of virtues which are rooted in their soul by way of putting these virtues into practice (Jamal al-Din, 2001). Miskawayh stated that "it is for this reason the wise men said that man is civil by nature, meaning that he needs a city, containing many people, for his human happiness to be complete" (Jamal al-Din, 2001, p.4). This is classical social psychology!

Another proposition of Ibn Miskawayh is that psychological conditions must be present in order for man to achieve happiness. He maintained that it is by training the soul, cleansing it, teaching it, making it gain from experiences and his behavioural inclinations that enable human to attain the degree of happiness. In a section of his book entitled "Restoring health to the soul," he clarified the method of treating the illnesses of souls. However, he does not distinguish between evil and illness, and the psychological evils or illnesses. His lists include rashness, cowardice, pride, boasting, frivolity, haughtiness, scorn, treachery, accepting injustice, and fear. Miskawayh suggested that

> it is not difficult for the rational man who desires to free his soul from its pains and save it from its dangers to examine the illnesses and treat them so as to be set free from them. This must be by success from God and by the man's own personal striving; both are required, one completing the other. (Ibn Miskawayh, 1959, Jamal al-Din, 2001)

Ibn Miskawayh presents the methods in the refinement of boys' souls. For Ibn Miskawayh, the psychological aspect is the most important one. These include

- Praise (reward or reinforcement) good behaviours. Ibn Miskawayh introduced what is now known as "self-reinforcement" and response cost (Haque, 2004).
- Self-control in relation to food and drink and fine clothing by adopting moderation.

- Promote abstinence from food, drink, and fine clothing, and be content with only the small amount.
- Develop generous characteristics.
- Provision of warning for punishment and made to fear blame for any evil deed he may demonstrate.
- The basic aim of training and exercise and the acquisition of knowledge is ethical in approach in the refinement and purification of the soul.

### Ibn Miskawayh's therapeutic interventions

Ibn Miskawayh also discusses the need for self-awareness and method of treating the illnesses of the souls. According to him, the development of our ethical intelligence is influenced by self and emotional control. Ibn Miskawayh narrated that "a Muslim, who feels guilty about doing something pleasurable to his *al-nafs al-ammarah*, should learn to punish himself by psychological, physical or spiritual ways such as paying money to the poor, fasting, etc." (Haque, 2004, p. 365). One of the psychological methods used is self-regulation strategy. This approach is similar to modern response cost models, where an individual punishes himself if his self-control lapses in order to eliminate undesired behaviours (Awaad et al., 2018, 2020, p. 68). It has been suggested that "this practice is encouraged in Islām, with the Qur'ān commanding Muslims to free a slave if they break an oath" (for example Qur'ān 5:89) (Awaad et al., 2020, p. 68). This is illustrated in the Qur'ān

لَا يُؤَاخِذُكُمُ ٱللَّهُ بِٱللَّغْوِ فِىٓ أَيْمَٰنِكُمْ وَلَٰكِن يُؤَاخِذُكُم بِمَا عَقَّدتُّمُ ٱلْأَيْمَٰنَ ۖ فَكَفَّٰرَتُهُۥٓ إِطْعَامُ عَشَرَةِ مَسَٰكِينَ مِنْ أَوْسَطِ مَا تُطْعِمُونَ أَهْلِيكُمْ أَوْ كِسْوَتُهُمْ أَوْ تَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ ۖ فَمَن لَّمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ ثَلَٰثَةِ أَيَّامٍ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ كَفَّٰرَةُ أَيْمَٰنِكُمْ إِذَا حَلَفْتُمْ ۚ وَٱحْفَظُوٓا۟ أَيْمَٰنَكُمْ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ (المائدة 89)

- *Allāh will not impose blame upon you for what is meaningless in your oaths, but He will impose blame upon you for [breaking] what you intended of oaths. So, its expiation is the feeding of ten needy people from the average of that which you feed your [own] families or clothing them or the freeing of a slave. But whoever cannot find [or afford it] - then a fast of three days [is required]. That is the expiation for oaths when you have sworn. But guard your oaths. Thus does Allāh make clear to you His verses [i.e., revealed law] that you may be grateful.* (Al-Ma'idah 5:89 – Interpretation of the meaning)

The development of a theory of psychotherapy has also been attributed to Ibn Miskawayh. According to Omar (2017), Ibn Miskawayh based his theory of psychotherapy on the Qur'ānic verses (91: 7–10):

نَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّىٰهَا
فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَىٰهَا
قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَن زَكَّىٰهَا (الشمس 7-10)

- *And [by] the soul and He who proportioned it*
- *And inspired it [with discernment of] its wickedness and its righteousness,*
- *He has succeeded who purifies it,*

- *And he has failed who instils it [with corruption].* (Ash-Shams 91: 7–10 – Interpretation of the meaning).

Omar (2017) suggested that the above verses of the Qur'ān are the main objective of the *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq*. However, Omar (2017) failed to substantiate with evidence the relationship between the Qur'ānic verses, the objective of *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq* and psychotherapy. In his exegesis, Ibn Kathir commented on the verses:

'*And [by] the soul [Nafs] and He who proportioned it*' meaning, He created it sound and well-proportioned upon the correct nature (*Al-ṭitrah*). '*And inspired it [with discernment of] its wickedness and its righteousness,*' meaning: He explained the good and the evil to it (the soul). '*He has succeeded who purifies it,*' meaning: Whoever purifies himself by obedience to Allāh, and then he will be successful. This is what Qatadah said, 'He cleanses it from the lowly and despicable characteristics.' '*And he has failed who instils it,*' meaning, to conceal it. This means that he makes it dull, and he disregards it by neglecting to allow it to receive guidance. He treats it in this manner until he performs acts of disobedience, and he abandons obedience of Allāh. It also could mean that he is indeed successful whose soul Allāh purifies, and he has failed whose soul Allāh corrupts.

Perhaps what Omar meant that this has more to do with the purification of the soul (*Tazkiyah an Nafs*) through the process of Islāmic psychotherapy.

## Abu'al Walid Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Muhammad Ibn Rushd

Abu'al Walid Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Muhammad Ibn Rushd, known as Ibn Rushd (Averroes), was born in Cordova, Spain. He has been acknowledged as one of the greatest thinkers and scientists in history. In contrast to Ibn Miskawayh, he integrated Aristotelian philosophy with Islāmic discourse, but he followed the Aristotelian tradition of observation and empiricism and based his ideas upon logic. The 13th-century philosophical movement in Latin Christian and Jewish tradition based on Ibn Rushd's work is called Averroism. For Ibn Rushd, there is no incongruity between religion and philosophy when both are properly grasped. He excelled in philosophy and jurisprudence and was nicknamed "the jurisprudent philosopher" (Famous Scientist, 2020). Ibn Rushd's education comprises studies in Hadith, linguistics, jurisprudence, and scholastic theology. He was the chief Islāmic Jurist (*Qadi*) of Cordoba, Caliph Abu Yaqub Yusuf's personal doctor, a philosopher, and a scientist (Hillier, n.d., Urvoy, 2015).

Ibn Rushd wrote on logic, Aristotelian and Islāmic philosophy, Islāmic theology, the Maliki school of Islāmic jurisprudence, psychology, political theory, the theory of Andalusian classical music, geography, mathematics, as well as the medieval sciences of medicine, astronomy, physics, and celestial mechanics. He was an astute defender of Aristotelian philosophy against *Ash'ari* theologians led by Al-Ghazâlî. Ibn Rushd's philosophical ideas were considered controversial in *Ash'arite* Muslim circles, despite being highly regarded as a legal scholar of the Maliki School of Islāmic law. In philosophy, his most important work *Tuhafut al-Tuhafut* was written in response to

Al-Ghazâlî's work. Ibn Rushd was criticised by many Muslim scholars for this book "*Tuhafut al-Tuhafut*" but had a significant influence on European thought in modern philosophy and experimental science. However, in his late years, Ibn Rushd was accused of heresy and his trial ended in his exile and the burning of his books.

## Ibn Rushd's books on psychology/philosophy

- *Al-Nafs* (The Soul).
- *Al ʿAql wa al-Maʿqūl* (The Mind and the Rational).
- *Talkhis Kitab al-Nafs* (Abridged Version of Book on Soul).
- *Tahāfut at-Tahāfut* (Incoherence of the Incoherence) – A polemical response to Al-Ghazâlî's *Tahāfut al-Falāsifah* (Incoherence of the Philosophers).

## Ibn Rushd on psychology

Ibn Rushd divided the soul into five faculties: the nutritive (growth and development), the sensitive (emotions and feelings), the imaginative (thinking process) or cognitive (problem-solving), the appetitive (bodily needs), and the rational. He maintained that, in contrast to Al-Ghazâlî, that soul is not spiritual but material and mortal. He further stated that soul does not survive at death. Ibn Rushd's views on psychology are most fully discussed in his *Talkhis Kitab al-Nafs* (Abridged Version of Book on Soul). As a discipline, psychology was perceived by Ibn Rushd as a noble and its rational discourse made it "surpass other sciences, except for divine science" (cited in Taylor, 1998, p. 513). He believed in existence of faculty of the mind, which is intended to accept intelligible forms from the active intellect and in his discussions of cognition, he argued that both sensation (perception) and imagination must be used to perceive it objectively (Haque, 1998, 2004).

Ibn Rushd argued there are three different types of intellect: receiving intellect, producing intellect, and the produced intellect (Norager, 1998). On the different types of intellectual discourse, he argued for an understanding each of these forms of arguments to enable individuals to interact with revealed Islāmic scripture on two levels: the scripture's apparent (*ẓāhir*) and hidden (*bāṭin*) levels of meaning (Haque, 2004). Ibn Rushd described a three-fold hierarchy of learning. One of them comes to assent through dialectical argument (*Jadali*). Another comes to assent through demonstration (*Burhan*). The third comes to assent through rhetorical argument (*Khitabi*). In his educational philosophy, the learning and knowledge acquisition strategies suggested by Ibn Rushd include reflection (*iʿtibār*), (examination (*faḥṣ*), deduction and discovery (*istinbāṭ*), demonstrative study (*naẓarburhānī*), naẓar-burhānī (*qiyās ʿaqlī*), comparison and analogy (*tamthīl*), allegorical Interpretation (*ta'wīl*), dialectical reasoning (*aqāwīl-jadalīya*), demonstrative reasoning (*aqāwīl-burhānīya*), and rhetorical reasoning (*aqāwīl-khiṭābīya*) (Günther, 2012). Ibn Rushd argued that we experience health and illness, and that religious texts contain important information as to how we should behave (Leaman, 1998). What is remarkable with Ibn Rushd is that he examined critically diverse views and argued that all these views are acceptable from different perspectives. Throughout his philosophy, he made an attempt to show how it is possible for one thing to be described in a diversity of ways.

**Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad Al-Fārābī**

Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad Al-Fārābī is known as Al-Fārābī, and in the West as Alpharabius. He was a philosopher, jurist, scientist, cosmologist, mathematician, and music scholar. In Arabic philosophical tradition, he is known with the honorific "the Second Master" (*al-Mou'allim al-Thani*), after Aristotle. He made contributions to physics, logic, philosophy, music, political philosophy, and social and educational psychology. Al-Fārābī produced more than one hundred works in his lifetime and is recognised as peripatetic or rationalist. He wrote on political philosophy and made commentaries on ideal state of Plato.

**Al-Fārābī's psychological treatise**

- *Ārāʾ Ahl al-*Madīnah al-Fāḍilah (Opinions of the People of the Righteous City)
- *Taḥṣīl al-Saʿādah* (Attaining Happiness)
- *Kitāb al-Tanbīh ʿalā Sabīl al-Saʿādah* (A Guide to the Path of Happiness)
- *Risālah fī al-ʿAql* (Epistle on the Intellect)
- *ʿUyūn al-Masāʾil* (The Depth of Matters)
- *al-Siyāsāh al-Madaniyyah* (Civil Policies)
- *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikmah* (The Cloves of Wisdom)
- *al-Daʿāwī al-Qalbiyyah* (Internal Claims)
- *Kitāb iḥṣāʾ al-ʿulūm* (On the Introduction of Knowledge)

His most influential work shaped Social Psychology, especially by his well-known treatise. In his *Ārāʾ Ahl al-Madīnah al-Fāḍilah* (Opinions of the People of the Righteous City), he describes several principles of social psychology using invented exemplars (Achoui, 1998, Soueif & Ahmed, 2001).

**Al-Fārābī on psychology**

The influence of Aristotelian philosophy is seen in his treatment of the human soul. He categorised the soul of being Appetitive (the desire for, or aversion to an object of sense); Sensitive (the perception by the senses); Imaginative (the faculty which retains images of sensible objects); and Rational (the faculty of intellect). Al-Fārābī held the view that the ruling organ in the human body is the heart, and the brain is a secondary organ that controls other organs and limbs. The heart is the faculty that managed nutrition (subordinates' organs, the stomach, the liver, the spleen, etc.), sensation (subordinates the five senses), and the imaginative faculty (controls by the five senses) (Al-Fārābī, 1985). According to al-Fārābī (1985), the rational faculty, also located in the heart, has neither auxiliaries nor subordinates, but rules the other faculties, namely, the imaginative, the sensitive, and the nutritive (pp. 169–171). The appetitive faculty makes the will (*irāda*) arise once the sensitive, the imaginative, or the rational faculties have apprehended something (pp. 170–171). Al-Fārābī suggested that the perfect human being (*al insan al-kamil*) has both theoretical virtue (intellectual knowledge) and practical moral virtues (moral behaviour). At the heart of Al-Fārābī's political philosophy is the concept of happiness in which people cooperate to gain contentment (Tiliouine, 2014). Al-Fārābī used observable realities and experimentation based on clear evidence even though relied on scriptural sources for his

intellectual discourse (Black, 2015). This is reinforced by the comment of Al-Fārābī (1985): "It is apparent that we need to return to the observable and rational realities that we have come to know through clear evidence" (p. 18). This is evidenced-based practice in contemporary terminology.

Al-Fārābī wrote Social Psychology and Principles of the Opinions of the Citizens of the Virtuous City, which were the first treatises to deal with social psychology. His psychosocial view of humankind was that an isolated individual cannot achieve perfection by himself but requires the aid of many other individuals (social relationship and network). It is the "innate disposition of every man to join another human being or other men in the labour he ought to perform." He concluded that to "achieve what he can of that perfection, every man needs to stay in the neighbourhood of others and associate with them" (Haque, 2004, p. 363). Al-Fārābī specifies that a person's innate psychological dispositions drive him to maintain social cohesion (Haque, 2004). Cohesion, according to Al-Fārābī's, is achieved by small group through sharing interpersonal contact, experiences of conflict, sharing food and drink, confronting threats together, and the distribution of pleasure. In contrast, large group cohesion is achieved through sharing personality characteristics, language, speech, and living in close proximity to one another (Soueif & Ahmed, 2001). Al-Fārābī wrote on dreams and explained the distinction between dream Interpretation and the nature and trigger of dreams. His writings on the therapeutic effect of music on the soul later influenced modern mental health and treatment (Haque, 1998).

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# 6 Abū Bakr Mohamed Ibn Zakariya Al-Rāzī

## Introduction and context

Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn Zakariya Al-Rāzī, known as Rhazes in the West, was one of the greatest Islāmic physicians, and perhaps second only to Ibn Sīnā in his accomplishments. He was a physician, physicist, chemist, mathematician, philosopher, astronomer, and a logician. Al-Rāzī was one of the world's first great medical experts and a *Hakim* (medic) in the Islāmic tradition because of his groundbreaking contributions to medicine, psychiatry, pharmacology, paediatrics, neurology, psychosomatic medicine, and medical ethics. He is considered the father of psychology and psychotherapy (Phipps, 2016). The Bulletin of the World Health Organization of May 1970 pays tribute to Al-Rāzī by stating "His writings on smallpox and measles show originality and accuracy, and his essay on infectious diseases was the first scientific treatise on the subject" (cited in Modanlou, 2008).

Al-Rāzī was born in Rey, Iran and became a student of Hunayn ibn Ishaq and later a student of Ali ibn Rabban. His early interests were in music and then started studying alchemy and philosophy. At the age of 30, he stopped his work and experiments in alchemy due to eye irritation by chemical compounds he was exposed to. Among his discoveries in alchemy, he is credited with the discovery of sulfuric acid and ethanol. He studied medicine under the celebrated polymath Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī (Amr & Tbakhi, 2007). Al-Rāzī was appointed Director of the first Royal Hospital at Ray and had a similar position in Baghdad. He originated a treatment for kidney and bladder stones and clarified the nature of various infectious diseases. He was the first to announce the usage of alcohol for medical purposes, and the use of mercurial ointments, and he was also an expert surgeon and the first to use opium for anaesthesia (Afridi, 2013). He developed instruments used in apothecaries (pharmacies) such as mortars and pestles, flasks, spatulas, beakers, and glass vessels (Amr & Tbakhi, 2007). Al-Rāzī established qualifications and ethical standards for the practice of medicine (Modanlou, 2008).

## Al-Rāzī's selected books

- *Kitāb al-Ḥāwī fī al-Ṭibb* (The Comprehensive Book of Medicine) is a 23-volume tome in which he described many mental illnesses, their symptoms, and their cures (Husayn & al-'Uqbi, 1977, Tibi, 2006).
- *Kitab Al-Hawi* (Liber Continens) comprises 10-volume and is a treatise on Greek and Roman medicine.

- *Kitab Al-Mansuri Fi al-Tibb* (Liber Medicinalis ad Almansorem) is a concise handbook of medical science.
- *Kitab Man la Yahduruhu Al-Tabib* (Book of Who Is Not Attended by a Physician or a medical Advisor for the General Public). This is equivalent to a modern health education booklet on services and treatment interventions. This book is dedicated to the poor, the traveller, and the ordinary citizen who could consult or refer to it for treatment of common ailments when a doctor was not available (Amr & Tbakhi, 2007).
- *Kitab Būr' al-Sā'ah (Cure in an Hour)* comprises short essay on treatment of the ailments including headache, toothache, earache, colic, itching, loss of feeling in numb extremities, and aching muscles to be cured within an hour's time (Amr & Tbakhi, 2007).
- *Kitab al-Ṭibb al-Rūhānī* (Book of Spiritual Medicine) in which Al-Rāzī focuses on soul (or psyche, mind) and its remedy spiritually, morally, and psychologically (Najātī, 1993).
- *Kitab al-Judari wa al-Hasbah* (The Book of Smallpox and Measles).
- *Kitab al-Murshid* (The Guide) is a short introduction to basic medical principles that were intended as a lecture to students (Amr & Tbakhi, 2007).

## Al-Rāzī's psychopathology

Al-Rāzī rejected the notion of the mind-body dichotomy and "considered mental health and self-esteem as significant factors that affect a person's health and well-being" (Yilanli, 2018). With the idea of a "sound mind in a healthy body," he was able to help many of his patients to attain optimum health. In his book *Kitāb al-Ḥāwī fī al-Ṭibb* (The Comprehensive Book of Medicine), Al-Rāzī defined and described many mental illnesses, their symptoms, and their cures (Husayn & al-'Uqbi, 1977; Tibi, 2006). His psychological conditions included memory problems, disturbed thinking, mood disorders (including both melancholic and manic symptoms), and anxiety (Mohamed, 2012). His treatise "On Spiritual Medicine" (*Kitab al-Tibb al-Ruhani*) discussed the importance of pure knowledge and the avoidance of "afflictions of the soul" ('*awarid al-nafs*), which lead to impaired mental states (Pormann & Savage-Smith, 2007). Abbasi and Omrani (2013) reported that "Al-Rāzī was the first ever to postulate the existence of a form of melancholy that does not involve any humoral alteration. Such sine materia psychogenic melancholy should not be treated medically but rather receive psychological treatment" (p. 101).

Al-Rāzī is known for his many works on melancholia and madness as he believed that sadness emerged due to an attachment to perishable things, or having lost something that one had possessed, which affected the balance between body and soul (Ammar, 1984). Al-Rāzī described depression as a "melancholic obsessive-compulsive disorder," which is triggered as a result of changes of blood flow in the brain, memory problems, disturbed thinking, mood disorders (including both melancholic and manic symptoms), and anxiety (Mohamed, 2012).

"He also differentiated between melancholia and madness (*junun*, possibly psychosis), where the sufferer of the latter experienced loss of reason and the former did not" (Abbasi & Omrani, 2013, p. 101). Al-Rāzī believed that the symptoms of melancholia varied depending on where the excess black bile arose in the body: that is, if it was in the brain, there would be mental confusion and delirium; if it arose from the

whole body, there would be leanness and a flushed complexion (Dols, 1992). Al-Rāzī in his Book of Experiences (*Kitab al Tajarib*) describes two interesting case studies (Pormann, 2008), "One of a young man who plucked his beard and showed his anger by tearing out clay from the wall, and another of a woman who spoke in a confused way, laughed excessively and had a red face" (Abbasi & Omrani, 2013, p. 101). It is reported that Al-Rāzī used a psychological technique (perhaps it is emotional blasting) to treat Amír Mansúr of Bukhara, who was afflicted with rheumatism. "After unsuccessful cures by the court physicians, Al-Rāzī entered the Amír's room and threatened him with a knife, at which insult the Amír sprang out of bed. Although Al-Rāzī fled the court, the Amír was delighted at the cure" (Browne, 1921, pp. 82–83).

## Al-Rāzī's public health and clinical practice

Al-Rāzī is attributed with a remarkable method for selecting the site of a new hospital in Baghdad. When the Chief Minister of al-Muktafi, named Adhud al-Daullah, requested him to build a new hospital, he had pieces of fresh meat placed in various areas of the city. A few days later, he checked the pieces, and he selected the area where the least rotten piece was found, stating that the "air" was cleaner and healthier there. Al-Rāzī was very interested in medical ethics. It is reported that

> In his History of Physicians, Ibn Abī Usaybiʿa attributes to him the saying that 'the physician, even though he has his doubts, must always make the patient believe that he will recover, for the state of the body is linked to the state of the mind'. (Koetschet, 2018)

Al-Rāzī utilised case histories extensively in his writing as an educational tool and as documentation of the various illnesses he diagnosed and treated. It is noted that he showed his commitment to many patients from different social backgrounds. In *al-Tibb al-Ruhani*, where he discussed the approaches to treat the moral and psychological ills of the human spirit, he emphasised the importance of the client–practitioner relationship (Farooqi, 2006). He treated his patients with respect, care, and empathy. He was very positive in his approach and gave hope to patients in their healing process. Al-Rāzī believed that an unexpected high emotional outburst (emotional blasting) has a quick curative effect on psychological, psychosomatic, and organic disorders (Haque, 2004). As part of discharge planning, each patient was given a sum of money to help with immediate needs. This was the first recorded reference to psychiatric aftercare. In the

> Epistle to One of his Pupils, he suggested that a noble physician is a man who lives in self-restraint, especially when he treats women, and who keeps the secrets of his patients. He insists that the art of the physician extends to the rich and to the poor. (Koetschet, 2018)

## Al-Rāzī's therapeutic interventions

Al-Rāzī was of a firm belief that mental illness should be considered and treated as medical conditions. As the director of the hospital in Baghdad, he established special wards for the treatment of the mentally ill and treated his patients with respect, care,

*Table 6.1* Al-Rāzī's therapeutic interventions

| Conditions | Therapeutic Interventions |
|---|---|
| Mental Illness | Use self-analysis and awareness, feedback exchange, and reasoning. |
| | Client–practitioner relationship. |
| | Medication. |
| | Nutritional therapy. |
| | Herbal therapy. |
| | Occupational therapy. |
| | Aromatherapy and baths. |
| | Music therapy. |
| | Early form of cognitive therapy for obsessive behaviour. |
| | Psychiatric aftercare after discharge. |

and empathy (Daghestani, 1997, p. 1602). His treatment interventions included talking therapies (psychotherapy- *ilaj-al-nafsani*), diet, occupational therapy, aromatherapy, baths, music therapy, and pharmacological agents such as sedating, and healing drugs and herbs. The foundation of Al-Rāzī's healing system was dietary therapy, and the careful regulation of the patient's nutrition. He rejected the use of multiple medications in his practice. In fact, nutritional therapy (Afridi, 2013) was the first line of treatment, followed by pharmacological treatment.

Al-Rāzī was also a firm believer in the power of the mind, and a positive mental attitude, as a valuable ally in the healing process, and even wrote a whole treatise on the spiritual dimension of healing. He is reported to practice an early form of cognitive therapy for obsessive-compulsive behaviour (Haque, 2004). Al-Rāzī advocated the use of honey as a simple drug and as one of the essential substances included in composed medicines (Katouzian-Safadi & Bonmatin, 2003). There is a claim that he was the first to describe classical conditioned responses, approximately one thousand years before Ivan Pavlov (Muazzam & Muazzam, 1989), but there is limited evidence to support this finding. Perhaps, Al-Rāzī's approach in dealing with patients in the use of empathy, rapport, compassion, and positive psychology may be the origin of the humanistic approach and client-centred therapy. Table 6.1 presents Al-Rāzī's therapeutic interventions.

## Evidence-based practice

Al-Rāzī was an early pioneer in the application of evidence-based practice in clinical medicine in 10th-century Bagdad. Al-Rāzī rejected the use of pharmacological remedies on the word alone, as was a common practice at the time, and would require seeing the evidence of effectiveness before using them on his own patients (Tibi, 2006). Al-Rāzī stated:

> Leave aside what confuses common idiots, namely [the idea] that one can hit on [the right treatment] by experience [tajriba] without any reference to [scientific] knowledge [ilm]. For such a thing does not exist, even if one were the oldest person, because the benefit which one derives from an appropriate treatment [in such a case] is merely the result of good luck.
> (Akhlaq al-Tabib, 1977, pp. 77–78)

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# 7  Abu Zayd Ahmed Ibn Sahl Al-Balkhī

## Introduction and context

Abu Zayd Ahmed ibn Sahl Al-Balkhī was born in Shamistiyan in Balkh, Khorasan (present-day Afghanistan). He studies under Abu Yūsuf Ya'qūb ibn 'Isḥāq aṣ-Ṣabbāḥ Al-Kindī who was hailed as "father of Arab philosophy" or the "Philosopher of the Arabs." Like most of the classical Islāmic scholars, he was a polymath: a geographer, mathematician, physician, psychologist, and scientist. He was also the founder of the "Balkhī school" of terrestrial mapping in Baghdad. Awaad and Ali (2015) suggested that he used both rational and divine revelations arguments "to dismantle social barriers to mental health services and deliberately communicated much of his knowledge in a way that was accessible to the general public" (p. 71). It is reported that Al-Balkhī prized revelation more than any other system of knowledge (Awaad et al., 2020). Badri (2013) suggested that Al-Balkhī wrote "more than sixty books and manuscripts, meticulously researching disciplines as varied in scope as geography, medicine, theology, politics, philosophy, poetry, literature, Arabic grammar, astrology, astronomy, mathematics, biography, ethics, sociology as well as others" (Badri, 2013, p. 1). He is noted in Ibn al-Nadim's Kitāb al-Fihrist (Fück, 2012) for his brilliance in mathematics, astrology, and geography. His Figures of the Climates (*Suwar al-aqalim*) consisted chiefly of geographical maps. He also wrote the medical and psychological work, *Masalih al-Abdan wa al-Anfus* (Sustenance for Body and Soul).

Throughout his life, Al-Balkhī contributed to the fields of psychology, geography, philosophy, science, literature, Islāmic theology, and theoretical medicine (Badri, 2013, Nasr, 1968). Al-Balkhī is hailed as a pioneer in psychosomatic medicine, counselling psychology, pioneer of cognitive therapy and the first to discover the difference between endogenous and reactive depression. Al-Balkhī also saw the importance of social and environmental factors in the maintenance of health. He noted the importance of having a suitable house and of taking active care of the body and the soul. His recommendations included the following:

> To enjoy beauty; to monitor nutrition with a healthy diet, drinking plenty of water, sleeping well, breathing fresh air and going to walks into nature; to groom the body with relaxing massages, perfumes and oils and with physical activity, protecting it from extreme temperatures, having an active sex life and listening to music; to avoid the inner monologue of catastrophic thoughts and obsessive thoughts, focusing on creating a repository of healthy thoughts to counteract the unhealthy ones; to accept that problems are part of life, using emotions to

neutralize them, interacting with other human beings, staying active avoiding laziness, boredom and being unemployed, contributing to the well-being of others, talking about problems with friends, family and the doctor, listening and accepting their help. (cited in Alí-de-Unzaga, 2020)

What is of great interest Al-Balkhī traced back his ideas on psychology and mental health to verses of the Qur'ān and Hadiths. In one of his poems, he stated that "Religion is the greatest of philosophies; therefore, man cannot be a philosopher until he becomes a worshipper" (cited in Badri, 2013).

## Al-Balkhī's book on psychology

The manuscript on the treatise of *Masalih al-Abdan wa al-Anfus* (Sustenance for Body and Soul) was preserved in Ayasofya Library Istanbul, Turkey, and was reproduced for the first time in 1985 by Fuat Sezgin and Suleymaniye Umumıˆ Kut (1998). In 2012, its second part: Sustenance of Soul was translated by Malik Badri. Badri (2013) wrote the *Sustenance of the Soul: The Cognitive Behaviour Therapy of a Ninth Century Physician.* In this book, Al-Balkhī argues that "since man's construction is from both his soul and his body, therefore, human existence cannot be healthy without the *ishtibak* (interweaving or entangling) of soul and body" (Al-Balkhī, cited in Deuraseh & Abu Talib, 2005, p. 76). Al-Balkhī's *Masalih al-Abdan wa al-Anfus* is composed of two sections. The first section "*Masalih al-Abdan*" is focused on medical and psychosomatic issues, and physical health maintenance (nutrition, good sleep, and cleanliness of body) in contrast the second treatise "*Masalih al-Anfus*" is dedicated to mental health.

The second treatise "*Masalih al-Anfus*" is subdivided into eight chapters, focusing on different mental health topics including the definition of mental health, the importance of mental health science, and the prevention of mental health disorders. In the last five chapters, Al-Balkhī discusses classification of mental disorders and provides suggested treatment intervention strategies. Throughout his book, Al-Balkhī offers a "Do it yourself" cognitive and spiritual therapies (Awaad & Ali, 2015).

## Al-Balkhī's mind-body connection

Al-Balkhī clarified how connected the mind and body are. Both the mind and the body have often been referred to as one entity. He made connection between the mind and the body, with the health of each having significant consequences on the other. Al-Balkhī asserted that the mind and body are interconnected (*ishtibak*) and that an imbalance of body and soul can affect the person in different ways (Mobayad, 2020). He was the first to successfully discuss diseases related to both the body and the soul. Al-Balkhī stated that "if the body gets sick, the *Nafs* [psyche] loses much of its cognitive and comprehensive ability and fails to enjoy the desirous aspects of life" and that "if the *Nafs* gets sick, the body may also find no joy in life and may eventually develop a physical illness" (cited in Deuraseh & Abu Talib, 2005, p. 76). Al-Balkhī identified that emotional reactions such as anxiety and depression can lead to physical illness (Badri, 1998, p. 36).

Al-Balkhī also recognises the reality of psychosomatic illness, "psychological pain may lead to bodily illness." It is reported that "This recognition, which is also later discussed in the works of Persian physician Haly Abbas, did not enter the

consciousness of Western psychologists until Freud began exploring the idea nearly a millennium later" (islammessage.org, 2021; Mobayad, 2020). Al-Balkhī believed in the interaction of body and mind and the interaction between physical and psychological disorders which resulted in psychosomatic disorders (Mohamed, 2012).

## Al-Balkhī's psychology and psychopathology

Al-Balkhī introduced concepts of mental health and "mental hygiene" related to spiritual health. He used the term *al-Tibb al-Ruhani* to describe spiritual and psychological health, and the term *Tibb al-Qalb* to describe mental medicine. Al-Balkhī criticised many doctors for placing too much emphasis on physical illnesses and neglecting the psychological or mental illnesses of patients (Awaad et al., 2019). He was the first to differentiate between neurosis and psychosis, and the first to classify neurotic disorders. He categorised neuroses into four emotional disorders: anxiety, fear, aggression and anger, depression and sadness, and obsessions (Haque, 1998).

- Anger (*Al-ghadab*)
- Sadness and depression (*Al-jaza'*)
- Fears and phobias (*Al-fazaá*)
- Obsessional disorders (*Wasawas al-sadr*)

He classified three types of depression: normal depression or sadness (*huzn*), endogenous depression originating from within the body, and reactive clinical depression originating from outside the body. Al-Balkhī suggested that psychological symptoms of anxiety, anger, and sadness are common among "normal people," most of which are learned behaviour and is a reaction to emotional stress (Awaad et al., 2019). In addition, he is likely to have been the earliest in history to describe, classify, and distinguish the illnesses now known as obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) and phobias from other mental illnesses (Awaad & Ali 2015). Awaad and Ali (2015) suggested that

> The description of obsessional disorders found in Al-Balkhī's manuscript [*Masalih al-Abdan wa al-Anfus*] echoes the description of Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD) found in modern diagnostic manuals of psychiatry such as the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM-V), the bible of psychiatric and psychological illness (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). (p. 187)

Al-Balkhī was one of the earliest to conceptualise phobias as separate diagnostic entity and to cluster psychological and physical symptoms of phobias under one category, "al-*Fazaá*" On obsessive compulsiveness, Al-Balkhī's descriptive criteria are in harmony with the DSM-V.

## Depressive disorders

Al-Balkhī categorised depression into normal depression or sadness (*huzn*), reactive depression, and endogenous depression. Al-Balkhī differentiated between depression and sadness by using "a simile comparing the intensity of blazing coal fire signifying the acute state of depression and glowing coal after subsidence of fire as the chronic

sadness" (cited in Zafar et al., 2020). In relation to depression, the first type is the everyday depression which is common in most individuals as a result of a normal reaction to grief and sadness. This concept is comparable to a mild depression as per DSM-V (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Reactive depression is viewed as a type of depression that is caused "in reaction to" an external event or situation. This depression generates pain and anguish and prevents physical activities or enjoyment of life. Al-Balkhī believed that the *huzn* with known reason is caused by thoughts about the loss of a loved thing or the difficulty of attaining a greatly desired thing. The last type is endogenous depression, which according to Al-Balkhī, has no identified reasons. That is an unexpected condition that originates from within the human being. This type of depression is characterised by sudden affliction of sorrow and distress (*ghummah*), which persists all the time, preventing the afflicted person from any physical activity or from showing any happiness or enjoying any of the pleasures (*shahwah*) (Deuraseh & Abu Talib, 2005, p. 77). This may be caused by physiological reasons (such as impurity of the blood) and can be treated through physical medicine. Table 7.1 presents the comparison of major depressive disorder DSM-V and Al-Balkhī's diagnostic features of *al-Huzn*.

Al-Balkhī's description of depression correlates to the present-day diagnostic criteria of depressive disorder of DSM-V. However, minor variances can be identified in

Table 7.1 Comparison of major depressive disorder DSM-V and Al-Balkhī's diagnostic features of *al-Huzn*

| *DSM V: Major depressive disorder* | *Al-Balkhī's criteria for* al-Huzn |
|---|---|
| Depressed mood. | Sudden affliction of sorrow and distress *Ghummah*[1] which persists all the time. Deprives from physical activity or any happiness or enjoying any of the pleasures or *shahwah*[2] (food and sex). |
| Fatigue or loss of energy. | Appears in the most horrible form, uncontrollable deeds demonstrating his impatience and annoyance. |
| Markedly diminished interest or pleasure in all, or almost all, activities. | These symptoms have pronounced affects in exhausting the body, draining its activity and wearing out its wish for pleasurable desires. |
| Feelings of worthlessness or excessive or inappropriate guilt (which may be delusional). | The face of the depressed expresses gloom, pessimism, and despair. |
| Psychomotor agitation or retardation. | A person suffering from this extreme state will succumb to hopelessness and impatience, described by Arabic word (*jaza'a*).[3] |
| Diminished ability to think or concentrate, or indecisiveness. | … behaving like someone who has lost his mind or integrity." |
| Significant weight loss when not dieting or weight gain or decrease or increase in appetite. | |

Source: Adapted from APA (2013) & Zafar et al., (2020).
Note:
[1] *Ghummah* – Grief, Affliction, Sorrow, Distress, and Sadness.
[2] *Shahwah* – Craving, longing, yearning, Ardent for, Eagerness, passion, Carnal Appetite, Lust.
[3] *Jaza'a* – Restlessness, Anguish, Fear, Sadness, to break apart, Impatience.

his diagnostic criteria for depression. What has been omitted, in contrast with DSM-V, includes insomnia or sleep disturbances, and suicidal ideation. Perhaps suicidal ideation was uncommon or not reported due to the rulings in theological Islām.

## Phobia

Al-Balkhī was one of the earliest to conceptualise phobias as separate diagnostic entity and cluster psychological and physical symptoms of phobias under one category, "*al-Fazaá.*" Al-Balkhī describes "'*al-Fazaá*' as an excessive fear that results from seeing, hearing, or thinking of a feared situation or object" (Awaad & Ali, 2016, pp. 90–91). When a comparison is made between Al-Balkhī's description of phobia to the descriptions of anxiety disorders found in DSM-V, "'*al-Fazaá*' very closely matches the criteria for specific phobias" (Awaad & Ali, 2016, p. 90). Table 7.2 presents a comparison between the DSM-V criteria for specific phobias and Al-Balkhī's criteria for "*al-Fazaá.*" For a more comprehensive account on phobia, see Awaad & Ali (2016).

## Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder

Al-Balkhī observes that: "Obsessive whispers are among the most intrusive psychological symptoms that linger deep within the core of the human being, triggering echoing thoughts that cage the person within themselves" (Al-Balkhī et al., 2005, p. 127). Al-Balkhī viewed obsession as a

> persistence in the human heart (or mind) causes repetitive repulsive or immoral thoughts that result in apprehension and unhappiness to the extent that the one

*Table 7.2* A comparison between the DSM-V criteria for specific phobias and Al-Balkhī's criteria for "*al-Fazaá*"

| DSM V: Phobia | Al-Balkhī's "al-Fazaá" |
|---|---|
| • Unreasonable, excessive fear: the fear or anxiety is circumscribed to the presence of a particular situation or object. | • Seeing, hearing, or thinking of a fearful situation or object. |
| • Immediate anxiety response: The fear reaction must intense or severe. | • To meet the criteria for diagnosis, the fear must be excessive. |
| • Avoidance or extreme distress: The individual avoids the object or situation, or endures it with extreme distress. | • The feared situation or object is located in close proximity or is expected to happen in the near future. |
| • Life-limiting. Phobia impacts on lifestyle and behaviour. | • There are differences among situations or objects that elicit normal fear and those that evoke a phobic response. |
| • Six months duration: In children and adults, the duration of symptoms must last for at least six months. | • The intensity of fears and anxiety differs among children, women, and men. |
| • Not caused by another disorder: For example, agoraphobia, obsessional-compulsive disorder (OCD), and separation anxiety disorder. | • Fear may become intense with severe symptoms: Tremors, body hot or cold, confusion, pale skin, inability to make decisions and physical illnesses. |

Sources: Adapted from APA (2013) and Awaad & Ali (2016).

obsessed may lose his ability to enjoy the pleasures of the body and the soul. This symptom of obsession is what is referred to (in Islāmic jurisprudence) as their inner speech or whispers of the soul. (cited in Badri, 2013, p. 39)

Al-Balkhī proposed two classifications of obsessions: time-dependent and symptom-dependent. The first classification depended on the time of onset of obsessions and was further subcategorised into two types: One which afflicted an individual from birth while the other appeared later in life. He believed that afflicted individuals suffered from "annoying thoughts" (*Afkar rade'ah*) that were not real. He explained that an individual who suffered from an obsessional disorder will continue to recall the fearful thoughts and expect them to happen in the near future. Al-Balkhī's descriptive criteria are in harmony with the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-V) (APA, 2013). There is also stark commonality between the two texts in describing the afflicted individual's attempts to suppress the unwanted obsessions. Table 7.3 presents a comparison between the DSM-V criteria for specific phobias and Al-Balkhī's criteria for obsession.

The DSM-V describes obsessions as "Recurrent and persistent thoughts, urges, or impulses that are experienced, at some time during the disturbance, as intrusive and unwanted, and that in most individuals cause marked anxiety or distress." This is extremely similar to Al-Balkhī's descriptions:

*Table 7.3* Comparison of OCD criteria between DSM-V and Al-Balkhī's diagnostic features

| DSM-V: Diagnostic features | Al-Balkhī's diagnostic features |
| --- | --- |
| • Recurrent and persistent thoughts, urges, or images that are experienced, at some time during the disturbance, as intrusive and unwanted, and that in most individuals cause marked anxiety or distress. | • Annoying thoughts that are not real. <br> • Intrusive thoughts prevent performing daily activities. <br> • Lack of concentration and interfere with ability to carry out different tasks. <br> • Afflicted individuals become preoccupied with fearful thoughts and expect these events to happen at any time. |
| • The individual attempts to ignore or suppress such thoughts, urges, or images. | • Resistance of the thoughts by focusing on other things. <br> • Loss of concentration due to preoccupied annoying thoughts. <br> • Compulsions. <br> • Physical symptoms associated with obsessions are not similar to those seen in physical illness. They are less severe in terms of their effect on the body, but are annoying to the afflicted individual and cause distress. |
| • Dysfunctional beliefs. <br> • These beliefs can include an inflated sense of responsibility and the tendency to overestimate threat; perfectionism and intolerance of uncertainty; and, over-importance of thoughts. | • People with obsessive disorder are generally pessimistic. <br> • When they are given choices, they are likely to choose the more complicated ones. <br> • They are continuously hard on themselves and tend to select difficult alternatives. |

Source: Adapted from APA (2013) and Awaad & Ali (2015).

Annoying thoughts that are not real. These thoughts prevent enjoying life and performing daily activities. They affect concentration and interfere with ability to carry out different tasks. Afflicted individuals become preoccupied with fearful thoughts and expect these events at any time.

For a more comprehensive account on Obsessional Disorders see Awaad & Ali (2015).

## Al-Balkhī's therapeutic interventions

Al-Balkhī's therapeutic interventions are largely in line with contemporary psychosocial and spiritual interventions in the treatment of mental health problems. His intervention strategies involved both prevention and treatment approaches. Al-Balkhī introduced the concept and practice of "psychological first aid." That is individual needs to maintain healthy and positive thoughts and feelings to counter the effects of depression and other psychological distress and tribulations.

Al-Balkhī promoted the preventive approach which encouraged individuals to keep positive "cognition sets" to use in times of trials and tribulations (stress) and is compared to contemporary "Rational Cognitive Therapy" (Badri, 2013). Al-Balkhī's also recommended the use of talk therapy or psychotherapy employed to modify an individual's thoughts and so consequently leading to desired improvements in their cognition, emotion, and behaviour. His prescribed treatment of depression echoes the ideas of psychotherapy. He describes using "gentle encouraging talk that brings back some happiness" while he also advocates for music therapy, and other activities that might warm a person's psychological state.

Al-Balkhī promoted the use of cognitive and spiritual therapies that can be self-administered and demonstrated in detail the importance of using rational and spiritual therapies to cure specific disorders (Awaad & Ali, 2015; Haque, 1998, 2004). Al-Balkhī advocates the use of positive self-talk for those with anxiety. This is a kind of positive reinforcement aimed at counteracting the negative thoughts and at calming an individual's psyche. "Using a famous prophetic saying, he reminds his readers that God has created a cure for every illness, and that afflicted individual should seek treatment and remain optimistic" (cited in Awaad et al., 2020, p. 72).

Awaad and Ali (2016) reported that in the treatment of a phobia, Al-Balkhī used a technique he calls *riyāḍat al-nafs* (psyche-training). This technique is now called "reciprocal inhibition," coined by Joseph Wolpe in the 20th century (Wolpe, 1968). Reciprocal inhibition is a technique used specially to treat phobias that attempt to replace an undesired response with a more desirable one by counter conditioning. It is used in conjunction with deep muscular relaxation or visual imagery. Similar concept was also proposed by Al-Ghazâlî as therapy of opposites, i.e., use of visual imagery in shadowing the opposites. Thus, Al-Balkhī's ideas are largely in line with contemporary intervention strategies for obsessional compulsive disorder and phobias. Table 7.4 presents Al-Balkhī's definition of mental illness conditions and their therapeutic interventions.

Perhaps the most important lesson to be drawn from Al-Balkhī's treatise for both the secular-minded Muslim psychologists and non-secular minded Muslim psychologists is the synthesis of Al-Balkhī's work between evidenced-based practice and Islāmic sciences. Above all, he remained in the Islāmic narrative, the authentic father of modern Cognitive Behaviour Therapy.

*Table 7.4* Al-Balkhī's definition of mental illness conditions and their therapeutic interventions

| Conditions | Characteristics | Treatment interventions |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Depression | *al-Huzn* (sadness)<br>Reactive depression<br>Sorrow and distress (*ghummah*)<br>Endogenous depression | Avoid negative behaviour. Beautify one's self with good behaviour.<br>Train one's self in the pursuit of contentment and spiritual happiness.<br>Development of inner thoughts and cognitions.<br>Persuasive talking, preaching, and advising. Cognitive therapy.<br>Physical and medical management along with therapy. |
| Phobias | Caused by environmental or circumstantial factors (loss or failure)<br>Caused a result of internal bio-chemical factors (organic depression (sudden affliction of sorrow and distress | Persuasive talking, preaching, and advising.<br>Development of inner thoughts and cognitions.<br>Pharmacological. |
| Phobias | Cluster psychological and physical symptoms of phobias under one category, "*al-Fazaá*"<br>Primary psychological disorder that sometimes manifests with physical symptoms similar to DSM-V | Behaviour management therapy, similar to modern CBT. |
| Obsessions | A psychological disorder<br>Two classifications of obsessions: time-dependent and symptom-dependent<br>Likely caused by an excess of black bile<br>"Annoying thoughts" (*afkar rade'ah*) that were not real<br>Occupied by the intrusive thoughts<br>Recall the fearful thoughts | Therapy external to the self (external therapy) and therapy from within the self (internal therapy).<br>Mind-based therapy or cognitive behaviour therapy. |
| Psychosomatic disorders | Disorders related to both the body and the mind | |

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# 8    Abu Ali Al-Husayn Ibn Abdullah Ibn Sīnā

## Introduction and background

Abu Ali Al-Husayn Ibn Abdullah Ibn Sīnā, known in the West as Avicenna, was born at Afsana near Bukhara, Samanid Empire (now in present-day Uzbekistan) on 23 August 980. He is acclaimed as one of the most celebrated polymaths with distinguished contributions to the field of Islāmic theology, philosophy, astronomy, alchemy, geometry, chemistry, poetry medicine, and psychology. He is regarded as the father of early modern medicine (Roudgari, 2018). Ibn Sīnā was exposed to a wide range of academic and clinical disciplines and ideas. He studied Hanafi jurisprudence (*Fiqh*) and memorised both the Qur'ān by the age of 10. He studied medicine with various teachers and "This training and the excellent library of the physicians at the Samanid court assisted Ibn Sīnā in his philosophical self-education" (Rizvi, n.d.). He is reported to have mastered all the sciences during his adolescent and became a knowledgeable physician and introduced new methods of treatments by the age of 18.

Ibn Sīnā was influenced by Greek Aristotelian philosophy, and he tried to merge rational philosophy with Islāmic theology, and his main goal in that regard was to prove the existence of God and His creation of the world by science and logic (Roudgari, 2018). Ibn Sīnā is called the most significant philosopher in the Islāmic tradition and arguably the most influential philosopher of the pre-modern era (Rizvi, n.d.). Ibn Sīnā is considered as a father of modern medicine, a pioneer of neuropsychiatry. He first recognised "physiological psychology" for the treatment of illness involving emotions.

## Ibn Sīnā's books on medicine and psychology

Ibn Sīnā was a prolific writer and is estimated to have written between 100 and 250 works. As a physician, his major work the Canon of Medicine (*al-Qanun fi't-Tibb*), a five-volume medical encyclopaedia, was used as the standard medical textbook in the Islāmic world and Europe up to the 18th century (McGinnis, 2010); for example, the University of Montpellier, France (1650). This medical encyclopaedia still plays an important role in *Unani* medicine [Perso-Arabic traditional medicine] (Rahman, 2003). According to Ibn Sīnā,

> Medicine is the science by which we learn the various states of the human body, in health, when not in health, the mean by which health is likely to be lost, and when lost, is likely to be restored to health. (*al-Qānūn fī al-Ṭibb*)

Following are some of his notable works related to the field of medicine and psychology:

- *al-Qānūn fī al-Ṭibb* (The Canon of Medicine): Encyclopaedia of medicine.
- *Risālah fī al-Nafs* (Treatise on the Soul).
- *Kitab al-shifa* (The Book of Healing) on philosophy and the existence, the mind-body relationship, sensation, perception, etc. (Haque, 2004).
- *Kitab al-najat* (The Book of Deliverance).
- *Andar Danesh-e-Rag* (On the Science of the Pulse) contains nine chapters on the science of the pulse. This is the most detailed clinical description on the characteristics of the pulse that had been ever written. The pulse section consists of techniques for feeling the pulse. In this book he explained the certain types of arrhythmias such as atrial fibrillation, premature and dropped beats and more than fifty different pulses. (Roudgari, 2018)

In the first volume of the *al-Qānūn fī al-Ṭibb* (The Canon of Medicine), Ibn Sīnā states that medicine is the science of knowing the structure of the human body, and he goes on to discuss the fundamental principles necessary to maintain human health. He explains various healing properties of simple and compound drugs and their various applications. Ibn Sīnā presents his diagnosis of a variety of illnesses known to him, ranging from meningitis and cancer to tuberculosis and gastrointestinal illnesses. He also offers an extensive discussion of pharmacology, providing a detailed description of the effects of medications on body (Aminrazavi, 2008).

## Ibn Sīnā and psychology

Ibn Sīnā was the major influence upon the origin and development of Islāmic psychology by merging rational philosophy with Islāmic theology. Ibn Sīnā's psychology has been primarily exemplified in his works in the *Kitab al-nafs,* parts of his *Kitab al-Shifa* (*The Book of Healing*) and *Kitab al-Najat* (*The Book of Deliverance*). In psychology, Ibn Sīnā is prominent for his theories of abstraction and intellectual intuition, as well as for his doctrine of the five internal senses (Germann, 2020). He began with Aristotle's idea that humans possessed three types of soul: the vegetative, animal, and rational psyche. The vegetative and animal soul bind humans to the earthly matters, and the rational psyche connects humans to God. His account of the soul is based on psychology and physiology, and its abilities of perception or sensory awareness of the environment. Davidson (1992) explains how Ibn Sīnā formulated "a comprehensive account of human faculties and how imagination plays a significant role. It is the faculty of using images and linking those images with both the abstract world of ideas and the ordinary world of sense perception." Ibn Sīnā proposed that humans have seven inner senses to complement the physical senses. Table 8.1 presents Ibn Sīnā's seven senses.

Awaad et al., (2020) noted that Ibn Sīnā's most interesting psychological theories "is his discussion of the relative motivational powers of physical desires (e.g., eating, sexual activity), cognitive desires (e.g., immersion in a game of chess), and virtuous desires (e.g., modesty, altruism, and dignity)" (pp. 72–73). Awaad et al., (2020) citing Ibn Sīnā stated that "The greatest physical pleasures may seem to come from eating

*Table 8.1* Ibn Sīnā's seven senses

| Type of inner senses | |
| --- | --- |
| Common sense | Information gathered from the physical (outer) senses. This information is synthesised. |
| Imagination | Processing of information and information is retained. |
| Compositive animal imagination | Sense that allow all animals what they should avoid or seek in their natural environment. |
| Compositive human imagination | This sense helps humans to learn what to avoid and what to seek in the world around them. |
| Imaginative faculty | Combination of images in memory, processing and production of new object or image. |
| Estimative power | Translates the perceived image makes senses out of it.Perception of danger. Flight of flight reaction. |
| Memory | Remembrance of all information collated by other senses and ascribed meanings. |

Source: Adapted from Ibn Sīnā.

and sexual activity. Yet, the human being may put these desires aside in search of a more meaningful psychological activity" (Ibn Sīnā et al., 1916, pp. 334–335). What Ibn Sīnā is proposing is having a two-level hierarchy of needs, that is, physical needs (eating and sexual needs) and the higher-level needs which is psychological/cognitive/spiritual in nature (see Figure 8.1).

According to Awaad et al. (2020), Ibn Sīnā's hierarchy of needs vaguely resembles Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1943). Ibn Sīnā et al. (1916) observed that some individuals may satisfy their higher psychological, cognitive, or spiritual (moral) needs than meeting their basic needs for food or sexual activity. Ibn Sīnā provides examples of

> individuals ignoring their basic need for food or sexual activity in the pursuit of cognitive stimulation in the form of a chess game, moral satisfaction in satisfying the hunger of others, and social satisfaction in preserving one's dignity or modesty. (cited in Awaad et al., 2020, p. 73)
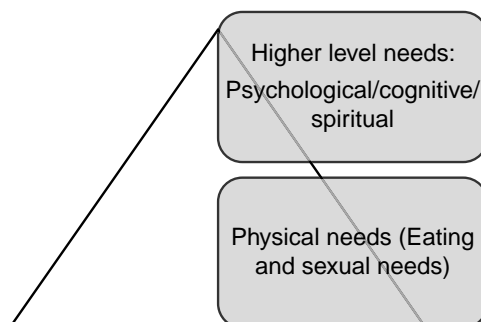


*Figure 8.1* Ibn Sīnā's hierarchy of needs.

This suggests that psychological needs or desires may be stronger than physical needs or desires (Ibn Sīnā et al., 1916).

## Ibn Sīnā's mind and body

Ibn Sīnā understood the importance of the interaction between mind and body and the understanding of psychosomatic conditions. It is noted that

> The reciprocity between soul and body represents one of the core principles of Arabic medicine. Arab physicians took a massive interest in explaining the mutual influence of these two dimensions of the human being and using it to optimise treatment. (Koetschet, 2020)

Ibn Sīnā's suggestion on the mind–body interaction leads us to have a better understanding of the role of psychological factors in the development of mental health problems and vice versa. It is reported that in *al-Shifā'*, Ibn Sīnā

> details how he observed physically sick people heal through sheer will-power, and mentally ill people lose their physical health because of unhealthy obsessions and other mental illnesses. He also lists the ways through which the mind can influence the body on three levels: voluntary movements (i.e., moving a limb), on an inwardly emotional level (i.e., strong feelings of fear could lead to the body collapsing), and on an externally emotional level (i.e., feeling such strong emotions that another person's body is affected). (Farooqi, 2006; Haque, 2004, Awaad et al., 2020, p. 73)

Ibn Sīnā is reported to identify that there are three levels on how the mind can influence the body. For example, in voluntary movement where the mind transmits the message to the body to move, emotion such as fear would also influence the body. For example, strong emotional feelings such as fear would lead to the body to remain still. Finally, external emotion may cause significant reaction on an individual (Farooqi, 2006; Haque, 2004). The mind–body interaction may exacerbate both physical and mental health problems.

## Ibn Sīnā's psychopathology

Ibn Sīnā was a pioneer of neuropsychiatry, psychophysiology, and psychosomatic medicine.

He also gave psychological explanations of certain somatic or physical illnesses. He first described numerous neuropsychiatric conditions including insomnia, mania, hallucinations, nightmare, dementia, epilepsy, stroke, paralysis, vertigo, melancholia, and tremors (Goichon, 1999, Abbasi et al., 2007). He called melancholia (depression) a type of mood disorder in which the person may become suspicious and develop certain types of phobias, and that anger signalled the change from melancholia to mania (Haque, 2004; Majeed & Jabir, 2017). He also identified a condition that seems like schizophrenia and defined as *Junun Mufrit* (severe madness) with symptoms including agitation, sleep disturbance, giving inappropriate answers to questions, and

occasional inability to speak (Majeed & Jabir, 2017, p. 70). Awaad and Ali (2016) stated that "Ibn Sīnā believed that it was impossible to simultaneously experience anxiety and relaxation because of the autonomic nervous system's role as an antagonist" (p. 73). This is the basis for the use of systematic desensitisation or visual imagery in the treatment of anxiety or phobia. Ibn Sina also wrote about symptoms and treatment of love sickness (*Ishq*), nightmare, epilepsy, and weak memory (Haque 2004, p. 366).

Ibn Sīnā examined the area of death anxiety and noticed this was a universal fear. He identified that there were three cognitive types of causes for death anxiety: (a) ignorance as to what death is, (b) uncertainty of what is to follow after death, and (c) supposing that after death, the soul may cease to exist. He stated that the degree of anxiety one experiences is directly related to the level of knowledge one has about the idea of death.

## Ibn Sīnā's therapeutic interventions

Ibn Sīnā was also a pioneer in therapeutic interventions by using a multitude of approaches (Avicenna, 2005).

He used of psychological therapeutic interventions along with pharmacological interventions (drugs and draughts). Ibn Sīnā and Abubakr Muhammad Ibn Zakariya Al-Rāzī founded a comprehensive healthcare system that focused on "Psycho-Somato-Spiritual well-being" (Asadi-Pooya et al., 2012). Ibn Sīnā generally followed the Galenic tradition that mental illnesses such as epilepsy were not divine in nature but arose essentially from imbalance humours. This approach recognised four humours: blood, phlegm, and black and yellow bile which composed the mixtures (*al-mizaj*) or temperaments (Al-Issa, 1999, p. 45). The "Therapeutics consisted of bringing temperaments into proper balance by purging, augmenting, or transforming or perfecting these humours (coction)" (Weber, 2014). Ibn Sīnā was also cognisant that individuals could overcome physical ailments by believing that they could become well. Equally, healthy persons could become sick if they believed that they were ill. In modern parlance, these examples are related to psychosomatic disease, self-fulfilling prophecy, and the adoption of the sick role. It is worth noting that during the Golden Age of Islām and beyond,

> The medical treatments used in the bimaristans also included fomentations (especially to the head), baths, bloodletting, cupping, bandaging, and massages with different oils, compresses, and particular personalized diets. It seems that ergotherapy was also largely utilised and that dancing, theatrical performances, as well as poems and Qur'ān recitations were part of the therapy. (Gorini, 2007–2008)

Pharmacological treatment was used to treat mental illness. They were "to stimulate the apathetic, soothe the violent [...] and [...] support depressed [patients]" (Gorini, 2002, p. 41).

In clinical practice, Ibn Sīnā applied physiological psychology in the assessment and treatment of strong emotional problems. He developed a system for associating changes in the pulse rate with inner feelings, using rudimentary bio-feedback

techniques (Awaad & Ali, 2016; Farooqi, 2006). This idea was in anticipation of the word-association test attributed to Carl Jung (Syed, 2002; Mohamed, 2012). Ibn Sīnā's therapeutic interventions include meditation, self-awareness, dialogue, reflection, imagery, and conditioning to treat mental illnesses (Farooqi, 2006). Manic problems (*al-maniya*) indicated excess of heat and an excess of hot humours, and was treated with its opposite substance opium, classified as a cooling drug (Weber, 2014). In addition, it is reported that

> Other physiologically based cures for mental affliction in the Middle Ages, and still popular in Islāmic folk medicine, included phlebotomy and bloodletting (*hijama*) or cautery with hot irons (*kaii, wasm*). Even a primitive electroconvulsive therapy was used by applying to the heads of patients' torpedo fish (*Torpedinidae*) and electric catfish (*Malapteruridae*), which can deliver a shock of up to 350 volts. Ibn Sīnā recommended a *ra'ad* ("thunder") fish for migraine headache. (Finger & Piccolino, 2011, p. 81; Weber, 2014)

Ibn Sīnā used both a relaxation method and a form of systematic desensitisation (hierarchy of anxiety-inducing words), modern cognitive behaviour therapy, with pulse-checking to identify anxiety-provoking words. This was used in the treatment of a prince suffering from anorexia nervosa (Haque, 2004; Awaad & Ali, 2016). Ibn Sīnā is reported to have treated a very ill patient by "feeling the patient's pulse and reciting aloud to him the names of provinces, districts, towns, streets, and people." He noticed how the patient's pulse increased when certain names were mentioned, from which Avicenna deduced that the patient was in love with a girl whose home Ibn Sīnā was "able to locate by the digital examination. Ibn Sīnā advised the patient to marry the girl he is in love with, and the patient soon recovered from his illness after his marriage" (Psychology & Islām). In case of death anxiety where disordered thinking is present, Ibn Sīnā recommended some form of cognitive restructuring and the use of religio-education in order to alleviate these thoughts (Khalil Center). Table 8.2 presents Ibn Sīnā's therapeutic interventions

*Table 8.2* Ibn Sīnā's therapeutic interventions

| Conditions | Therapeutic interventions |
| --- | --- |
| Identify the source of the client's emotional conflict | Bio-feedback techniques. |
| Mental illnesses | Meditation, self-awareness, dialogue, reflection, imagery, and conditioning to treat. Crude form of Electro Convulsive Therapy. Phlebotomy and bloodletting (*hijama*) or cautery with hot irons (*kaii, wasm*). Music therapy. |
| Anorexia Nervosa | Form of systematic desensitisation (hierarchy of anxiety-inducing words) with pulse-checking to identify anxiety-provoking words. |
| Hysteria, mania, epilepsy, anxiety, and depression | Treatment similar to those used today. |
| Mania | Use of pharmacology: opium. |
| Death anxiety | Cognitive restructuring and religio-education. |

The 12th-century poet Nizámí-i-'Arúdí relates the following story about the celebrated physician Ibn Sīnā. The prince of the House of Búya suffered from melancholia, and he imagined himself to have been transformed into a cow. He would cry all day and keep repeating that "Kill me, so that a good stew may be prepared from my flesh." He became anorexic and the physicians were unable to treat him. However, Ibn Sīnā's treatment included binding the prince bound with ropes and approaches him with knives.

> "O what a lean cow!" said he; "it is not fit to be killed: give it fodder until it gets fat." Then he rose up and came out, having bidden them loose his hands and feet, and place food before him, saying, "Eat, so that thou may speedily grow fat." They did as Ibn Sīnā had directed and set food before him, and he ate. After that they gave him whatever draughts and drugs Ibn Sīnā prescribed, saying, "Eat well, for this is a fine fattener for cows," hearing which he would eat, in the hope that he might grow fat and they might kill him. So, the physicians applied themselves vigorously to treating him as the minister had indicated and in a month's time he completely recovered and was restored to health. (Browne, 1921, pp. 91–93)

Awaad and Ali (2016) provided a technical explanation of the treatment mode used by Ibn Sīnā,

> For example, when treating a prince suffering from anorexia nervosa, he constructed a hierarchy of anxiety-inducing words, and then spoke each of the words while measuring the prince's pulse with his thumb. A quickened pulse meant that the word just spoken was closer to the prince's trigger area than the word spoken previously. After identifying his client's emotional difficulties, he would often expose the client to those difficulties, while inducing a state of antagonistic relaxation. (p. 73)

Ibn Sīnā was also a prolific poet, and his medical poem was highly significant in the transmission of medical knowledge to medieval Europe (Abdel-Halim, 2014). In relation to rehabilitation of patients, Ibn Sīnā recommended good company and music (Krueger, 1963, pp. 61–62). In addition, in the regimen for the convalescent, Ibn Sīnā stated the following verses showing his care for the psychological state of the patients:

> *Insist upon their quiet and rest, for their limbs are weak;*
>
> *Try to lift their spirit through welcoming words and pleasant company;*
>
> *Give them sweet-scented perfumes and flowers;*
>
> *Obtain happiness and music for them;*
>
> *Spare them sombre thoughts and fatigue.*
>
> (Krueger, 1963, pp. 61–62)

Finally, he was pioneer and is credited to be among the first to suggest "*Isolation*" or "*Quarantine*" as a means to control epidemics and curb the spread of infection among humans just like public health campaigns are now dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic.

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# 9    Abu Ḥāmid Muḥammad Al-Ghazâlî

## Introduction and context

Abu Ḥāmid Muḥammad Al-Ghazâlî was born 1058 CE at Tus, Greater Khorasan, Seljuq Empire and died on the 19th of December 1111. Al-Ghazâlî received his early education in his hometown and went on to study with the influential Ash'arite theologian Al-Juwaynî (1028–85) at the Nizâmiyya Madrasa in nearby Nishapur. Al-Ghazâlî was one of the most prominent and influential philosophers, theologians, jurists, and mystics of Sunni Islām. In 1091 Nizâm al-Mulk appointed Al-Ghazâlî to the prestigious Nizâmiyya Madrasa in Baghdad. In 1095, Al-Ghazâlî suddenly gave up his posts in Baghdad and left the city. Under the influence of Sufi literature Al-Ghazâlî had begun to change his lifestyle two years before his departure from Bagdad (Griffel, 2009, p. 67). In 1096, after performing the pilgrimage in 1096, he returned via Damascus and Baghdad to his hometown Tûs, where he founded a small private school and a Sufi convent (*khânqâh*) (Griffel, 2020).

Al-Ghazâlî was active at a time when Sunni theology had just entered a period of intense challenges from Shiite Ismâʾîlite theology and the Arabic tradition of Aristotelian philosophy (*falsafa*). His religious work *Tahāfut al-Falāsifa* ("Incoherence of the Philosophers") favours Muslim faith over philosophy and was extremely influential in turning medieval Muslim thought away from Aristotelianism, philosophical debate, and theological speculation. For Al-Ghazâlî

> the purpose of society is to apply the *Shari'ah*, and the goal of man is to achieve happiness close to God. Therefore, the aim of education is to cultivate man so that he abides by the teachings of religion and is hence assured of salvation and happiness in the eternal life hereafter. (Nofal, 1993, p. 524)

Al-Ghazâlî "reinstated the 'principle of fear' in religious thinking and emphasised the role of the Creator as the centre around which human life revolves, and an agent intervening directly and continuously in the course of human affairs (once the 'principle of love' had gained supremacy among the Sufis)" (Nofal, 1993, p. 531). Al-Ghazâlî (2005) asserted that "more attention should be directed to treating diseases of the heart [psyche], which has an infinite lifetime" (p. 929).

## Al-Ghazâlî's books

- *Iḥyāʾ ʿUlūm al-Dīn* (Revival of the Religious Sciences)
- *Kīmiyā -e-Saʿādat* (Alchemy of Happiness)

- *Tahāfut al-Falāsifah* (Incoherence of the Philosophers)
- *Fayṣal al-Tafriqah bayna al-Islām wa al-Zandaqah* (The Decisive Criterion for Distinguishing Islām from Clandestine Unbelief). It has been observed that in this book, Al-Ghazâlî endorses the application of secular or non-Muslim theories, provided that they do not contradict revelation or rationale (Griffel, 2009).

## Al-Ghazâlî's spiritual psychology

Al-Ghazâlî, as a Sufi, was an advocate of introspection and self-analysis to understand the psyche and psychological issues. In *The Alchemy of Happiness*, he reiterated his fundamental belief that a connection to God was an integral part of the joy of living and happiness. Al-Ghazâlî maintained that it is self-awareness that leads to true happiness and fulfilment. According to Al-Ghazâlî, it is "the human soul that is the natural keeper in which one's knowledge potentially exists" (Shahzadi et al., 2021, p. 173). It is that knowledge, kept within the human soul, that helps man him developing a connection with his creator. In addition to the cognitive abilities (*Aql*) that are the prime factors in enabling both levels of inspiration and motivation for self-learning. Accordingly, in order to have knowledge of the self, people must devote themselves to God by showing restraint and discipline rather than gluttony of the senses (Al-Ghazâlî, 2017). Al-Ghazâlî also recommended to have knowledge of God, knowledge of the world, and knowledge of the future world.

Al-Ghazâlî stated that the self (*Nafs*) is made up of three elements: animals, devils, and angels. The animal self concerns much about our appetites for basic needs including eating and sleeping. The part of the "devil" self which leads us to mischiefs, deceit, and lies. The angelic part of the self, contemplating on the signs of God and being under His protection, prevents us from lust and anger. Al-Ghazâlî stated that "Human can either rise to the level of the angels with the help of knowledge or fall to the levels of animals by letting his anger and lust dominate him" (cited in Fidanboylu, 2011). Al-Ghazâlî describes that the concept of the self is expressed by four terms in Arabic as conceived by the Qur'ān. These terms are *Qalb* (heart), *Ruh* (soul), *Nafs* (desire-nature or behavioural inclination), and *Aql* (intellect, reason). Each of these terms signifies a spiritual entity.

Al-Ghazâlî prefers to use the term *Qalb* for the self (soul) in his work. One is essentially required to know this *Qalb* in order to discover ultimate reality (Amer, 2015). Al-Ghazâlî (1980) in the *Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-Dīn* comments that there are two meanings of the heart. One meaning is that "It is the special flesh, pine like in shape, positioned in the left side of the breast and has within it a hollow cavity." The second meaning of the heart is that

> It is subtle (*Latifah*), divine (*Rabbaniyyah*) and spiritual and it is the essence of a man. In man, it is what perceives, knows, is aware, is spoken to, punishes, blames and is responsible. It has connection with the corporeal heart, and the minds of most men have been baffled in trying to grasp the mode of the connection … It [the heart] is like king and the soldiers are like servants and helpers. (p. 3)

Al-Ghazâlî (1980) stated that the heart "has sound natural disposition (*Fiṭrah sahihah*) to know the truths (*Ma'rifat al-haqa'iq*)" (p. 14), but when the heart is tranquil under the command of God and free from agitation because of the opposition of the lusts, it is called the soul at rest" (Al-Ghazâlî, 1986, pp. 3–4). Al-Ghazâlî (1980) mentioned

about the sickness of the soul (*Qalb*) which prevents it acquiring the truth. These barriers of the heart include a physical defect of the heart, impurities due to sins, and ignorance due to lusts (pp. 13–14). The spiritual diseases of the heart include arrogance, miserliness, ignorance, envy, and lust (Haque, 2004). It is through spiritual detoxification of (*Tazkiyat al-nafs*) that the sicknesses of the heart are cured.

The study of the *Nafs* is a major element of Islāmic psychology. *Nafs* (pl. Anfus or Nufus), in the literature, the *Nafs* is synonymous with the concepts of "psyche," "or "soul." Ahmed (2015) suggested that in the Qur'ān, the word *Nafs* is used in two ways. *Nafs* is used to indicate our own self or soul or it refers to the elements of the self which include desires, appetite, anger, passion, and lust. Al-Tabari reported: Hasan al-Basri (may Allāh be pleased with him) said, "Your enemy is not the one you are relieved from if you killed him. Rather, your true enemy is your own soul, between your two sides" (Musnad 'Umar). Al-Ghazâlî (2010) relates to the *Nafs* as the appetitive soul "united man's blameworthy qualities" (p. xvi), as opposed to his rational soul. He speaks of the *Nafs* as the vehicle (*markab*) of the heart, and states that that Sufis call the *Nafs* the animal spirit (*al-ruh al-hayawani an-nafs*). Al-Ghazâlî categorised the *Nafs* into three stages as identified in the Qur'ān. The three levels, or states, of the *Nafs* described in the Qur'ān are *Nafs al-ammārah* (Qur'ān 12: 53), *Nafs al-lawwāmah* (Qur'ān 75:2), and *Nafs al-muṭmaʾinnah* (Qur'ān *89:27–28*).

*Aql* in Islāmic psychology is the rational faculty of the soul or mind. It has also been translated as "dialectical reasoning" (Esposito, 2004). The meaning of *Aql* from Qur'ānic verses, Sunnah, and the Interpretations of theological scholars is totally in contrast with the philosophers. *Aql* is a quality when a person has the capacity to reason, undertakes reflective practice and act. There is a difference of opinion between Islāmic scholars concerning the anatomical seat of intellect. Al-Ghazâlî (2010) stated that the "'Intellect' maybe used with the force of knowledge (*'ilm*) of the real nature of things and is thus an expression for the quality of knowledge whose seat is the heart" (p. 9). The *Nafs* and *Rûh* (spirit) are regarded as synonyms and are interchangeable by the majority of Islāmic scholars depending on the context of use. The scholars of *Ahlus-Sunnah wal Jamaah* maintained that the terms *Nafs* and *Rûh* are interchangeable. In simplicity, when the soul as an entity is in the body, it is referred as *Nafs*, but when the soul is separated from the body it is known as *Rûh*.

## Al-Ghazâlî's psychopathology

Al-Ghazâlî divided illness into two: physical and spiritual. He asserted that spiritual diseases, the deviation from the connection with God, are far more dangerous than physical illnesses. Some of the spiritual diseases include self-centeredness, addiction to wealth, fame and status, ignorance, cowardice, cruelty, lust, doubt (*waswas*), malevolence, calumny, envy, deceit, and avarice. Purwakania Hasan (2018) inferred from the work of Al-Ghazâlî that

> mental health is seen as a model consisting of the *aqeedah* solidity, the liberation from the heart disease, the development of noble character, good morality built in social relations, and the achievement of happiness in the world and the hereafter. (p. 3)

Al-Ghazâlî also examined the nature of anger and he divided it into three situations: Minor anger, a feeling of excessive anger, and anger allowed by the Islāmic

jurisprudence (*shari'ah*). Anger was also categorised into two dimensions: praise-worthy anger and reprehensible anger. Praiseworthy and justified anger is anger to-wards the polytheists and infidels for the sake of Allāh (Majid, 2009). A good example is when the messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) got angry for the sake of Allāh when His rights were violated. This is the kind of anger which is praiseworthy. The messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) became angry when he was told about the *Imam* who was putting people off the prayer by making it too long and when he saw curtains with pictures of animals while he was praying. His anger was purely for the sake of Allāh.

## Al-Ghazâlî's therapeutic interventions and self-purification

Al-Ghazâlî and al-ʿIrāqī (2005) believed that our focus should shift from "treating diseases of the body, such diseases compromise an already fleeting life. More attention should be directed to treating diseases of the heart [psyche], which has an infinite lifetime" (p. 929). In Iḥyā ʿUlūm al-Dīn, Al-Ghazâlî mentioned six steps for self-purification (Keshavarzi & Haque, 2013):

- *Mushāraṭah* (self-contract with goals)
- *Murāqabah* (self-monitoring)
- *Muḥāsabah* (self-examination; holding oneself accountable)
- *Mujāhadah* (self-penalisation; implementing, consequences for breaking the self-contract [lapse and relapse])
- *Muʿāqabah* (self-struggle; working diligently to overcome sinful inclinations)
- *Muʿātabah* (self-admonition; regretting breaking and recommitting to up-holding the contract). (p. 242)

Al-Ghazâlî discussed the strategies and tools for self-purification including

> prayer, *zakat* and *infaq*, fasting, pilgrimage, recitation of the Qur'ān, *zikr*, contemplation (*tafakur*), remembrance of death and limiting imagination, super-vision (*murāqabah*), contemplation (*muhasabah*), sincerity (*mujahadah*), self-punishment for deficiency (*muʿāqabah*), *jihad* in the goodness of preventing evil (*amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*), devotion and *tawadhu*, and enduring the temptations of the *shaytans* [devils]. (Purwakania Hasan, 2018)

Al-Ghazâlî believed the use of therapeutic interventions including negative re-inforcement, modelling, labelling, and shaping (Farooqi, 2006). In the management of anger, Al-Ghazâlî has outlined two methods for dealing with anger, through the process of self-education and "trained and accustomed to the logic of reason and *Shari'ah*. This quality can be trained if you can get used to the nature of patience and continuous effort and restrain the angry person through knowledge and practice" (Ibrahim et al., 2020, p. 1279). Seeking refuge with Allāh from the *shaytan* is one way of dealing with anger. Sulayman Ibn Sard said: "I was sitting with the Prophet (ﷺ) and the two men were slandering one another. One of them was red in the face, and the veins of his neck were standing out. The Prophet (ﷺ) said: "I know a word, if he were to say it, what he feels would go away: 'I seek refuge with Allāh from *shaytan*' what he feels (anger) would go away" (Bukhari (a)).

The messenger of Allāh (☪) said: "If any of you becomes angry, let him keep silent" (Ahmad), and

> If any of you becomes angry and he is standing, let him sit down, so his anger will go away. If it does not go away, let him lie down (Abu Dawud). Abu Hurayrah reported that the man said to the Prophet (☪): 'advise me,' to which the Prophet said: 'do not become angry.' The man repeated his request several times, and each time the Prophet told him: 'do not become angry'. (Bukhari (b))

There is the reward for those who can control their anger. "Whoever controls his anger when he has the means to act upon it, Allāh will fill his heart with contentment on the Day of resurrection" (Al-Tabarani). "*Dua'h* (supplication) is the weapon of the believer, and one should make supplications to protect himself from evil, trouble, and anger." One of the *Dua'h* of Prophet Mohammad (☪) was:

> O Allāh, I ask You to make me fear You in secret and in public, and I ask You to make me speak the truth in times of contentment and of anger … (Al-Jaami)

In relation to the management of psychopathology like delusional thoughts, it is noted that this could be treated using negative reinforcement, modelling, labelling, and shaping (Farooqi, 2006).

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# 10  Ibn Taymīyah Al-Ḥarrānī

## Introduction and context

He is Aḥmad Taqī al-Dīn Abū 'Abbās ibn al-Shaykh Shihāb al-Dīn Abī al-Maḥāsin 'Abd al-Ḥalīm ibn al-Shaykh Majd al-Dīn Abī al-Barakāt 'Abd al-Salām bin Abī Muḥammad 'Abd Allāh Abī Qāsim al-Khaḍr bin Muḥammad bin 'Alī bin 'Abd Allāh, and is better known as Ibn Taymīyah. He lived in between the late 7th century of Islāmic calendar to the early 8th century (661 AH–728 AH). He was born in al-Ḥarrān, a city in Damascus and was a member of a family that was well-known for its Islāmic literacy. He dedicated his life to knowledge, and memorised Qur'ān and Ḥadīth at an early age and did extensive study in Islāmic Jurisprudence. He fought in the battle against Tatars in the early 7th century in al-Shām (Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine) and was later imprisoned and tortured along with his students for speaking against *Bid'āt* (innovations) and other forms of evil that were spread in the name of religion in his time (Al-Zarkalī).

## Diseases of the heart and their cure

Ibn Taymīyah authored an epistle on the very topic of diseases of the heart and their cure by the name: *Amrāḍ al-Qulūb wa Shifā'uhā* (Diseases of the Hearts and Their Cure). In this epistle, he discusses what he believed to be the spiritual diseases of the heart. He expounds his understanding of psychological diseases in the mentioned treatise that is published along with another epistle named, *al-Tuḥfah al-'Irāqīyah fī al-A'māl al-Qalbīyah* (The Iraqi Gift on the Actions of the Heart). For example, he states about infatuation ('*Ishq*):

> Infatuation is a psychological disease, the effect of which when intensifies, the disease takes root in the body while affecting both, mind in a way similar to that of melancholia as it is said that it is a form of disease associated with insinuation like melancholia, and body in form of weakness and frailty. (Ibn Taymīyah, 1402, p. 24)

Ibn Taymīyah mentioned a number of verses from the Qur'ān and the Aḥādīth of the Prophet (ﷺ) in order to substantiate that the heart can be afflicted with a spiritual disease (Ibn Taymīyah, 1402, p. 3).

The analogy that he presents to demonstrate his point is that of the human body. Just like the body of an individual suffers from a disease either by losing its capacity to

conceive as in form of losing the eyesight or the ability to hear, or in form of hallucinating about something that does not exist in reality, the heart suffers from a similar form of imbalance. The spiritual disease influences the will (*Irādah*) and the vision (*Taṣawwur*) of the heart thereby clouding one's vision with doubts and will with desires. Consequently, a person is unable to think straight as he is engulfed in doubts and is incapable of making a conscious decision because of his indulgence in the desires. Desires overcome his will and he begins to disapprove what is true and beneficial and starts to approve what is false and harmful (Ibn Taymīyah, 1402, pp. 3–4). Ibn Taymīyah believes that just like the human body becomes ill and dies, hearts fall ill and die as well. Similarly, just like the body regains its strength after finding cure to its illness, the hearts regain their strength as well after they have recovered from the spiritual illnesses (Ibn Taymīyah, 1402, p. 4).

## Types and conditions of the heart

Ibn Taymīyah categorises the heart into four categories based on the report which is attributed to Ḥudhayfah b. al-Yamān RA (Ibn Taymīyah, 1402, p. 11):

> The heart that has exclusively been illuminated by a blazing torch and that is the heart of the believer; the heart that is encased and that is the heart of the disbeliever; the heart that is inverted and that is the heart of the hypocrite – he knew only to reject, and he saw only to become blind; and the heart that has two impulses: an impulse calling it to faith and an impulse calling it to hypocrisy: it belongs to the impulse that is most prominent. (Albâni)

In his famous epistle, Diseases of the Hearts and Their Cure, he discussed the psycho-spiritual diseases from a number of aspects while relating them to the heart. Figure 10.1 depicts the psycho-spiritual ailments and diseases.

## Health of the heart

According to Ibn Taymīyah, a healthy heart is the one that has enough strength to protect itself from the approaching trials and illnesses. Its health mainly depends on two fundamental matters: An insight (*baṣīrah*) that is acquired through knowledge, and guidance (rashād) that is acquired through sound consciousness and will (*irādah*) (Ibn Taymīyah, 1402, p. 4).

## Death of the heart

Ibn Taymīyah believes that the absolute form of ignorance (i.e., *al-jahl al-muṭlaq*) causes the heart to die and it falls ill when it is exposed to a part of it. Additionally, he emphasises that the matter of life and death of the heart is far more important than the life and death of the body (Ibn Taymīyah, 1402, p. 4). He believes in the possibility of a person living a healthy life with a spiritually deceased heart. Hence a lifeless heart is the one that does not respond to that which gives it life (Ibn Taymīyah, 1402, p. 10). He goes on inferring from the following verse of the Qur'ān
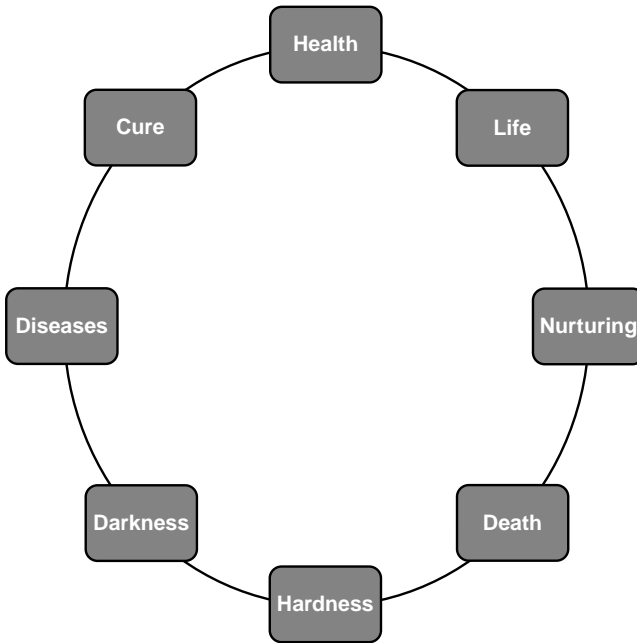
*Figure 10.1* Psycho-spiritual ailments and diseases.

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱسْتَجِيبُوا۟ لِلَّهِ وَلِلرَّسُولِ إِذَا دَعَاكُمْ لِمَا يُحْيِيكُمْ ۖ وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَحُولُ بَيْنَ ٱلْمَرْءِ وَقَلْبِهِۦ وَأَنَّهُۥٓ إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ (الأنفال 24)

- *O you who have believed, respond to God and to the Messenger when he calls you to that which gives your life. And know that God intervenes between a man and his heart and that to Him you will be gathered.* (Al-Anfāl 8:24, Interpretation of the meaning)

Ibn Taymīyah considers *Shirk* (associating any form of partnership with Allāh) to be lethal for the heart. He gives the example of disbelievers who are deprived of employing the faculties of their heart to understand or bear truth. Their heart beats in their chests but they are lifeless as they are incapable of understanding and bearing truth (Ibn Taymīyah, 1402, p. 9). Ibn Taymīyah understanding rests upon the following verse of the Qur'ān:

وَقَالُوا۟ قُلُوبُنَا فِىٓ أَكِنَّةٍ مِّمَّا تَدْعُونَآ إِلَيْهِ وَفِىٓ آذَانِنَا وَقْرٌ وَمِنْ بَيْنِنَا وَبَيْنِكَ حِجَابٌ فَٱعْمَلْ إِنَّنَا عَـٰمِلُونَ (فصلت 5)

- *And they say, "Our hearts are within coverings [i.e., screened] from that to which you invite us, and in our ears is deafness, and between us and you is a partition, so work;1 indeed, we are working.* (Ha-Mim 41:05, Interpretation of the meaning)

For Ibn Taymīyah, a life without the heart is like the life of an animal that only eats, drinks, and copulates (Ibn Taymīyah, 1402, p. 10). He goes on mentioning the verse of the Qur'ān as the basis of his understanding:

أَمْ تَحْسَبُ أَنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ أَوْ يَعْقِلُونَ ۚ إِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا كَٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ ۖ بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا (الفرقان 44)

- *Or do you think that most of them hear or reason? They are not except like livestock.1 Rather, they are [even] more astray in [their] way*. (Al-Furqan 25:44, Interpretation of the meaning)

### Nurturing of the heart

In Ibn Taymīyah's view, just like a body requires food with all the necessary nutrients to grow and become healthy, the heart also requires a form of spiritual provision to nurture itself and to become healthy and strong. Likewise, just like there are deterrents to the healthy growth of the body, there are spiritual elements that disturb its nurturing process (Ibn Taymīyah, 1402, p. 5). He believes that the provision of the heart is beneficial knowledge and righteous action (p. 27).

### Hardness of the heart

Ibn Taymīyah believes that an individual's heart is hardened if it is deprived of beneficial knowledge, an effective reminder, and righteous actions. A hard heart is like a wasteland which neither holds water nor it produces any plant. Hardness of the heart is more dangerous than its weakness as it corrupts an individual's conception, causes dauntlessness for falsehood, and is overwhelmed with temptations and allurement (Ibn Taymīyah, 1402, pp. 4–5). Consequently, having a hard heart is a sign of clear misguidance and deviation. Allāh says:

فَوَيْلٌ لِّلْقَٰسِيَةِ قُلُوبُهُم مِّن ذِكْرِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ أُوْلَٰئِكَ فِى ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ (الزمر 22)

- *Then woe to those whose hearts are hardened against the remembrance of Allāh. Those are in manifest error*. (Az-Zumar 39:22, Interpretation of the meaning)

### Darkness of the heart

The heart is overwhelmed with the darkness as a result of the corruption of belief and their respective implications. The higher the intensity of corruption is the more it is engulfed in the darkness until the heart is completely screened from observing the truth. (Ibn Taymīyah, 1402, p. 8). One outcome of darkness is injustice which is of three types:

- Injustice of shirk (polytheism) which is the greatest injustice ever committed
- Injustice against the creation of Allāh
- Injustice against oneself (Ibn Taymīyah, 1402, pp. 7–8)

Ibn Taymīyah regards every act of disobedience to be an act of injustice carried out by an individual against his own self as he did not act justly in the matter of His Lord's

obedience. He thereby being exposed to the darkness in form of his Lord's anger and wrath and deprivation of His blessing and reward. Consequently, when committing a sin, a person plays the role of both the *ẓalim* (unjust) and *maẓlūm* (victim) (Ibn Taymīyah, 1402, pp. 6–7).

### Life of the heart

A heart only acquires its life from the oneness of Allāh (*Tawḥīd*) and by responding to His call through his obedience. *Tawḥīd* purifies the heart from all that is sought to worship other than Allāh and the obedience purifies the heart from falling victim to the traps of Shayṭān (devil) and one's own desires (Ibn Taymīyah, 1402, p. 6). Following is the verse of the Qur'ān on which Ibn Taymīyah hinges his understanding:

أَوَمَن كَانَ مَيْتًا فَأَحْيَيْنَٰهُ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُ نُورًا يَمْشِى بِهِۦ فِى ٱلنَّاسِ كَمَن مَّثَلُهُ فِى ٱلظُّلُمَٰتِ لَيْسَ بِخَارِجٍ مِّنْهَا ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ زُيِّنَ لِلْكَٰفِرِينَ مَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ (الأنعام 122)

- *And is one who was dead, and We gave him life and made for him light by which to walk among the people like one who is in darkness, never to emerge therefrom? Thus, it has been made pleasing to the disbelievers that which they were doing*. (Al-An'am 6:122, Interpretation of the meaning)

Ibn Taymīyah believes that the life of the heart is not reserved to a mere sense or the ability to make a conscious act. Likewise, it is not restricted to mere knowledge or capacity (i.e., *qudrah*) as assumed by some. Ibn Taymīyah disagrees with those who believe that the life of the heart actually has a metaphorical meaning. For him it is a quality with which a heart is characterised within a real sense. The heart's ability to make a conscious decision and to conceive ideas is in fact the very manifestations of its life that it possesses. He states while referring to the life of the heart:

It is in fact a characteristic with which it (the heart) is characterised with and is a pre-requisite for knowledge, conscious decision making and the capacity to act freely and is also imperative to that. Hence, anything that is alive, entails that it possesses the ability to make a conscious decision and the capacity to act on its own. (Ibn Taymīyah, 1402, p. 13)

He further argues that a living thing also deters itself from what causes it harm and corruption as opposed to what is already dead. Therefore, a living heart will always endeavour to prevent itself from the diseases that seek to cause harm to it (p. 13).

### Diseases of the heart

According to Ibn Taymīyah, a believer can diagnose the disease that is afflicted to the heart and does not delay its treatment. There are certain diseases that affect a believer's will (i.e., *irādah*) while others affect his conception (*taṣawwur*) (Ibn Taymīyah, 1402, p. 4). Ibn Taymīyah believes that the cure of all such diseases either lies in sound knowledge or in sound practice ('*amal*) (pp. 11–12). In his treatise, Diseases of the Hearts and Their Cure, he discusses the following diseases and their cures (Ibn Taymīyah, 1402):

- Ignorance
- Doubts
- Envy
- Miserliness
- Pride
- Desires
- Anger
- Infatuation and Love

**Cure of the heart**

Ibn Taymīyah believes that the cure for all the diseases of the heart lies in the Qur'ān as Allāh has revealed this Book as a cure for all the doubts and desires that can afflict a believer's heart (Ibn Taymīyah, 1402, p. 5). Allāh states

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ قَدْ جَآءَتْكُم مَّوْعِظَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَشِفَآءٌ لِّمَا فِى ٱلصُّدُورِ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ (يونس 57)

- O mankind, there has come to you instruction from your Lord and healing for what is in the breasts and guidance and mercy for the believers. (Yunus 10:57, Interpretation of the meaning)

This book offers signs to the reader which provide cure to the person's doubts, and it also provides one with warnings and wisdom that purifies him from all that afflicts him from desires. For Ibn Taymīyah, the following ways can prevent one's heart from getting affected by the mentioned diseases (Ibn Taymīyah, 1402):

- Grounding his strong belief in Allāh and His Oneness.
- Fulfilling his obligations (*farā'iḍ*)
- Refraining from acts of disobedience (*muḥarramāt*)
- Recitation of Qur'ān
- Repentance and Seeking Allāh's forgiveness (*tawbah and al-Istighfār*)
- Patience
- Gratitude
- Pondering and reflecting on the verses of Allāh
- Engaging in the remembrance of Allāh (*dhikr*)
- Supplication (*du'ā*)
- Charity (*ṣadaqah*)

**Ibn Taymīyah's understanding of the *Nafs* (Self/Soul)**

Ibn Taymīyah (1415, 9/294) classifies *Nafs* (self) into three categories:

- *Al-Lawwāmah* (the reproaching self)
- *Al-Ammārah bī al-Sū'* (the inciting self)
- *Al-Muṭma'innah* (the contended self)

The first form of the self refers to the one that commits sins and repents. Once the sin is committed, it reproaches the individual on the committed sin. In other words, it

fluctuates between good and bad. As for the second form of self, it is the one that is dominated by desires because of excessive indulgence in sins. The contended self is the one that seeks pleasure and peace in good and disapproves evil and all that is associated with the disobedience of Allāh (Ibn Taymīyah, 1415, 9/294). Ibn Taymīyah believes that the mentioned forms are not three independent selves; rather they are different characteristics or the conditions of the same self. In other words, having three forms does not mean that an individual possesses three independent selves, rather he is equipped with one "self" with three conditions and characteristics (Ibn Taymīyah, 1415, 9/294).

Hence, Ibn Taymīyah defines *Nafs* as "*al-Rūḥ al-Mudabbirah* (the soul or the spirit that possesses the ability to direct and govern the human body)" (Ibn Taymīyah, 1415, 9/301). He also believes that it is not restricted to a specific place in a human body, rather it ventures within the human body like life. Therefore, life is dependent upon soul. As long as it has soul, it is alive, but when the soul departs, the life departs from the body as well (Ibn Taymīyah, 1415, 9/302). It is important to note that Ibn Taymīyah does not differentiate between the soul (*rūḥ*) and the self (*nafs*). He states: "The governing soul for the body that which departs the body by death is actually the soul that is whispered in it, it is the *nafs* (self) that abandons by death" (Ibn Taymīyah, 1415, 9/289). To substantiate his point, he takes evidence from the Prophetic words where both soul and *nafs* are used synonymously. During an expedition, when the Prophet (ﷺ) along with his companions missed a prayer because of slumber, his companion Bilāl who was appointed to wake them all excused by saying: "May my father and mother be offered as ransom for you, the same thing overpowered my *nafs* (self) which overpowered your *nafs* (self)" (Muslim). The Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Allāh captured your souls (*arwāḥ*: plural of *rūḥ*) when He wished and released them when He wished" (Bukhārī).

To further reiterate, Ibn Taymīyah quotes the verse of the Qur'ān

<div dir="rtl">

ٱللَّهُ يَتَوَفَّى ٱلْأَنفُسَ حِينَ مَوْتِهَا وَٱلَّتِى لَمْ تَمُتْ فِى مَنَامِهَا ۖ فَيُمْسِكُ ٱلَّتِى قَضَىٰ عَلَيْهَا ٱلْمَوْتَ وَيُرْسِلُ ٱلْأُخْرَىٰ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَـَٔايَـٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ (الزمر 42)

</div>

- *Allāh takes the souls at the time of their death, and those that do not die [He takes] during their sleep. Then He keeps those for which He has decreed death and releases the others for a specified term. Indeed, in that are signs for a people who give thought.* (Az-Zumar 39:42, Interpretation of the meaning)

However, Ibn Taymīyah acknowledges the use of both terms, *rūḥ* and *nafs* in multiple meanings. He sees no harm in the use of both for different meanings (Ibn Taymīyah, 1415, 9/292).

## Ibn Taymīyah's understanding of reason (*al-ʿAql*)

Ibn Taymīyah has expounded both sensory perception (*al-idrāk al-ḥissī*) and mental cognition (*al-īdrāk al-ʿaqlī*) of a human being in his works. He first expounds his study on the former and then elaborates the latter as it is mostly observed in his works such as *Dar' Taʿāruḍ al-ʿAql wa al-Naql, al-Radd ʿalā al-Manṭiqiyyīn,* and in his *Majmūʿ Fatāwā* (compilation of legal opinions) (Fahmī al-Najjār, n.d., p. 78). While disagreeing with the earlier Greek and Muslim philosophers in discussing the reality of reason, he opposes the idea of considering reason to be *jawhar* (essence) and considers it to be *ʿarḍ*

(contingent or non-essential) in philosophical terms. He argues that "reason" in the language of Qur'ān, the Sunnah and that of Prophet's companions is conceived to be possessing contingent (*'ard*) reality. However, in the language of Greek philosophers, it is classified as *jawhar* (essence) – something that retains its independent existence. He argues that in the language of *Sharī'ah,* wherever the word *'aql* is used, it is used as a verb rather than a noun. Therefore, to consider it as an essence with its independent existence does not conform with the textual understanding of *'aql* (Ibn Taymīyah (a), p. 276). Ibn Taymīyah does not agree with the philosophical understanding of *'aql* whereby recognising its existence in substance (*a'yān*). He believes that *'aql* is contingent on other substances: therefore, he classifies it as *'ard* (contingent) and that it only exists in minds rather than substance (Ibn Taymīyah (a), p. 278).

Ibn Taymīyah strongly criticises those Muslim philosophers who in their attempt to revere reason rely upon fabricated narrations. He also strongly opposes the understanding of Greek philosophers who consider reason to be eternal and immaterial (Dalhat, 2015). Ibn Taymīyah's understanding is mainly influenced by Imām Aḥmad and Ḥārith al-Muḥāsibī's definition of reason. Ibn Taymīyah states: "Sometimes the reason is understood as an innate property (*gharīzah*) of a human being. This is based on what Imām Aḥmad, Ḥārith al-Muḥāsibī and the likes have said: 'Verily the reason is the innate property of man'" (Ibn Taymīyah (a), p. 276).

Similarly, he also believes that reason can also refer to the necessary knowledge or to those actions that are carried out as an outcome of that necessary knowledge. He states: "Some people say: 'Reason is necessary knowledge (*'ulūm al-ḍarūrīyah*),' while others believe: 'Reason is in fact referred to the action that is an outcome of that knowledge.' The correct opinion is that the word *'aql* consists of both" (Ibn Taymīyah, 1415, pp. 9/287). However, he emphasises that it is important to understand that the term reason or *'aql*, if used in this context, must be used for knowledge that is coupled with action, "because a mere action without knowledge is ignorance (*jahālah*) while knowledge divorced of action is unreasonableness" (Ibn Taymīyah, 1415, pp. 9/286–287). He bases his understanding on the following verse of the Qur'ān. The people of fire will say on the Judgment Day

وَقَالُوا لَوْ كُنَّا نَسْمَعُ أَوْ نَعْقِلُ مَا كُنَّا فِىٓ أَصْحَـٰبِ ٱلسَّعِيرِ (الملك 10)

- *And they will say, "If only we had been listening or reasoning, we would not be among the companions of the Blaze*. (Al-Mulk 67:10, Interpretation of the meaning)

According to Ibn Taymīyah, the majority of *Salaf* (righteous predecessors) have used reason for the action that is based on (sound) knowledge. Therefore, he states:

As for action that is based on knowledge it leads to what benefits man and protects him from what harms him by virtue of his foresight; therefore, this meaning of *'aql* has seemingly dominated in the language of *Salaf* (righteous predecessors) and the great scholars based on the reports that have transmitted in the (sources that record) virtue of intellectuals. (Ibn Taymīyah, 1401, 9/12)

Furthermore, Ibn Taymīyah addresses the question related to *'aql* and its association with either heart or the brain. While referring to Imām Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal's

understanding of the reason, he professes that "the reason is associated with one's heart in the human body" (Ibn Taymīyah, 1415, pp. 9/303). The verse of the Qur'ān on which he bases his understanding goes on saying

أَفَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ فَتَكُونَ لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ يَعْقِلُونَ بِهَآ أَوْ ءَاذانٌ يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَا فَإِنَّهَا لَا تَعْمَى ٱلْأَبْصَـٰرُ وَلَـٰكِن تَعْمَى ٱلْقُلُوبُ ٱلَّتِى فِى ٱلصُّدُورِ (الحج 46)

- *So, have they not traveled through the earth and have hearts by which to reason and ears by which to hear? For indeed, it is not eyes that are blinded, but blinded are the hearts which are within the breasts.* (Al-Hajj 22:46, Interpretation of the meaning)

The heart's relation with the ʿaql does not mean that they both are one and the same things as some have misunderstood, rather, for Ibn Taymīyah, it is one of the faculties of the heart with which a person's heart acquires understanding. The example which Ibn Taymīyah presents is that of an eye and its ability to see (sight). Just like sight refers to the ability to see which is mainly the function of one's eyes, similarly, to reason is the faculty of heart (Ibn Taymīyah, 1403, pp. 2/162).

While referring to the opinions of the majority of physicians and Imām Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, he admits that it would not be wrong to associate reason with one's brain as well as the word "qalb" is often used for multiple meanings. It also refers to the piece of flesh that is situated in the chest of a person's body and it also refers to the inner side of something. If one were to take the first meaning, then the "reason" relates to the heart that lies in the chest and if one were to choose the other meaning, then it can also relate to the brain (dimāgh) of an individual. He concludes by mentioning the opinion of the companions of Imām Aḥmad b. Hanbal: "The base of the reason is in the heart. However, once it perfects, it reaches the brain" (Ibn Taymīyah, 1415, pp. 9/303).

He believes that the origin of irādah (will) is the heart while the origin of thought and insight is the brain. He states:

> The correct opinion is that Rūḥ, which is actually Nafs, has a relation with this (brain) and that (heart) and with whatever the 'reason' (ʿaql) is associated with, it has a relation with this (brain) and that (heart); however, the origin of thought and insight is the brain while the origin of irādah (will) is the heart. (Ibn Taymīyah, 1415, pp. 9/303–304)

He explains the relation by expounding that in order for the heart to desire, the heart is dependent upon the brain to think and to imagine. Once the heart desires what the brain has conceived, the conception ascends back to the brain for further processing thereby relating the process with both; brain and heart (Ibn Taymīyah, 1415, pp. 9/304). In this way, Ibn Taymīyah attempts to align both understandings; one that associates reason with heart and the other that associates reason with brain.

## Ibn Taymīyah's understanding of love

He believes that an action is primarily the outcome of love and desire even if the act itself is disliked and detested. In such case the act is carried out in order to acquire a

desirable outcome. Therefore, love and desire are achieved either directly or indirectly. Sometimes, an individual is forced to do things that are not desirable just to acquire what is desirable and other times he detests doing what opposes his desire and liking. Ibn Taymīyah has authored a book on the topic of love by the name: *Qāʿidah fī al-Muḥabbah* (English: The Principle of Love). The purpose behind authoring the book was that he considers love and desire to be the foundation of every action or movement that is carried out by an individual in this world. Likewise, he considers hatred and displeasure to be the main causes of abandonment and neglect (Ibn Taymīyah (b), p. 10).

Ibn Taymīyah expounds that no living person would leave something that they desire unless that thing for which they have left is more desirable than the first. Likewise, one cannot expect from someone to do something that they dislike unless what they intend to acquire from it is more desirable. Additionally, no one leaves a desirable thing unless the outcome which that thing leads to is more undesirable than the desire itself (Ibn Taymīyah (b), pp. 10–11). He states:

> Every action is born out of love and desire; every inaction or avoidance of action is born out of hate and dislike; every person is a *hammām* (worker) and a *ḥārith* (person with intent) who loves and hates; there is no living person who does not possess these two emotions, and his actions are the consequence of his love and his hatred. (Ibn Taymīyah (b), p. 49)

Ibn Taymīyah considers love and desire to be the prerequisites of hatred and dislike. He believes love to be the very reason for the existence of hatred. In his opinion, a hated action only exists because of its opposition to something that is loved. "If love did not exist for that thing, there would be no hatred for its opposite" (Ibn Taymīyah (b), p. 11).

To conclude, Ibn Taymīyah considers love to be the cause of every action that occurs including the hatred and displeasure. He believes that all the creation works on the same principle. Every creation is bound to serve its Lord, i.e., Allāh and their service is actually what one considers to be the worship of the creator, i.e., *'Ibādah*. He gives the example of Angels and their service to their Lord and concludes that these acts are offered to serve Him or, in other words, worship him. And the foundation of every act of worship is love and humility. He states: "Hence, a person who loves Allāh's creation more than Him, he is claimed to be engaged in the act of worship" (Ibn Taymīyah (b), pp. 12–13).

The verse of the Qurʾān on which Ibn Taymīyah bases his understanding is as follows:

مِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يَتَّخِذُ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ أَندَادًا يُحِبُّونَهُمْ كَحُبِّ ٱللَّهِ (البقرة 165)

- *And [yet], among the people are those who take other than Allāh as equals [to Him]. They love them as they [should] love Allāh. But those who believe are stronger in love for Allāh.* (Al-Baqarah 2:165, Interpretation of the meaning)

Therefore, for Ibn Taymīyah, the common love and hatred that a group of people share becomes part of their religion, thereby considering love to be at the foundation of religion (Ibn Taymīyah (b), p. 50). He believes that there is nothing that can be

loved from all aspects of its being except Allāh, the Almighty; therefore, the concept of worship is specified for Him alone (Ibn Taymīyah (b), p. 17). The greatest form of love in the opinion of Ibn Taymīyah is Allāh's love and one's desire to worship Him alone without any partners whatsoever. Likewise, the greatest evil is to love others besides Allāh more than their love for Him and to make them equal partners (Ibn Taymīyah (b), p. 47).

Ibn Taymīyah believes that a person's desire and love must conform to the teachings of the Qur'ān and the Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ). A person must ensure that whatever he says or holds as an opinion must be in line with the textual evidence of *Sharī'ah*. While referring to Al-Mujāhid, he says:

> The best form of worship is good judgment, which is the judgment that follows the Sunnah … This is the reason the *Salaf* (righteous predecessors) used to call the people who employ their judgment in opposition to the Sunnah in theology and jurisprudence, the People of Desires (*ahl al-Hawā*), because a judgment that opposes the Sunnah is ignorance, not knowledge. Whoever does that is in fact following his desires without knowledge. (Ibn Taymīyah (b), p. 23)

He concludes his discussion with the following: "So every movement and every action in the world is based on love and desire, and every love or desire that is not based on the love for Allāh is futile and corrupt" (Ibn Taymīyah (b), p. 32).

Ibn Taymīyah associates the concept of *Dīn* with love and humility. According to him, *Dīn* refers to "what people submit themselves to outwardly and inwardly out of love and humility, unlike obedience to a ruler, which could be just done outwardly" (Ibn Taymīyah (b), p. 48). He further explains that "the religion (*Dīn*) is a habitual obedience that becomes a characteristic so that the one who is obeyed is loved and desired, because the basis of that is *al-Muḥabbah* (love) and *al-irādah* (will)" (Ibn Taymīyah (b), p. 52). Likewise, according to him, the basis of faith (Īmān) is also love (p. 69).

Ibn Taymīyah believes that love for the one who is worshipped (i.e., Allāh) is more important for an individual than his desire to eat and to nourish himself. The reason he gives is that if an individual is not provided nourishment for his body, then this would harm his body but if he is deprived of worship, then his soul will suffer. And a person's soul can only survive with worshipping Allāh without a partner. This is the innate nature of man with which a person is born. (Ibn Taymīyah (b), p. 63). However, as Ibn Taymīyah professes the belief of increase and decrease in faith, he argues that love in that way also increases and decreases. Sometimes, it is strong and other times it is weak. Likewise, sometimes even the strongest love can change into hatred (p. 69).

Ibn Taymīyah differs openly with some people from the *Jahmīyah* school of thought who explain the reality of love that Allāh has for His creation in terms of an action rather than a feeling. For them, Allāh's love for His creation refers to the goodness that He does for His creation. Likewise, some people see it to be in the sense of "beneficence" rather than love (Ibn Taymīyah (b), p. 73).

## Ibn Taymīyah's critique on the concept of *'ishq*

Ibn Taymīyah believes *'ishq* (a type of love) to be a psychological problem rather than something normal. He states: "This is why psychologists say that *al-'ishq* is a type of

obsessive disorder that resembles depression, so they classify it as a mental illness that causes delusions, like manic depression" (Ibn Taymīyah (b), pp. 80–81). In his famous opus on love and desire, he has also discussed the use of the word and *'ishq* for Allāh and the connotations attached. Ibn Taymīyah disagrees with the idea of using the word *'ishq* (English: passion or infatuation) for Allāh with the assumption that it is the perfect form of love and therefore, Allāh is most deserving of that because it is incumbent upon the creation to love Him completely and He loves His slaves completely in return (Ibn Taymīyah (b), p. 76). Ibn Taymīyah argues that in the Arabic language the word *'ishq* is mainly used in the context of sexual relations. It is rarely used to describe one's feelings for children, relatives, hometown, religion, etc., nor it is used in the context of something other than one's feeling for the physical appearance of the individual such as knowledge, religion, bravery, honour, etc. (Ibn Taymīyah (b), p. 77). In other words, no one says that I have *'ishq* for his knowledge, his bravery, etc. Likewise, no one uses it in the context of platonic love.

   He further argues that it is said about *'ishq* that it refers to a feeling of love that surpasses its objective thereby making it undesirable to be used for Allāh. Therefore, this kind of love cannot be attributed to Allāh because of two reasons; one, because Allāh, the Almighty, does not love what is more than necessary or that which surpasses its objective, and second, there is no limit set for His slaves to love their Lord. Therefore, to love their Lord more than limit holds no meaning (Ibn Taymīyah (b), p. 78). He further explains the reason while stating that the *'āshiq* (infatuating person) imagines the *ma'shūq* (infatuated one) to be different from the reality thereby experiencing delusion every time he imagines the beloved because of his *'ishq*, which is why both are obsessed with each other. If they recognise the reality of each other, they will not acquire such level of obsession (Ibn Taymīyah (b), p. 80). This further affirms that such concept cannot be associated with Allāh as Allāh's perfect knowledge necessitates His accurate and precise understanding of His creation even if He loves that creation. No one can assume about Allāh to be having such love and emotions for His creation that He becomes delusional of them (may Allāh forgive) (Ibn Taymīyah (b), p. 81).

   Ibn Taymīyah classifies *'ishq* into different levels (ascending order):

1   *al-'alaqah* (connection),
2   *aṣ-ṣabābah* (longing),
3   *al-ghirām* (infatuation),
4   and *at-Tatayyum* (obsession or addiction).

*Tatayyum* is a level of obsession where one is enslaved by his feelings and loses control over himself. This type of feeling takes the form of worship as the word *Taymullāh* means the slave of Allāh. Therefore, it is not difficult to conceive that an individual sometimes ends up worshipping the other person whom he or she is obsessed with (Ibn Taymīyah (b), p. 102). Consequently, *Shayṭān* (Satan or the devil) loves *'ishq*, and many people who are afflicted with it take *Shayṭān* as their ally and commit shirk (polytheism) due to their lack of sincerity for the love of Allāh (Ibn Taymīyah (b), p. 111).

   Thus, the Prophet (ﷺ) likened such obsession for someone with idolatry. The Prophet (ﷺ) said: "The one who drinks alcohol is like the worshipper of idols" (Ibn Majah). Ibn Taymīyah considers *'ishq* to be a form of intoxication as he says: "When

someone becomes intoxicated by alcohol, he usually remains in that state for a day or part of a day. However, when someone is intoxicated by desires and false love like *al-ʿishq*, he suffers from chronic intoxication" (Ibn Taymīyah (b), p. 111). Thereafter, he explains the basis of his understanding from the verse of the Qurʾān where Allāh describes the state of the people of *Lūṭ* (sodomites):

$$\text{لعمرك إنهم لفي سكرتهم يعمهون (الحجر 72)}$$

- *By your life, [O Muḥammad], indeed they were, in their intoxication, wandering blindly*. (Al-Hijr, 15:72, Interpretation of the meaning)

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# 11  Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawzīyah

## Introduction

Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawzīyah is one of the flag bearers of Islāmic psychology, though mainstream Islāmic psychologists today do not recognise him as one of the fore-runners of the field. Perhaps this is due to his different school of thought belonging to the *Atharī Salafī* tradition in contrast to Al-Ghazâlî and others who were known by their *Sūfī Ash'arī* tradition. Imām Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawzīyah is one of the leading polymaths of *Atharī Salafī* tradition. His approach differs in various aspects to those of his contemporaries or his predecessors. According to Ṣabāḥ,

> Whenever we look at our history and our intellectual heritage, we find numerous references to psychology in different forms and tastes. Ibn Qayyim is one of those who has contributed with an extensive work in the human psychological behaviour and the complexities therein. Even if we do not find references specifically under the title of '*Ilm al-Nafs* (Science of the soul), it is definitely there, and we really need to review the works of the classical scholars and deduce whatever we can and relate them to the contemporary issues. (p. 42)

## Ibn Qayyim's methodology of understanding the psycho-spiritual diseases and their cure

Like other classical scholars, Ibn Qayyim has thoughtfully chosen his sources of understanding the psycho-spiritual sicknesses and their cure. In his methodology, he primarily relies on the following resources:

### Transmission (Qur'ān and Sunnah)

Ibn Qayyim argues that there is not a disease or sickness whether that relates to one's heart or his body, except that an observer who is gifted by Allāh with a sound understanding can find its cure in the revelation. He states:

> As for the cure of hearts, there is no better way to acquire it except through the Prophets because the wellbeing of the heart depends upon the knowledge of Allāh, His Names, His Attributes, His actions and His injunctions, and in following what

pleases and refraining from what displeases Him. There is no absolute way to acquire life and the wellbeing of the heart except through His Prophets. As for those who assume that the wellbeing of the heart can be retained without obeying them, then they have made a sheer mistake in assuming that. (Ibn Qayyim, 1418, p. 72)

Similarly, he believes that both, physical and mental illnesses along with their cures, are mentioned in the Qur'ān (Ibn Qayyim, 1418, p. 69).

### Reason (al-ʿAql)

The second source in Ibn Qayyim's methodology is the intellect or reason. He has employed his reason in numerous ways to identify what he believes to cause an impact on one's psychological and mental health. He argues, "It requires one to ponder and reflect (by employing his reason) in preventing himself from inflicting identical disease" (Ibn Qayyim, 1406, p. 8). Equally, he does not believe in a possibility where a sound reason might digress in conforming to the authentic and unequivocal transmission of revelation. Similarly, it is implausible in Ibn Qayyim's view that the innate nature of man (i.e., *Fiṭrah*) can in any way disagree with the Islāmic teachings (i.e., *Sharīʿah*) (Ibn Qayyim, 1420, p. 822).

### Experimentation (al-Tajribah)

Ibn Qayyim acknowledges the importance of experiential knowledge in identifying and curing psychological and physical diseases. He argues that every society has its own practice and norm by which it prepares its medicine. Their medical practices and principles are based on their experience that they have acquired after practising number of years and obtaining results (Ibn Qayyim, 1416, p. 318). Elsewhere, he makes a comparison between the effort and the pain that one endures in the path of Allāh with which he bears in the path of evil. In his opinion, it can be determined by experience that the effort made in someone else's path renders more suffering and pain than the one made in Allāh's path (p. 318).

### Observation (al-Mulāḥaḍah)

Additionally, Ibn Qayyim is in favour of making use of one's senses and observation in determining the cure for psychological diseases. According to him, this field of medicine mainly relies on one's senses and experience, it is through senses and observation by which the knowledge about the nutrition and the medicine is acquired (Ibn Qayyim, 1416, p. 125). Nevertheless, despite acknowledging the importance of employing all faculties in determining the psychological diseases and their cure, Ibn Qayyim believes that the primary source on which all others depend is still the revelation from Allāh which is revealed to His beloved Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ). He concludes by reiterating: "The criterion, however, is the Book, the sound nature of man (i.e., *Fiṭrah*) and the reason which is Enlighted by the light of prophethood" (p. 319).

**Causes of spiritual and psychological diseases and their treatment**

Depression and anxiety, both relate to weakness in faith in a triangular relationship. Weakness in faith precipitates spiritual ailment which further constitutes psychological illness. The verse of the Qur'ān which expounds the aforementioned is as follows:

وَمَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَن ذِكْرِى فَإِنَّ لَهُ مَعِيشَةً ضَنكًا وَنَحْشُرُهُ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَـٰمَةِ أَعْمَىٰ (طه 124)

- *And whoever turns away from My remembrance – indeed, he will have a depressed [i.e., difficult] life, and We will gather [i.e., raise] him on the Day of Resurrection blind.* (Ta-ha 20:124, Interpretation of the meaning)

According to one of Ibn Qayyim's students, Ibn Kathīr, such individual suffers from a great deprivation of peace in this world and his heart suffers from chronic inner disorder such as anxiety, doubt, and delusion even if he appears to be blessed with the riches of this world (Ibn Kathīr, 1999, pp. 322–323). On the contrary, those who embrace faith and perform righteous actions are bestowed with a *Ṭayyib* (pleasant) life. Allāh, the Almighty, promises

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَـٰلِحًا مِّن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهُ حَيَوٰةً طَيِّبَةً ۖ وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُم بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ (النحل 97)

- *Whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer – We will surely cause him to live a good life, and We will surely give them their reward [in the Hereafter] according to the best of what they used to do*. (An-Nahl 16:97, Interpretation of the meaning)

Some of the classical exegetes have interpreted the term *Ṭayyib* with fulfilment and contentment (Ibn Kathīr, 1999, pp. 322–323). Therefore, the very foundation of Ibn Qayyim's understanding of psychological diseases, like his teacher, Ibn Taymīyah, rests on the idea of weakness in faith in Allāh which is inclusive of disobedience to His commandments and weakness in conviction. Ibn Qayyim strongly professes that the major cause of the constriction of heart is neglecting Allāh and associating one's heart with one other than Him. Consequently, one is enraptured in the internal suffering, misery, and exhaustion (Ibn Qayyim, 1406 AH, p. 25).

**Ibn Qayyim and psychosomatic concept**

Ibn Qayyim had rightly identified the relation between the physical and spiritual ailments. He has contributed both in the fields of spiritual and physical health. Therefore, it would be unjust not to give him credit for his famous contribution in the form of his treatise on Prophetic Medicine.

However, in comparison to the cure for physical diseases, he has greatly emphasised on the cure of psycho-spiritual diseases especially those that relate to the heart. According to Ibn Qayyim, focusing only on the betterment of one's physical condition while neglecting one's heart does not benefit an individual in terms of his health. However, in cases where the heart is given attention and the physical health is compromised, the harm is definitely caused but is bearable (Ibn Qayyim, 1418 AH, p. 100).

The idea that the psycho-spiritual well-being of an individual precedes his physical well-being is based on the Prophetic Ḥadīth that prophesied a three-year-long global famine just before the emergence of the anti-Christ. The Prophet (ﷺ) was asked about the survival of humanity to which he responded that remembrance of Allāh (*Dhikr*) will satisfy their bodily needs (Albanī, 1408).

Hence, Ibn Qayyim based his idea on his understanding of the heart. The example that he uses for the heart is that of a king who ensures his dominion over his subjects and his armies. The heart commands the limbs, and they obey. Therefore, the rectitude and the deviation of all depends on the soundness and the deviation of the heart (Ibn Qayyim, Ighāthah al-Lahfān, p. 05). The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) said:

> O people! Beware! Every king has a sanctuary and the sanctuary of Allāh on the earth is His illegal (forbidden) things. Beware! There is a piece of flesh in the body if it becomes good (reformed) the whole body becomes good but if it gets spoilt the whole body gets spoilt and that is the heart. (Bukhārī (a))

For Ibn Qayyim, psycho-spiritual and physical health have a natural relation and they cannot be treated independently. He greatly emphasises on acknowledging the strong impact that each have on other to the extent that they cannot survive independently. He states: "Among those things that have the strongest relation with each other in terms of proportion, interaction, influence on one another, is in between the soul and body" (Ibn Qayyim, 1418, p. 126). Accordingly, the impact of physical disease on mind and soul is inevitable and vice versa. He argues by expounding the impact depression and anxiety have on the appetite of an individual (Ibn Qayyim, 1418, p. 216). However, he acknowledges the difference between the impacts of both. In his opinion, the emotional and psychological pain causes more suffering than the one produced by the physical pain. He states: "Just like the heart is ached by the suffering caused to the body, the body suffers more when the heart is tormented" (Ibn Qayyim, 1418, p. 216). Such reciprocal relation between mind and heart is the foundation of psychosomatic field of medicine today. Similar understanding of mind and body and their ability to influence each other is traced back to the early generations of Islāmic scholarship to which Ibn Qayyim contributed in his time as well (p. 216).

## Ibn Qayyim's method of curing psychological and spiritual illnesses

Ibn Qayyim strongly believes that despite there being numerous ways and methods to cure psychological illnesses such as anxiety and depression, those that are most beneficial and effective are the ones that lead towards Allāh and are associated with Him. Ibn Qayyim's understanding of treating psychological illness rests primarily upon the model that is founded upon the faith (*Īmān*) in Allāh. By referring to some of the righteous scholars of the past, he expounds their observation of the people who make an attempt to flee from anxiety and depression by seeking refuge in marriage, eating, listening to music and other forms of indulgences. To their surprise, such indulgences were being suggested as a cure by the so-called intellectuals of their time while most of these cause further complications as none of them lead to Allāh, the Almighty, with whom lies all the cure and good (Ibn Qayyim, 1417, p. 279). He believes that when a spirit that yearns to seek Allāh's pleasure and gets closer to its Lord with Whom lies all

the cure and is the creator of the disease and the cure, for the spirit, such connection in and of itself becomes a cure and a source of strength as it finds contentment and satisfaction by getting closer to Him in an attempt to acquire what it longs for (Ibn Qayyim, 1418, p. 80). Hence, the primary source of treating psychological illness in Ibn Qayyim's opinion is a person's faith in Allāh.

### Faith in Allāh (Īmān)

For Ibn Qayyim, faith plays a major role in the treatment of psychological illnesses and disorders. Therefore, having faith in Allāh and to believe in His oneness (i.e., *Tawḥīd*) coupled with His obedience and avoidance from every form of disobedience strengthens one's soul and improves one's mental health. The strength of the soul provides one's mind and body the capability to overcome one's physical and mental illness. Therefore, Ibn Qayyim strongly emphasises the importance of faith in strengthening one's heart for bearing and overcoming all forms of illnesses. He emphasises that the medical treatments of all such psychological and spiritual diseases rest on three fundamental principles (see Figure 11.1).

- Preservation of one's psycho-spiritual health.
- Prevention from anything that seeks to cause harm to the mental and psychological health.
- Discharging and relieving all that causes it to lose balance and its strength.

According to Ibn Qayyim, the heart requires one to preserve its strength by strengthening faith in Allāh and carrying out acts of obedience. Additionally, it seeks to prevent all that can cause illness. This prevention is ensured by preventing one from engaging in acts of disobedience and sins. Finally, it seeks to relieve itself from all that has already inflicted it. This is ensured by repentance and *Istighfār* (seeking Allāh's forgiveness) (Ibn Qayyim, Ighāthah al-Lahfān, p. 17).
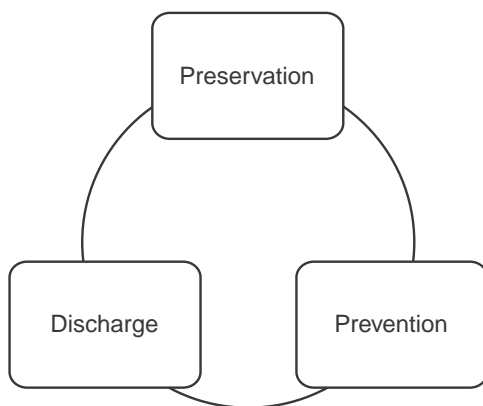


*Figure 11.1* Ibn Qayyim's fundamental principles of treatment interventions.

## Psychological treatment by carrying out acts of worship

Ibn Qayyim strongly believes that when a person engages himself in acts of obedience, he becomes closer to Allāh which constitutes feeling of success and contentment. This becomes a source of strength for him which consequently preserves his mental and psychological health. Following are the acts of worship that, in his opinion, play pivotal roles in preserving one's mental and psycho-spiritual health. This prevents a Muslim from becoming a victim of all sorts of mental and psychological diseases (Ibn Qayyim, 1416, p. 265).

### Ṣalāh (Prayer)

According to Ibn Qayyim, Ṣalāh is one of the primary sources of preserving, expanding, and attaining pleasure of the heart. By praying to Allāh, a believer employs all his body and strength in serving his Lord while standing before Him with the sole purpose of acquiring His pleasure. He severs his connection with the rest of the world and seeks pleasure and peace of the heart while standing before his Lord. Subsequently, he sees it to be the most effective cure for all kinds of diseases. However, Ibn Qayyim agrees that such pleasure is not experienced by all and only few with the sound heart can experience such feelings. For this he gives the analogy of a healthy body that is feeding on wasteful food. He states, "An exalted heart is like an exalted body which cannot survive on a wasteful food" (Ibn Qayyim, 1418, p. 279). According to him, where prayer benefits an individual by becoming a source of all the goodness in this world it also prevents him from committing evil and consequently protects him from becoming a victim of diseases that afflict his heart and mind thereby causing harm to his mental and spiritual health (Ibn Qayyim, 1406, p. 209).

### Al-Dhikr (Remembrance of Allāh)

On numerous occasions, Ibn Qayyim emphasises the importance of remembering Allāh and using it as a cure for psychological illnesses including anxiety and depression. He states:

> There are hundred benefits of *al-Dhikr*. It relives a person from anxiety and depression, it strengthens a person's heart and body, it provides the heart with pleasure, joy, expansion and ingrains love (for Allāh) which is the spirit of Islām. (Ibn Qayyim, 1408, p. 61)

He further reiterates: "Indeed the remembrance of Allāh is the cure and treatment for the heart while heedlessness is its disease; therefore, for a diseased heart, the cure and treatment lies in the remembrance of Allāh" (Ibn Qayyim, 1408 AH, p. 99). This understanding of Ibn Qayyim rests on the following Ḥadīth of the Prophet (ﷺ):

> And those persons who assemble in the house among the houses of Allāh (mosques) and recite the Book of Allāh and they learn and teach the Qur'ān (among themselves) there would descend upon them tranquillity and mercy would cover them and the angels would surround them and Allāh mentions them in the presence of those near Him. (Muslim (a)).

### *Al-Ṣabr (Patience)*

The third most essential practice to preserve one's mental and psychological health in Ibn Qayyim's opinion is patience. Ibn Qayyim defines patience as: "Restraining oneself from acting that is *makrūh* (disapproved), controlling one's tongue from uttering complains and awaiting relief from Allāh while enduring pain" (Ibn Qayyim, 1419 (c), p. 474). According to him, patience is the most effective preventive measure that one can take against all sorts of psychological and mental illnesses. He states: "And the major sicknesses of the body originate from lack of patience. There is no way better to preserve the health of one's heart, body and spirit except through patience" (Ibn Qayyim, 1418, p. 387). Patience helps an individual in preventing numerous forms of psychological illnesses. Patience when coupled with *Yaqīn* (certainty in Allāh) and trust in Allāh yields a certain form of spiritual strength that qualifies him to bear and preserve his mental and psycho-spiritual health when dealing with psychological problems. According to Ibn Qayyim, when patience and certainty is lost, things become difficult for him but when his certainty and patience is strengthened, every form of difficulty and distress becomes easier for the believer to endure (Ibn Qayyim, 1419 (a), p. 139).

For him, patience has three aspects.

- Patience on carrying out acts of obedience.
- Patience on avoiding sins and acts of disobedience.
- Patience on the Decree of Allāh.

In order to experience the outcomes, one must cover all three forms of patience (Ibn Qayyim, 1418, p. 387). This concept of patience mainly originates from the concept of faith in Islām. Islām expects from its adherents to submit themselves to the will of Allāh by carrying out acts of obedience, avoiding acts of disobedience, and by enduring patiently what Allāh decrees for them. Ibn Qayyim views patience as a *ra's* (head) of faith. He states: "That is the reason patience is to faith like head is to the body. Therefore, the one who lacks patience, he lacks faith, like a headless body" (Ibn Qayyim, 1416 (a), p. 149). He goes on mentioning the following Ḥadīth of the Prophet (ﷺ): "And whoever remains patient, Allāh will make him patient. Nobody can be given a blessing better and greater than patience" (Bukhārī (b)).

### *Al-Du‘ā (Supplication)*

Ibn Qayyim considers invoking Allāh in times of difficulty to be a believer's strongest defence against all forms of challenges and difficulties of life (Ibn Qayyim, 1417, p. 492). It is one of the most effective sources to relieve one from emotional problems. Through supplication, a believer relieves himself from distress in front of Allāh by opening up his heart, and in return being blessed by peace and tranquillity of the heart. The mentioned opinion is based on numerous supplications taught by the Prophet (ﷺ) to provide one with emotional stability and to help him get out of stress. For example, Asmā' bint al-‘Umays states: "The Messenger of Allāh said to me: 'May I not teach you phrases which you utter in distress?' (These are:) 'Allāh is my Lord, I do not associate anything as partner with Him'" (Abū Dāwūd (a)).

Likewise, the Prophet (ﷺ) taught his companions supplications to get out of anxiety and depression. For example, Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī narrates:

One day the Messenger of Allāh entered the mosque. He saw there a man from the Anṣār called Abū Umāmah. He said: 'What is the matter that I am seeing you sitting in the mosque when there is no time of prayer?' He said: 'I am entangled in anxiety and debts, O Messenger of Allāh.' He replied: 'Shall I not teach you words by which, when you say them, Allāh will remove your anxiety, and settle your debt?' He said: 'Why not, Messenger of Allāh?' He said: 'Say in the morning and evening: 'O Allāh, I seek refuge in You from anxiety and depression, I seek refuge in You from incapacity and slackness, I seek refuge in You from cowardice and niggardliness, and I seek in You from being overcome by debt and being put in subjection by men.' He (Abū Umāmah) said: 'When I did that Allāh relieved me from my anxiety and settled my debt. (Abū Dāwūd (b))

### *Al-Istighfār and Al-Tawbah (Seeking forgiveness and repentance)*

Regret for committing sins is one of the major causes of psychological illnesses that deprive one from living a life with peace and satisfaction. Committing sins in fact causes one to realise his weakness and leads to low self-esteem. Once the person repents, he is relieved of the regret and consequently acquires peace of the heart. According to Ibn Qayyim, *Istighfār* and repentance dissolve all such impediments that hinder a person's relation with Allāh. "When a person is disconnected with Allāh, he is raided by anxiety, depression and all such problems from every side and they enter upon him from every door (of his life)" (Ibn Qayyim, 1420, p. 752). Ibn Qayyim believes that the sins are the biggest cause of anxiety, depression, and congestion of one's heart and all other diseases of the heart. Therefore, there is no cure for such diseases except through repentance and seeking Allāh's forgiveness (Ibn Qayyim, 1418, p. 279).

## Treatment through changing the thinking process (cognitive restructuring)

Ibn Qayyim strongly believes that by changing the thinking process of a person suffering from psychological illness, one can treat such illnesses (Cognitive Behaviour Therapy). Ibn Qayyim identifies alternative thought processes that if inculcated correctly can change the thinking pattern of a person suffering from negative thoughts that are destructive and self-defeating. According to Ibn Qayyim, a person's negative thoughts should be replaced with following to preserve his mental and psychological health.

1   **It is from the Sunnah (ways) of Allāh that each individual will be inflicted with problems such as anxiety, depression, etc.**

Ibn Qayyim believes that a true believer must acknowledge this fact that such problems are part of this life, and this is the way Allāh created this world. A person cannot escape from such problems just like he cannot escape from feeling hot and cold and other physical diseases that afflict an individual throughout his life in numerous forms (Ibn Qayyim, Ighāthah al-Lahfān, p. 189). In other words, a person needs to change his perspective and consider such problems to be inevitable against the gift of life that is bestowed upon him. Therefore, according to Ibn Qayyim, whosoever assumes that he can prevent himself from any form of pain or ailment then this person is deluded because the creation of man necessitates that it will bear pain and pleasure

and in order to live, he would have to endure problems like fear and grief (Ibn Qayyim, 1420, p. 672).

**2   A person should realise that such challenges of life are necessary to elevate him in this life in terms of success.**

According to Ibn Qayyim, Allāh loves and expects from His beloved slaves to worship him in both instances of pain and pleasure and in times of difficulty and ease. On each occasion, Allāh has expectations from His slaves that are suited to the condition that a person is involved in. Consequently, a believer is expected to respond in a manner that is expected of him as that prescribed manner is the only way through which a person can maintain balance and preserve his psychological and mental health just like a person is required to do so in conditions where he has to act by his physical conditions. Such difficulties and tribulations are essential for acquiring humanly perfection and perfect balance in life (Ibn Qayyim, Ighāthah al-Lahfān, p. 190). In other words, the outcome of these afflictions is ultimately going to benefit a believer. Ibn Qayyim states: "These tragedies and afflictions are like a cure for a believer to take out himself from the diseases that if they were to remain would cause harm to him, diminish his reward, and downgrade him in front of Allāh" (Ibn Qayyim, Ighāthah al-Lahfān, p. 189). Then he goes on quoting the following words of the Prophet (ﷺ):

> Strange are the ways of a believer for there is good in every affair of his and this is not the case with anyone else except in the case of a believer for if he has an occasion to feel delight, he thanks (God), thus there is a good for him in it, and if he gets into trouble and shows resignation (and endures it patiently), there is a good for him in it. (Muslim (b))

**3   It is important to understand that this world is a house of affliction, and one must not expect only comfort.**

In Ibn Qayyim's opinion, the pleasure of this world is nothing but like a dreamer's dream or like a shadow that will soon dissolve. He states: "The one who laughs more, cries more; the one who experiences pleasure for an hour, often suffers for years." He goes on quoting Ibn Sīrīn's words: "There is not a laughter except that the cry follows it after" (Ibn Qayyim, 1418, p. 263).

**4   A believer needs to know that whatever he suffers from, he will be rewarded against that suffering and it will become a source of expiation of his sins.**

When a person starts to believe that whatever he suffers from, it is sent upon him to elevate him in the Hereafter and will be compensated by Allāh against his pain, he finds strength in him to endure such suffering. Ibn Qayyim believes that if a person was shown what his Lord has preserved for him against the suffering that he has endured, he would realise that what is preserved for him is far better than his prevention from those sufferings (Ibn Qayyim, 1418, p. 263). This is based on the following Ḥadīth of the Prophet (ﷺ) which was narrated in following words: "No fatigue, nor disease, nor sorrow, nor sadness, nor pain, nor distress befalls a Muslim, even if it were the prick he receives from a thorn, but that Allāh expiates some of his sins for that" (Bukhārī (c)).

Additionally, a person would be able to acquire the love of His creator. Allāh says

وَٱللَّهُ يُحِبُّ ٱلصَّـٰبِرِينَ (آل عمران 146)

- *And Allāh loves the steadfast.* (Al-i'Imran 3:146, Interpretation of the meaning)

Ibn Qayyim urges that the benefit of observing patience in times of trials and tribulations outweighs the benefit of its prevention. Likewise, losing the reward of patience is worse than the affliction itself. Expressing lack of patience pleases Shayṭān, weakens the person's psychologically, and consequently leads to the loss of what was supposed to be the compensation (Ibn Qayyim, 1418, p. 265). Ibn Qayyim's suggestion is founded upon the following Prophetic words:

On the Day of Judgement, when the people who were tried (in this world) are given their rewards, the people who were pardoned (in life), will wish that their skins had been cut off with scissors while they were in the world. (Tirmidhī (a))

### 5   A person should observe the state of those who are in worse conditions than him.

According to Ibn Qayyim, a person becomes more capable of bearing the pain if he is able to see people who are in worse conditions and are enduring greater suffering than him. He believes that when a person in pain starts to look around, he will see that wherever there is ease, there is suffering. Wherever one goes, he will find people who have endured pain for the loss of their loved ones or for some other difficulty. This observation and realisation will extinguish the fire of pain in him to certain extent (Ibn Qayyim, 1418, p. 263).

### 6   A person should know that what has befallen him, he could not have avoided it as it was decreed.

Ibn Qayyim emphasises that an individual must know that every tragedy that afflicts him is decreed to befall him. He states: "One should know that what has befallen him, it could not have missed him and what has missed him, it could not have befallen him" (Ibn Qayyim, 1418, p. 263). He then goes on quoting the *āyah* [verse] of the Qur'ān:

مَآ أَصَابَ مِن مُّصِيبَةٍ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِىٓ أَنفُسِكُمْ إِلَّا فِى كِتَـٰبٍ مِّن قَبْلِ أَن نَّبْرَأَهَآ ۚ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ (الحديد 22)

- *No disaster strikes upon the earth or among yourselves except that it is in a register1 before We bring it into being – indeed that, for Allāh, is easy."* (Al-Hadid 57:22, Interpretation of the meaning)

### 7   The seriousness of the calamity is normally according to the strength of a believer's faith.

According to Ibn Qayyim, such endurance is measured with the level of sincerity, obedience, and the strength of faith that exists in his heart. Allāh does not burden a

believer with more than what he can bear. If He were to test him with such trials anyway, he does so by subsiding the level of difficulty, challenge, and suffering (Ibn Qayyim, Ighāthah al-Lahfān, p. 188). The purpose of this trial is to expiate a believer's sins. This understanding of Ibn Qayyim finds its roots in the following words of the Prophet. The Prophet (ﷺ) was asked: "O Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ)! Which of the people is tried most severely?" He said:

> The Prophets, then those nearest to them, then those nearest to them. A man is tried according to his religion; if he is firm in his religion, then his trials are more severe, and if he is frail in his religion, then he is tried according to the strength of his religion. The servant shall continue to be tried until he is left walking upon the earth without any sins. (Tirmidhī (b))

### 8   The calamity has befallen him not to punish him but to test his patience.

To realise that the calamity which has befallen him is not to punish him but to test his patience and to bless him in return would strengthen a believer's heart in Ibn Qayyim's opinion. He states:

> (One must realise) that the one who afflicted him with such calamity is the wisest of all, the most merciful and He does not inflict such calamities to destroy him or to punish him, neither is He in need of it and He has afflicted him to test his patience and his love for Him and the amount of faith he has in Him and to listen to his call made in humility in front of him, seeking ease while standing heartbroken in front of Him and complaining in front of Him. (In Qayyim, 1418, p. 267)

### Conclusion

If one were to conclude, Ibn Qayyim sees disobedience, distancing from Allāh, The Almighty, and the weakness of faith to be the major causes of all types of psychological, mental, and spiritual problems. He adopts a preventive approach and suggests strengthening one's faith in Allāh and turning towards him through acts of obedience and repentance in order to seek the right cure. The method he adopts to identify such diseases and their cure is through understanding the revelation primarily and then employing sound reasoning in acquiring knowledge through observation, experimentation, and senses.

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# 12 Ar-Rāghib Al-Aṣbahānī

## Introduction and context

There are certain ambiguities regarding the life of Al-Aṣbahānī. Numerous biographers have attempted to write on his life and to gather information, but that information is not sufficient enough to mention something significant about him. First and foremost, there is difference of opinion regarding his actual name. Some have argued that his name is al-Mufaḍḍal b. Muḥammad while others say that he was al-Ḥusayn b. al-Mufaḍḍal b. Muḥammad. The majority of the sources evince the name Abū al-Qāsim al-Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad b. al-Mufaḍḍal al-Aṣbahānī. Likewise, there is uncertainty about his birth and death dates. One can say that he was born in 499 AH and died most probably in 502 AH (Khalīfah, 1429, p. 668).

There is not much to say about his life apart from his travels between al-Baghdād and al-Aṣbahān where he was mostly engaged in acquiring and disseminating the religious knowledge. As for his school of thought, some have argued that he followed the Shāfi'ī school of thought and professed Shī'ī or Mu'tazilī theological beliefs (Khalīfah, 1429, p. 669). However, after the detailed analysis of Al-Aṣbahānī's opinions regarding theological schools, Dr 'Umar 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sārīsī concludes that he belonged to the Sunnī school in general and *ahl-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'āh* in particular based on his perspicuous statement *regarding al-Firqah al-Nājīyah* (i.e., the group that will survive with the help from Allāh according to the Prophetic prediction) in one of the manuscripts of his epistle on *'Aqīdah* (*theology*) *where he corroborates that this group is none other than ahl* al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah (Abu 'Amr, 2007).

## Ar-Rāghib Al-Aṣbahānī's books

He has authored books on numerous aspects of Islām. While writing, he adopts a comparative approach and does not confine himself to one specific school or writes with a biased view. He brings forth benefits from all schools of Sunnī theology. It is said about him that Al-Ghazâlî was fond of him and his work especially the *adh-Dharî'ah ilā Makārim al-Sharī'ah* (Means to the Excellence of Islāmic Teachings) (Khalīfah, 1429, p. 669). He has greatly emphasised on understanding the Qur'ānic exegesis by means of first acquiring the understanding of its terms (Ar-Rāghib, n.d., p. 6).

There are two books in particular where he disseminates his understanding of different aspects of Islāmic psychology: The first was mentioned earlier by the title *adh-Dharî'ah* and the other entitled as *Tafṣīl al-Nash'atayn wa Taḥṣīl al-Sa'ādatayn* (Detail of Two

Developments and the Acquisition of Two Successes). The primary objective of authoring the latter was to identify the path through which one can attain the success of this world and the Hereafter. While touching on different fields of psychology, He has discussed numerous actions and characteristics in the light of Islāmic guidelines that are essential to achieve the success of both lives (Hilami, 2013).

In his famous opus, he has answered three fundamental questions of life:

- How are we created?
- For whom are we created?
- Where is our return?

## Self-actualisation and estimation

Al-Aṣbahānī has greatly emphasised the importance of man's realisation of his self and his reality. While touching on the teleological nature of man's existence, he has expounded by different means the reality and the purpose of man's creation on the earth. Similarly, he has expounded a methodology through which one can progress and elevate himself to the status for which Allāh has created him, i.e., *khalīfah* (viceregent) on His earth. He lists seven benefits of knowing the reality of oneself is that a man begins to identify his shortcomings. Once he has identified his shortcomings, he begins to realise that others are far better than him which allows him to walk on the path of self-improvement rather than finding faults in others. Likewise, the one who knows himself is able to find God. He deplores man's negligence of realising the reality of himself (*ḥaqīqah*) while only being concerned over the appearance and neglecting the inner self. In his opinion, in order to acquire success and happiness in this world, a person must comprehend the reality of his self (Al-Aṣbahānī, 1988, pp. 61–67).

He believes that the world was created for the service of man so that he can benefit from it. All that acquired existence and progressed in development, did so for the benefit of man. While presenting the idea, he refers to the different passages of Qur'ān thereby professing the importance and the status of man among the creation that inhabits the earth. He goes on further and states the purpose of man's creation. Everything in this world is created for the disposal of man and the man is created to serve His Lord through His worship (*'ibādah*) (Al-Aṣbahānī, 1988, pp. 100–103). Thereafter, he concludes that whoever does not meet the purpose for which he was created, then it is not befitting for him to reserve the title of "man." He bases his understanding on the following verse of the Qur'ān:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ ٱلْجِنَّ وَٱلْإِنسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ (الذاريات 56)

- *And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me*. (Adh-Dhariyat 51:56, Interpretation of the meaning)

Thus, it can be stated that only through serving the purpose for which man is created, he can acquire self-actualisation and self-estimation which would in return lead him to the path of success in this world and the Hereafter for which he was created (Khalīfah, 1429, pp. 672–673). Al-Aṣbahānī mentions four levels of man's progress (see Figure 12.1) that are attained through ensuring certain behaviours and avoiding their respective detriments (Al-Aṣbahānī, 1973, pp. 70–73).
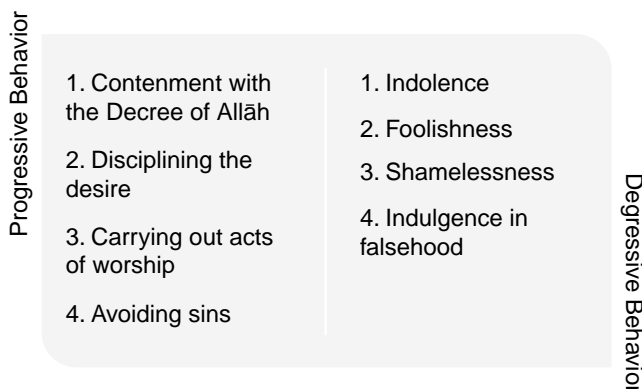
*Figure 12.1* Al-Aṣbahānī's four levels of man's progress.

Only through Sharī'ah one can acquire true form of happiness and success. Success in his opinion can be bifurcated into instrumental or the ultimate success. He considers instrumental success to be of this world and the success of the Hereafter to be the ultimate success and happiness (Al-Aṣbahānī, 1988, pp. 154–164).

## Al-Aṣbahānī's understanding of educational psychology

Al-Aṣbahānī attempts to define knowledge and differentiate between the associate terms that are often used synonymously. He defines knowledge to be knowing and getting access to the reality of certain things. Likewise, he understands *dirāyah* to be the knowledge of the acquired with the help of examples. Similarly, he explains wisdom to be any beneficial knowledge and the righteous action that is performed accordingly (Al-Aṣbahānī, 1973, pp. 81–93).

He categorises knowledge and information into different categories. He classifies knowledge into what is only reserved with the Prophets and Messengers of Allāh and cannot be acquired by man; what can be acquired with minimal effort and what is acquired with great effort generally. Likewise, he classifies information by relating one of its types to the word, the other with the word and its meaning and the third that is associated only with the meaning divorced of word (i.e., expression). He encourages people to acquire information and knowledge of different disciplines without belittling anyone as each has its own use and benefit. Likewise, he urges people to take a free time out from their worldly affairs by limiting their involvement in order to acquire beneficial knowledge. He also advises teachers who teach the person in different capacities to employ wisdom and compassion for the student and also make sure that they continue to stride on the path of knowledge (Al-Aṣbahānī, 1973, pp. 134–145).

Al-Aṣbahānī differentiates between the types of wisdom when spoken to with reference to Allāh and when spoken to with reference to a human being. When it is spoken with reference to Allāh then it referred to the "Knowledge of the things and their creation with utmost perfection and precision." Similarly, when it is spoken with reference to a human being then it means, "To have knowledge of the existing and the righteous actions" (Al-Aṣbahānī, 1973, p. 126). He believes that there are two types of

people who can acquire wisdom: First: The one who has a refined understanding, he is faithful in his action, and he has made for himself a purpose to develop a true believer of himself as the very essence of reason and action is faith. Therefore, the person who is not a believer, he is only considered a believer figuratively as he has not acquired the status of humanity which is based on the knowledge of Allāh and His worship. Second: The second type of person is the one to whom Allāh has bestowed wisdom as there are some blessed people who are given wisdom by inspiration (*ilhām*) from Allāh. Al-Aṣbahānī criticises the Greek Philosophers and those who associate wisdom to them. In his opinion, they were wise people but they never acted accordingly (Hilami, 2013). Consequently, he has emphasised acting according to one's practice. He has gathered numerous quotations of the scholars in order to expound the loss of knowledge in the absence of knowledge. In his opinion, knowledge without action is nothing but a source of sins. And he quotes a man who said to another man with knowledge and lacking action: "O you! If your whole life is spent on gathering weapons, when will you fight?" (Al-Aṣbahānī, 1973, pp. 115–116).

## Man's physical and cognitive development

While discussing the reality of man's self, he discusses both, the outer and the inner aspects of man's existence. As he touches the scope of developmental psychology, he discusses man's development from fertilisation in mother's womb till his death and the instincts that he develops over time and the faculties that he acquires during his life on the earth. According to Al-Aṣbahānī,

> man progresses through the stages of development, both physically and cognitively by means of his *shahwah* (carnal desires) and knowledge, respectively. However, often his carnal desires hinder his cognitive development by preventing him from acquiring excellence in knowledge and virtue? (Al-Aṣbahānī, 1973, pp. 72–75)

## Individual differences and personality theories

While touching on to the topic of social psychology, Al-Aṣbahānī argues in favour of the classification and the hierarchical structure of the societies. He acknowledges the individual differences found within the human race and different personality traits that the individual possesses in order to play his social role in life. He believes that such variation and individual differences are necessary in order for the man to complement each other to successfully acquire the status of *khilāfah* on earth (Al-Aṣbahānī, 1988, pp. 111–114). He goes on mentioning the causes of these differences such as the impact socialisation and model behaviour has on the personality building of an individual. He identifies seven major factors that constitute variations:

> These amount to differences in *amzijah* (temperament), in structure (innate disposition), in the circumstances of parents with respect to goodness and corruption, in the composition of sperm, in diet, in nursing, in nurturing the child with good and bad habits, and in the process of self-purification by means of knowledge and practice. (Al-Aṣbahānī, 1988, pp. 115–120)

In doing so, he discusses the presence and the virtue of the Prophets who are the most perfect of the creation of human beings. They are bestowed with knowledge that is often reserved with angels while at the same time enjoy the human nature of themselves in terms of food and drink (Al-Aṣbahānī, 1988, p. 128). He also emphasises the importance of acquiring those competencies and capabilities that secure a man's position as the guardian or the leader. Al-Aṣbahānī considers following the truth and standing up against the foe of Muslims to be the most important characteristics that a leader must equip himself with (Al-Aṣbahānī, 1988, pp. 92–99).

## Interdependency of *Sharīʿah* and reason and cognitive abilities

The reason cannot function up to its fullest potential and acquire guidance without the help of **Sharīʿah**, and neither does *Sharīʿah* elucidate without reason. Therefore, for a human being, both interdepend on each other. He believes that self-actualisation can only be achieved through acquiring the understanding of one's existence and its purpose *which is dictated by the reasonable understanding of the Sharīʿah. Al-Aṣbahānī considers Sharīʿah* to be the primary source of preventing oneself from the psychological diseases that one can be afflicted with. *Sharīʿah* is like a purifying water that cleanses all the impurities that can inflict an individual (Al-Aṣbahānī, 1988, pp. 154–156).

He emphasises on the importance of reason by bifurcating reason into two forms:

1   Innate reasoning abilities (*gharīzī*)
2   Acquirable (*muktasab*)

This classification implies that there is a certain part of cognitive ability that is inherited through genes while the other part is acquired through nurturing (Al-Aṣbahānī, 1973, pp. 74–76). The development of these cognitive abilities highly depends on the guidance of *Sharīʿah*. In other words, only through *Sharīʿah* guidelines, one can develop his mental and cognitive abilities to their fullest potential (Al-Aṣbahānī, 1973, pp. 154–156). He alludes to numerous positive outcomes of employing the reason in the right direction and way. The most important of which is that it allows one to recognise His Lord, avoid his disobedience and stride across the path of truth (pp. 134–135).

## Behavioural treatment through *ʿIbādah* (worship)

While dealing with conception and belief system, Al-Aṣbahānī defines *ʿibādah* (worship) to be an act carried out by free will which is detrimental and against the physical desires and is carried out solely to get near to Allāh through obedience of His teachings (*Sharīʿah*). He bifurcates worship into knowledge (*ʿilm*) and practice (*ʿamal*). He further classifies knowledge into theoretical and practical. Theoretical knowledge mainly deals with the *maʿrifah* (knowledge) of Allāh while practical knowledge refers to the knowledge that is materialised only through knowledge. As for action or practice, he classifies it into three types; one that relates with the heart, the second that relates with one's body, and the third that is materialised by the combination of both (body and heart) (Al-Aṣbahānī, 1988, pp. 159–164). Figure 12.2 shows the behavioural treatment through *ʿibādah* (worship).

*Figure 12.2* Behavioural treatment through '*Ibādah* (worship).

Similarly, in establishing acts of worship, Al-Aṣbahānī categories people into the following four categories:

- Those who have necessary knowledge and the resolve to carry out the act of worship.
- Those who have neither of the two.
- Those who have knowledge but lack the will to carry out the action.
- Those who lack knowledge but have the will to carry out the action.

Al-Aṣbahānī does not differentiate between the last two categories as in both cases the result is the same as in both cases the action does not take place (Al-Aṣbahānī, 1988, pp. 190–196). It is important to note that he does not confine the term '*ibādah* (worship) to merely acting against one's desires. Rather he gives it a comprehensive outlook whereby whatever a believer performs; it has the potential to be called an act of worship provided if he performs it for the sake of Allāh. Consequently, his endeavours in the life of this world where he tries to acquire the worldly success by employing faculties and the resources that he has been provided, all of it is regarded as worship provided the intention is of pleasing Allāh (Hilami, 2013). This understanding is based on the following narration of the Prophet (ﷺ): "You will be rewarded for whatever you spend for Allāh's sake even if it were a morsel which you put in your wife's mouth" (Bukhārī). He professes that the purpose of man's existence is to worship his Lord and the purpose of worship is to purify his self (*nafs*) from the impurities so that he can acquire a never-ending life and

sustainability with peace. There are numerous diseases that afflict a person's self such as laziness, ignorance, injustice, stinginess, and others which deprive a person from progressing in life, and one cannot overcome them without turning to Allāh (Al-Aṣbahānī, 1988, pp. 173–174).

Mainly, there are three faculties that a man is gifted with that require discipline and purification so that man can enjoy potential benefits and outcomes:

- Ardent Desires (*Shahwah*)
- Zeal (*ḥamīyah*)
- Conception or thought (*fikr*)

By reforming the desires, one acquires *'iffah* (abstinence); by reforming zeal, one acquires *shujā'ah* (courage), and by reforming thought one acquires wisdom (Al-Aṣbahānī, 1988, pp. 173–174). Al-Aṣbahānī differentiates between those human characteristics that are nurtured and those that are inherited genetically. He believes that there are certain aspects that can be changed while others are difficult to change. Having said that, he believes that the most difficult part of human nature to control is his *shahwah* (desires) but they are required to be controlled the most (Al-Aṣbahānī, 1973, pp. 31–41). In order to discipline one's desires, Al-Aṣbahānī offers the behavioural modification through the concept of *ḥayā'* (modesty, morality, shamefulness, etc.). *Ḥayā'* in his understanding refers to the constriction of oneself from acting immorally. This is the first trait, which according to him, emerges among children. As for *khajal*, he refers to it as the hesitation which occurs as a result of extreme shamefulness and modest outlook. Al-Aṣbahānī believes that it is a praiseworthy characteristic in children and women but not in men. As for *waqāḥah* (boldness) is the urge to act immorally and is therefore an inappropriate behaviour (Al-Aṣbahānī, 1973, pp. 145–147).

In *ad-Dharī'ah* [book], he differentiates between different types of actions: *Al-Fi'l* is a general word which is said to be any action that is performed either skillfully or without a skill, based on knowledge or out of ignorance, intentionally or unintentionally, carried out by a human or an animal. As for *al-'amal*, it refers to the action that is carried out intentionally, with knowledge by a living being excluding plants. *Al-ṣun'* (manufacturing/production) in his opinion refers to the action of only a human being unlike other living creatures and is based on skill only (Al-Aṣbahānī, 1973, p. 221).

## Al-Aṣbahānī's theory of different emotions

Al-Aṣbahānī discusses anger and the associated feelings from both physiological and psychological aspects in his book *ad-Dharī'ah*. Once a person is overwhelmed with the feeling of anger, the blood begins to rush to the heart thereby making the heart rate grow. This feeling yields certain other associated emotions such as grief, anger, and grudge (Al-Aṣbahānī, 1973, p. 167). Thereafter, he appears to be fond of differentiating between different emotions such *ghibṭah* (exultation), *munāfasah* (rivalry/competition), and *ḥiqd* (grudge). He expounds how virtuous it can be to be able to control one's anger and not being overwhelmed by it. While discussing the importance of observing patience, he indicates different forms of patience which includes bodily

patience and psychological patience where the latter is believed to be more important than the former (Al-Aṣbahānī, 1973, pp. 107–111).

Furthermore, he discusses love and its different forms and virtues. For him, love can be defined as the self's inclination to something that it deems beneficial and good. He bifurcates love into two types: One that is natural and the second which is by choice. He also believes that justice (*'adl*) must be the supervisor of love as it compensates love in matters where love is absent (Al-Aṣbahānī, 1973, pp. 191–192).

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# 13 Jamāl al-Dīn Abū al-Faraj 'Abd al-Raḥmān Ibn Al-Jawzī

## Introduction

Ibn Al-Jawzī is Jamāl al-Dīn Abū al-Faraj 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Alī b. Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-Qurashī, known by the name Ibn Al-Jawzī. He belonged to the Ḥanbalī School of Jurisprudential Thought and authored numerous books on different disciplines of Islāmic sciences. He grew up without a father but was nurtured under the supervision of his mother and paternal uncle (the brother of his father). He did not socialise much with other people and spent most of his time at home engaged in learning. Like his paternal uncle, his maternal uncle (the brother of his mother) assisted him in the journey of knowledge and helped him acquiring knowledge of Ḥadīth. He acquired knowledge of Qur'ān from numerous experts and benefitted from a great number of teachers who were experts in their respective fields of Islāmic sciences. He recorded the accounts of his 86 teachers, three of whom were females, in his book: "*Mashyakhah Ibn Al-Jawzī*" (Sheikhdom of Ibn Al-Jawzī) (Abd al-Mun'im, 2008, p. 883).

## Ibn Al-Jawzī's understanding of cognitive development and developmental psychology

Like his predecessors, Ibn Al-Jawzī was strongly motivated to explore what amounts to a beneficial nurturing starting from childhood to dotage. Unlike modern cognitive psychology, Ibn Al-Jawzī's perspective of cognitive development was far broader and comprehensive. In other words, contemporary psychology views the cognitive development of an individual in the context of acquiring progressive and qualitative changes in the mental abilities thereby confining perception to only two levels, sensory and cognitive levels (Shehu, 2015, p. 5). Contrary to this, scholars like Ibn Al-Jawzī add one more level to the development of perception. Therefore, as we shall see, the works of Ibn Al-Jawzī cover all three areas of cognitive development: the *ḥiss* (organs), *'aql* (reason), and the *qalb* (heart) (Shehu, 2015, p. 3). Ibn Al-Jawzī has classified the human cognitive development in six stages. The first stage which Ibn Al-Jawzī does not specifically discuss but has made indications is the stage that covers from the conception till the birth of a child. The rest of the five stages, starting from birth till death, are named as *mawāsim al-'Umr* (seasons of age or life) rather than al-*marāḥil* (stages or phases) (Abd al-Rashīd 'Aṭṭār, 1998, p. 193). Figure 13.1 presents Ibn Al-Jawzī's human cognitive development.
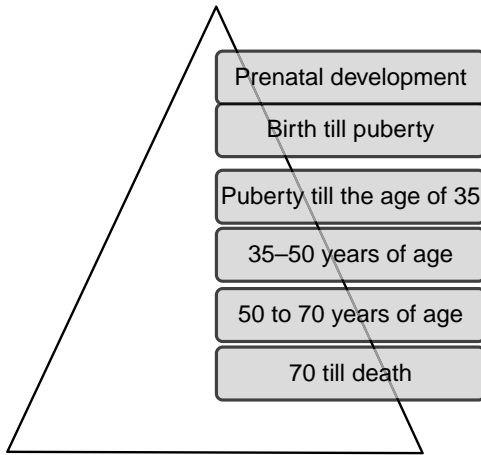
*Figure 13.1* Ibn Al-Jawzī's human cognitive development chart.

Ibn Al-Jawzī classifies these seasons according to the following age groups:

- Season 1: From birth till puberty.
- Season 2: From puberty till the age of 35 years which is regarded as the youthful stage (*al-Shabāb*).
- Season 3: From the age of 35 to 50 years which is regarded as *kuhūlah* (middle age).
- Season 4: From the age of 50 to 70 years which is regarded as *shaykhūkhah* (elderly age).
- Season 5: From the age of 70 to onwards, till the death of an individual which is regarded as haram (decrepit state) (Abd al-Rashīd 'Aṭṭār, 1998, pp. 193–194).

## First stage: From conception till birth (prenatal development)

As stated earlier, Ibn Al-Jawzī did not discuss this stage explicitly in his epistle: *"Tanbīh al-Nā'im al-Ghamr 'alā Mawāsim al-'Umr"* (Reminder to a Foolish Sleeper on the Seasons of Age); however, in his other works, he discusses the initial stage. There are two aspects of this stage:

- Choosing a right spouse for one's child.
- Development of the human embryo or foetus within a mother's womb.

Because of the important role of a female in nurturing the child, Ibn Al-Jawzī has authored a complete book on the Islāmic guidelines related to a mother by the name: *Aḥkām al-Nisā'* (Religious Rulings for a Woman). In this book, he discusses in detail rulings that are associated with the woman including acts of worship, social matters, manners, and acquiring necessary knowledge regarding their affairs. He believes that women are more in need of it than their spouses as the nurturing of the child begins with the mother. Therefore, she is more in need of acquiring knowledge about the *Dīn* and other related matters (Ibn Al-Jawzī, 1985a, p. 4).

Likewise, he believes that the ignorance of both parents regarding the religious knowledge is the major cause of deficiency in nurturing and the development of a child. He considers both father and mother to be equally responsible for neglecting their responsibility of teaching their children and making sure that they are nurtured in the right way. He states:

> I have seen one of the people who was preoccupied with his job and because of that, he does not teach his child the obligatory acts of worship and the necessary knowledge of worldly affairs. Consequently, his child turned to the desire of the World having no knowledge of the Hereafter and of the obligatory acts of worship … he is persistent on committing sins and says: 'My Lord is merciful (and he will forgive my sins)…'. (Ibn Al-Jawzī, 1985a, p. 4)

In the mentioned book, on the issues relating to women, Ibn Al-Jawzī emphasises by quoting the Prophetic Ḥadīth: "A woman is married for four things, i.e., her wealth, her family status, her beauty and her religion. So, you should marry the religious woman (otherwise) you will be a loser" (Bukhārī (a)).

As for the second phase of the first season of life, Ibn Al-Jawzī has described different stages of the development of human embryos, some of which might not conform with the modern scientific understanding as he was not a physician. His understanding mainly rested upon his apparent understanding of *Sharī'ah* and what he had acquired from the physicians of his time (Abd al-Rashīd 'Aṭṭār, 1998, p. 201). He states:

> The first change that occurs in the sperm is a foam that appears which then begins to swell surging towards the middle of its moistness to layout the place for the heart. Then the organs begin to distinguish – each one disengaging from the other. A foetus is covered by a three-layered membrane; one is in which the arteries are spread through, the second is where the urine of the child is held and the third accumulates the moisture that escapes the fetus. (Ibn Al-Jawzī, 1970, p. 159)

Ibn Al-Jawzī goes on commenting on the following verses of the Qur'ān which lays out the overall process of the embryo's development in the mother's womb. Allāh says in the Qur'ān:

ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَٰهُ نُطْفَةً فِى قَرَارٍ مَّكِينٍ
وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ مِن سُلَٰلَةٍ مِّن طِينٍ
ثُمَّ خَلَقْنَا ٱلنُّطْفَةَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقْنَا ٱلْعَلَقَةَ مُضْغَةً فَخَلَقْنَا ٱلْمُضْغَةَ عِظَٰمًا فَكَسَوْنَا ٱلْعِظَٰمَ لَحْمًا ثُمَّ أَنشَأْنَٰهُ
خَلْقًا ءَاخَرَ ۚ فَتَبَارَكَ ٱللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ ٱلْخَٰلِقِينَ (المؤمنون 14)

In the mentioned verses of the Qur'ān, the following developmental stages of the human embryo are mentioned:

• Nuṭfah
• 'Alaqah
• Muḍghah
• 'Iẓām
• Laḥm

Ibn Al-Jawzī commented on the first three stages and explained what he understood from the mentioned stages of development. According to him, the word *nuṭfah* means semen or the discharge. He describes *'alaqah* to be a clotted blood which is still liquid to a certain extent because a dry blood is not called *'alaqah* by Arab lexicologists. *Muḍghah* is normally said to a small lump of flesh (Ibn Al-Jawzī, 1964, p. 406). Ibn Al-Jawzī does not explain the last two stages where that small lump of flesh takes shape of bones and then those bones are covered with the skin and the rest of the flesh. According to the Prophetic description, then the spirit or the soul is whispered into the foetus which takes the shape of either a male or a female.

Ibn Al-Jawzī refers to the following Ḥadīth for explaining the rest of the process of human development:

> The creation of every one of you starts with the process of collecting the material for his body within forty days and forty nights in the womb of his mother. Then he becomes a clot of thick blood for a similar period (40 days) and then he becomes like a piece of flesh for a similar period. Then an angel is sent to him (by Allāh), and the angel is allowed (ordered) to write four things; his livelihood, his (date of) death, his deeds, and whether he will be a wretched one or a blessed one (in the Hereafter) and then the soul is breathed into him…. (Bukhārī (b))

## Second stage: From birth till puberty

Ibn Al-Jawzī's first stage covers the first four stages of Erikson's psychological development stages – that is from infancy to the school age (11 years old) as he considers the first season to be from infancy to the age of puberty. Ibn Al-Jawzī considers this stage to be the most important phase of human development as it casts an imprint on his overall personality. This is the stage when a child's personality is shaped, his mental faculties are nurtured, and his social and moral characteristics are developed. In this phase of life, a child acquires without any resistance or retaliation whatever is fed to him. For him, his elders are upright people and whatever they present to him is truth and whatever they forbid is an evil. In other words, his moral judgment is strongly influenced by his elders that is why it is extremely important that a child be taught the basics of Islāmic creed, values, good manners, and the righteous behaviour at this very stage. Therefore, Ibn Al-Jawzī believes that whatever is imprinted at this stage, it is difficult to alter in the later stages of life (Ibn Al-Jawzī, 1969, p. 133). He states: "It is so because his heart is empty, so he consumes whatever is fed to him" (Ibn Al-Jawzī, Al-Laṭā'if wa al-Ṭibb al-Ruḥānī, p. 134).

Ibn Al-Jawzī specifies that till the age of five, a child can be taught whatever his parents deem necessary, and this is the age when he accepts whatever is presented to him. However, "Once he crosses the age of five, his understanding begins to clear and he chooses what he likes for himself" (Ibn Al-Jawzī, 1981, p. 58). Hence, he urges on the importance of training a child regarding hygiene and purity and learning good manners and behaviour before the age of five. Thereafter, he should be encouraged to acquire knowledge (Ibn Al-Jawzī, 1985b, p. 17). Ibn Al-Jawzī believes in clear gender roles thereby treating children according to their respective sexes. He emphasises that a child should be urged to act according to his sex. For example, he should be urged to wear colour that suits his sex rather than what is normally chosen by the other sex. He states: "A (male) child should be given white clothes to wear and if he asks for the

colorful, one should say: 'Those are the clothes for women and effeminate people'" (Ibn Al-Jawzī, Al-Laṭā'if wa al-Ṭibb al-Ruḥānī, p. 134).

He urges parents to engage their children in healthy activities like exercise and feed them healthy diet so that a child is rightfully nurtured spiritually, physically, and mentally (Ibn Al-Jawzī, 1969, p. 134). He reiterates the importance of spiritual development by stating that the "love of moral values (ḥayā') and generosity (sakhā') be ingrained in him" (Ibn Al-Jawzī, Al-Laṭā'if wa al-Ṭibb al-Ruḥānī, p. 134). Moreover, "He should be warned against delinquent acts such as lying and hanging out in the company of bad friends. Moreover, he must be advised to act with kindness and respect towards parents" (Ibn Al-Jawzī, 1978, p. 244). In other words, Ibn Al-Jawzī believes that the schooling should start from the age of five (Ibn Al-Jawzī, 1978, p. 244). Before that age, a child should be taught manners and his spiritual development should be in focus. While emphasising on the mentioned age bracket, he does not mean that later a child is not receptive to the parental guidance, rather he professes that it becomes difficult as the child grows, and his cognitive abilities begin to develop, and he begins to make his decisions and starts to become self-reliant (Ibn Al-Jawzī, Al-Laṭā'if wa al-Ṭibb al-Ruḥānī, p. 133).

To conclude, as this age is vulnerable and a child is receptive to what his parents like to inculcate in him, it is important for those who are responsible for his upbringing to cater all the developmental needs of the child while keeping in mind his aptitude, his capacity, his inclinations, and aspirations so that he is given a right direction and his energy is oriented towards positive and fruitful interests. Ibn Al-Jawzī stresses on the mentioned idea by stating: "Know that the doctor first looks at the age of the patient, his place, his time and then prescribes. In the same manner, a person should be nurtured according to his condition" (Ibn Al-Jawzī, Al-Laṭā'if wa al-Ṭibb al-Ruḥānī, p. 133).

### Factors that influence child's cognitive development

There are numerous factors that influence a child's development, especially in a positive sense. It is necessary to keep these factors in mind and to make use of them in order to ensure a child's righteous upbringing. Following are some of the factors that Ibn Al-Jawzī has emphasised upon:

### Parenting

As stated earlier, Ibn Al-Jawzī stresses upon the family members and especially parents to take the responsibility of their children. At this stage, a child is receptive to whatever is given to him; consequently, he should be provided with right education and his character building (tarbīyah) in the right direction must be ensured. "Whatever is taught to him at this stage is like an imprint on the rock" (Ibn Al-Jawzī, 1981, p. 58). He states: "The father must know that the child is a responsibility (trust) on his shoulder" (Ibn Al-Jawzī, Al-Laṭā'if wa al-Ṭibb al-Ruḥānī, p. 134). He emphasises that the father must create a balance in expressing his love and disciplining the child. Because expressing too much love and not reprimanding at all would lead to losing control over the child's behaviour and would also cause waste of money (Ibn Al-Jawzī, Al-Laṭā'if wa al-Ṭibb al-Ruḥānī, p. 134).

### Good company of friends

The second most important factor which Ibn Al-Jawzī has identified is the good company based on the Prophetic narration: "A man is upon the religion of his friend, so let one of you look at whom he befriends" (Tirmidhī). Ibn Al-Jawzī advises parents to make sure that they provide their child with the righteous company lest they influence their child in a negative way. Not only should they protect their children from the bad company but should also find good company for their children. They should find the company of the scholars and noblemen and motivate their children to join their company to benefit themselves (Ibn Al-Jawzī, 1978, p. 244). Equally, he urges them to inculcate in their children, love for books (Ibn Al-Jawzī, Laftah al-Kabid ilā Naṣīḥah al-Walad, p. 53).

### Methods employed for nurturing the child

The third most important factor that influences the development of a child is the method that is adopted to nurture the child. Parents experiment on their children; sometimes they are successful, other times they end up regretting their decisions. There are few guidelines and general principles that Ibn Al-Jawzī presents for the parents. As these principles are taken from Islām, they are universal and can be applied in all situations and circumstances. For the sake of brevity, they are briefly mentioned, and the details can be referred to in Ibn Al-Jawzī's referenced works.

- **Presenting oneself as a role model (*qudwah*)**

Ibn Al-Jawzī shares his personal experience in this regard:

> I have met numerous scholars with different qualifications and levels of knowledge. The most fruitful for me was the company of the one among them who would act according to his knowledge, even if the other was more knowledgeable than him. (Ibn Al-Jawzī, 1978, p. 134)

- **Method of reprimanding and rewarding the child**

As stated earlier, Ibn Al-Jawzī emphasises on knowing the personality and the temperament of the child thoroughly before devising a plan for his character building. Each child has his own inclinations and interests and is motivated and demotivated by different factors. He gives the example of a doctor who does not prescribe anything before examining the disease thoroughly (Ibn Al-Jawzī, Al-Laṭā'if wa al-Ṭibb al-Ruḥānī, p. 133). Ibn Al-Jawzī deems positive reinforcement to be more important than negative reinforcement. He urges that one should begin with rewarding for good actions rather than reprimanding. However, it also varies from condition to condition. He states: "It is important that one should be gentle towards the child. A man said to al-Sufyān al-Thawrī: 'We beat our children for prayer.' He said: '(Rather) encourage them'" (Ibn Al-Jawzī, Al-Laṭā'if wa al-Ṭibb al-Ruḥānī, p. 133). Unlike the common trend of being strict towards a naughty and hyperactive child, Ibn Al-Jawzī suggests that one should be gentle and lenient towards them because this is an indication of their intelligence. He states: "And when a child appears to be naughty/hyperactive in

his childhood, one should be gentle towards him" (Ibn Al-Jawzī, Al-Laṭā'if wa al-Ṭibb al-Ruḥānī, p. 134).

• **Education of the child**

Ibn Al-Jawzī outlines the curriculum and methods that parents should adopt in providing education to their children. As stated earlier, Ibn Al-Jawzī believes that the child's education should start once he has reached the age of five (Ibn Al-Jawzī, 1978, p. 244). He also outlines the curriculum for the child with respect to different stages especially for teaching him Islāmic studies and moral values which we cannot cover here. For example, he believes that even though all sciences are good, one should start with what is most beneficial and higher in virtue than others. Children should not proceed to the secondary level until they have mastered the primary level of education (Ibn Al-Jawzī, 1978, p. 178). While professing differentiation in education, he emphasises keeping in mind different cognitive abilities and their aptitude when planning their education. He states: "How much difference exists in the cognitive abilities of people – even the scholars differ greatly in their (knowledge) of principles and the branches thereof" (Ibn Al-Jawzī, 1978, p. 475).

## Third stage: From puberty to the age of 35

Ibn Al-Jawzī considers the youthful phase to be the second season of life for an individual (Ibn Al-Jawzī, 1981, p. 50). It is important to note that Ibn Al-Jawzī did not specify the age when a child acquires his or her puberty. Generally, Islāmic scholars classify the age by either one of the two means:

1   Discharge of semen
2   Pubic hair

However, some classical scholars do specify the age and believe that 15 years can be the age when maturity can be expected from the child. They base their understanding on the following Ḥadīth of 'Abd Allāh b. 'Umar (may Allāh be pleased with him): "I presented myself to the Prophet (ﷺ) for the battle at the age of 14 but he did not permit me. I again presented myself at the age of 15 and he allowed me" (Ibn Qudāmah, 1983, p. 514). Based on the mentioned narration, contemporary scholars have identified that the age of puberty starts from the age of 15 and it is perfected at the age of 18 (Qāḍī & Yālgin, 1981, p. 115). Ibn Al-Jawzī considers this phase of life to be a very challenging phase for an individual because this is the age when a child experiences hormonal changes and begins to experience his sexual needs. Therefore, this is when a youth is extremely vulnerable to deviation (Ibn Al-Jawzī, 1981, p. 59). Ibn Al-Jawzī suggests certain ways through which a young person can retain his righteous conduct:

## God-consciousness

He believes that a child in whom God-consciousness is inculcated, he is more likely to retain his righteous conduct and preserve his morality and good behaviour. He believes that if one is conscious of the fact that two angels accompany him throughout

his life and they keep on recording whatever he does and this record will be presented to Allāh, he wouldn't be heedless (Ibn Al-Jawzī, 1981, p. 59).

## Opportunity to get married at this age

Ibn Al-Jawzī raises concerns over parents who are negligent of the child's sexual needs when he is grown up and is physically fit for having a spouse. He states: "It is strange how a father forgets what he experienced in his puberty; if he had slipped, he should expect similar for his child" (Ibn Al-Jawzī, 1981, p. 59).

## Lowering one's gaze

For those who are unable to get married because of their circumstances, Ibn Al-Jawzī advises them to protect their gaze and must not allow it to wander and fall on what might lead him to sin. He states:

> It is said that a gaze casted over a woman is one of the arrows of Iblīs (Satan) – the one who leaves it for the pleasure of Allāh, Allāh will bless him with the sweetness of faith in his heart. (Ibn Al-Jawzī, 1981, p. 60)

He goes on referring to the verse of the Qur'ān:

قُل لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا۟ مِنْ أَبْصَٰرِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا۟ فُرُوجَهُمْ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ أَزْكَىٰ لَهُمْ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ خَبِيرٌۢ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ (النور 30)

- *Tell the believing men to reduce [some] of their vision and guard their private parts. That is purer for them. Indeed, Allāh is [fully] Aware of what they do.* (An-Nur 24:30, Interpretation of the meaning)

## Contentment over one female

Ibn Al-Jawzī advises young males to be content over one female rather than desiring for more. In case one has someone in mind, he should be content over that female and must not venture around to look for more. Such behaviour would weaken his resolve and he wouldn't be able to contain himself (Ibn Al-Jawzī, 1981, p. 60). Being content over one female does not necessitate that he discourages one to have more than one wife. He simply intends to advise young men to contain themselves and not to let loose their urges lest they are manipulated by their desires because such urges can never be satisfied, and one is ultimately consumed by them. He mentions the reason by saying: "It disperses the heart, weakens one's strength and it is limitless" (Ibn Al-Jawzī, 1981, p. 60).

## Observing fasts

Ibn Al-Jawzī advises the young men who are unable to marry too fast excessively to be able to retain control over their nafs (self). He states: "The one who is unable to get married (due to his circumstances) should excessively observe fasting" (Ibn Al-Jawzī, 1981, p. 60). His understanding is based on the Prophetic Ḥadīth:

> O young men, those among you who can support a wife should marry, for it restrains eyes (from casting evil glances) and preserves one from immorality; but he who cannot afford It should observe fast for it is a means of controlling the sexual desire. (Muslim)

## Avoiding free mixing

Those who are unable to marry and have reached the age when they desire to have a physical relation, they should avoid free mixing with the opposite gender. He raises concern by professing that it is unsafe to let the young man wander among young women especially in the presence of strong urges and ignorance of the youth that often cloud one's reverence and respect. He states: "These are the principles one should treat the problem with, and one should not unnecessarily wait as they can lead to serious consequences" (Ibn Al-Jawzī, Al-Laṭā'if wa al-Ṭibb al-Ruḥānī, p. 137).

## Fourth stage: From 35 to 50 years (middle age)

Ibn Al-Jawzī classifies this phase of life as the middle age for a human being. However, in modern day, middle age refers to the age between 45 and 65 years (Oxforddictionaries.com). Ibn Al-Jawzī has discussed this phase in two aspects:

### First aspect

A person's vulnerability towards desires and the need to contain himself from following what he longs for. According to Ibn Al-Jawzī, this is the age when a person is still occupied with the longing to fulfil his physical desires and does require making an enormous effort to overcome them. However, as he has gained maturity, and the signs of his departure from this world begin to surge, he should dedicate what is left of his time and effort to his aspirations after primarily resorting to what his age requires of him (Ibn Al-Jawzī, 1981, p. 61).

### Second aspect

A time when a person must exert himself in knowledge, authoring and spreading what he has acquired in his youth from religious and other beneficial knowledge. This is the age according to Ibn Al-Jawzī, when a person should start teaching others and begin to author books if he is capable of doing so (Ibn Al-Jawzī, 1978, p. 229). Perhaps one of the reasons why he chose this age for spreading knowledge and authoring the books is because this is normally the age when Prophets were given the task to spread the Word of God that were revealed to them. According to Ibn Al-Jawzī, one of the opinions of the classical exegetes regarding the time of the Prophethood of Mūsā (Moses) and Yūsuf (Joseph) was the age of 40 (Ibn Al-Jawzī, 1964). Similarly, Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) was also delegated the responsibility of Prophethood in the age of 40 (Khan, 2002, p. 32).

## Fifth stage: From 50 to 70 years (old age)

As stated earlier, Ibn Al-Jawzī considers this age to be the old age. He discusses this age from two aspects:

*First aspect*

Weakness of one's sexual desires and the domination of other desires because of his lack of knowledge and weakness of faith in Allāh. Ibn Al-Jawzī believes that at this age, a person's physical desires begin to fade but his desire to acquire dominion, popularity, and knowledge increases (Ibn Al-Jawzī, 1981, p. 63).

*Second aspect*

A person should spend most of his time in acquiring knowledge and spreading it. Moreover, he urges those endowed with knowledge to author and teach what they have acquired in their life. This is what one must do till the age of 70. However, once he surpasses the 70th year of his age, he should prepare for the hereafter and excessively remember it (Ibn Al-Jawzī, 1978, p. 229). This does not imply that a person should not prepare for his journey after death before the age of 70. A believer is expected to be ready at all times and places for death. However, once he has crossed this age, his primary focus should shift to the hereafter rather than spreading or engaging in knowledge or other acts of *khair* (goodness) (Abd al-Rashīd 'Aṭṭār, 1998, p. 250).

## Sixth stage: From 70 till death

This is the age to which Ibn Al-Jawzī calls the age of *al-haram* (dotage). This is the last phase of a human's life in this world (Ibn Al-Jawzī, 1981, p. 58). According to Ibn Al-Jawzī, this is the age when a person must begin to prepare for the life of Hereafter and prepare himself for the next journey that begins from his death till his final abode either in Paradise or in Hell. This is the time when a person looks back at his life and contemplates over what he has achieved and what he has lost. Therefore, a person should focus more on his personal acts of worship such as *Ṣalāh* (prayer) and *Istighfār* (seeking forgiveness) and excessive supplications (*du'ā'*). Additionally, he should spend in continuous charity (*al-Ṣadaqah al-Jārīyah*) (Ibn Al-Jawzī, 1981, p. 64).

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# 14 Ibn Khaldūn Al-Ḥaḍramī

## Introduction

Abū Zayd 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Khaldūn is known to be the first philosopher of history and sociologist. Apart from that he is also known as a social scientist, a jurist, and a philosopher of education (Hitti, 1968, p. 256). He is known as the greatest educational sociologist and historian not only by the Arab world in the Middle Ages but in all civilisations after him (Toynbee, 1995). He was born in Tunis, travelled to all over Spain, North Africa and then finally settled in Cairo where he died (Abū Sayf, 1975, p. 143). Being a sociologist, he wrote extensively on the social nature of man. Ibn Khaldūn's psychological knowledge of man is found scattered in his great opus The *Muqaddimah* (meaning the Introduction). His understanding of social psychology has a wider scope which includes his analysis on societies and civilisations (Dhaouadi, 2008, p. 572). Apart from The *Muqaddimah*, he produced other works. These include *Al-Ta'rīf bī Ibn Khaldūn wa Riḥlātuh Sharqan wa Gharban* (Introduction to Ibn Khaldūn and His Journeys to East and West), *Lubāb al-Muḥaṣṣal fī Uṣūl al-Dīn* (Acquired Pearls in the Foundations of Dīn), and also *Shifā al-Sayl fī Tahzīb al-Masā'il* (The Cure in Questioning in Order to Solve the Problem).

## Ibn Khaldūn's knowledge of human nature

Ibn Khaldūn makes multiple references to the human nature in his *Muqaddimah*. However, it is difficult to identify exactly which category one should assign his understanding of human nature to. There are three types of human nature that he discussed:

- Human Nature as reflected in *Fiṭrah* (the innate nature of man with which he is born)
- The Dualistic Human Nature
- The Aggressive Human Nature

Ibn Khaldūn uses *Fiṭrah* as a measuring tool to gauge the virtue of human individuals, groups, societies, and civilisations. The closer these groups are to their innate or primitive state, the better they are in terms of goodness and virtue. Ibn Khaldūn's second type resembles somewhat with the communal trait of al-'aṣabīyah. This phenomenon explains the conflicting nature of human beings. Such nature arises from the contrasting components of the nature itself, i.e., good and evil. This idea is inspired by

the Qur'ān where it says that man is equally inclined towards good and evil. As for the aggressive nature of man, Ibn Khaldūn alludes that such nature sprouts from the animalistic side of man. He believes that the aggression is an inborn feature of man and is commonly shared by all living creatures (Dhaouadi, 2008).

Islāmically, *Fiṭrah* is the innate state of man with which he is born. It is the innocent state and is also used synonymous to Islām, hence the name "*Dīn al-Fiṭrah*" (the religion of Fiṭrah). The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> Every child is born with a true faith (i.e., to worship none but Allāh Alone) but his parents convert him to Judaism or to Christianity or to Magainism, like an animal that delivers a perfect baby animal. Do you find it mutilated? (Bukhārī)

Ibn Khaldūn's concept of *Fiṭrah* is inspired by the Qur'ān and the Ḥadīth. In these sources, Fiṭrah mainly refers to living a balanced life as per the divine order. For Ibn Khaldūn, this balanced life is conducive to the nomadic life whereby he enjoys closeness to the natural world and order (Dhaouadi, 2008, p. 575).

For Ibn Khaldūn, man shares both animalistic and humanly qualities where the latter is unique to the human being unlike other living creatures. Man's ability to think and reason is what makes him unique to the creation (Dawood, 1974, p. 42). While discussing the dualistic nature of man, Ibn Khaldūn argues that evil is the closest quality to man especially when he is unable to improve himself through religions (Dawood, 1974, p. 97). Hence, for him, religion (Islām) is the system of life that can preserve the human nature to its innate state of goodness (Dhaouadi, 2008, p. 576). This explains the dichotomous nature of man where man's inner self experiences a tussle between its good and evil aspect thereby explaining his dynamic nature. Ibn Khaldūn believes that both aggression and injustice are rooted in the animalistic aspect of human nature. For him, aggression is a fundamental inborn behaviour that he shares with all other living creatures. He believes that man does not carry out evil merely as a survival mechanism when he is threatened, rather he would do injustice as if he was inclined to do so or is accustomed to act in that way. One such example is of him possessing the property of his brother unjustly (Dawood, 1974, p. 47). This aggressive nature of man is disruptive to man's collective and individual progress. This form of man's nature is an ugly side of man. He falls prey to this condition when he is dominated by his animalistic side (Dhaouadi, 2008, p. 578).

## Nurture over nature

As opposed to the strong influence of evolutionary psychology which argues in favour of the commonly shared foundations in the human behaviour, aptitudes, and motivations, Ibn Khaldūn's one of most central positions is that he believes that the human character is developed by the environment and conditions in which people live (Ibn Khaldūn, 1967). A significant number of psychologists and other professionals defend the evolutionary psychology's thesis which theorises the presence of innate human instincts that influence the human intelligence, society, sexuality, etc. (Badcock, 2003).

Ibn Khaldūn in his *Muqaddimah* has professed greatly his ideas on the issue of nurture over nature. He argued that the acquired disposition can overtake the natural disposition of man (Ibn Khaldūn, 1967, p. 229). If a certain action is repeated multiple times, it becomes part of the person's soul and disposition (Ibn Khaldūn, 1967, p. 306).

Acquiring the trait is a gradual process and does not happen overnight. However, the natural disposition of man does facilitate the nurtured trait (habitus) to take roots in his behaviour. In other words, there are certain traits that can be acquired more easily than others. The nurtured traits then colour the soul which weakens its ability to acquire another trait. Therefore, it is rarely observed that a scholar who has acquired a skill in one field has the ability to master one more (Ibn Khaldūn, 1967, p. 315).

By explaining how the non-Arabs established the scholarly and academic disciplines of Islāmic civilisation, Ibn Khaldūn alludes an important outcome of habitus (socially acquired habit or trait) for an Islāmic civilisation: the habitus of the crafts preserves the continuity of the crafts themselves. Normally, the habitus of the crafts survived the three-generation lifespan of a particular dynasty (Ibn Khaldūn, 1967). To explain this idea further, he presents the comparison of two groups of populations that are exposed to different environmental conditions: nomadic life ('*umrān badawī*) and urban life ('*umrān ḥaḍārī*) (Abū Sayf, 1975, p. 144).

Ibn Khaldūn favours the nomadic life over the urban life. While commenting on the negative aspects of the urban environment, he goes on to refer to the number of immoral habitus that the urbanites acquire as a result of luxuries and pleasures that their environment has to offer (Ibn Khaldūn, 1967, pp. 303–304). On the contrary, the nomadic life renders certain benefits such as military strength as they are constantly exposed to external threats and have limited means to protect themselves (Ibn Khaldūn, 1967, p. 95). He proves his point by presenting the analogy of animals. He contrasts between the environmental impact over the animals living in harsh conditions such as deserts and those living in plain lands. One can notice the difference between their physical and mental characteristics (Abū Sayf, 1975, p. 144). One environmental factor that influences the human character is the type of food that he eats. Those who limit their food and milk intake as Arabs do during their travels are healthier than others (Ibn Khaldūn, 1958, p. 65).

## Steps that lead to human corruption

Ibn Khaldūn lists down five modifications that lead human nature to the ultimate loss. Table 14.1 presents the steps that lead to human corruption.

## Ibn Khaldūn's understanding of human cognitive development

Ibn Khaldūn believes that the trait that distinguishes man from all other creatures is his ability to think and reflect. He is able to organise his ideas, execute them in an orderly manner. That is one of the main reasons why he is honoured being the vice-gerent (*khalīfah*) on the earth. Additionally, he argues that man is social by his nature. Therefore, it is not appropriate to expect from him to live in isolation all by himself. His survival depends on his association with other fellow human beings (Ibn Khaldūn, 1986, p. 34). He believes that the animalistic nature of man is necessary for socialisation purposes (Yazid, 1985). This enables him to think and learn by interacting with others thereby building a civilisation. He emphasises on the importance of knowledge (*ma'rifah*) and the nature of knowing *(idrāk)*. These two make human beings unique among living creatures. While highlighting the importance of human mind for acquiring knowledge and conceptualising, he considers it to be centre of all human activities (Mohd Nizam Sahad & Mohd Azolman Zulkufli, 2017).

*Table 14.1* Steps that lead to human corruption

| Characteristics | Explanations |
| --- | --- |
| Man's strength | Ibn Khaldūn believes that the manhood of an individual is determined by the amount of useful things that he can obtain for himself and the harm that he can repeal (Dawood, 1974). |
| Sedentary character of man | Ibn Khaldūn believes that the sedentary human is incapable of taking care of his basic needs on his own. The cause of his weakness might be his easy lifestyle or his pride which is an outcome of prosperity and luxury in which he was raised and nurtured (Dawood, 1974, p. 228). |
| Corruption of religion | An involvement in a sedentary lifestyle weakens the restraining collective-control system. In Ibn Khaldūn's time, Islāmic culture prevailed, but as time passed and the sedentary lifestyle was embraced, numerous Islāmic cultural norms began to lose value and diminish (Dhaouadi, 2008, p. 585). |
| Man becomes animal | Ibn Khaldūn believes that the accumulative effect of sedentary life begins to negatively influence the most when the man's humanity is transformed into an animal. For Ibn Khaldūn, when the strength of man, his character, and religion are corrupted this transforms man into an animal (Dawood, 1974, pp. 288–289). |
| The animal state of man | When the animal takes over the character and the behaviour of man, it overcomes the first and the second state. A person's *fiṭrah* is not only masked but his dualistic nature is also diminished. Consequently, he is directed by his animalistic behaviour. To be more precise, when man's behaviour is not guided by the religious ethics and values, he is dehumanised (Dhaouadi, 2008, p. 586). |

Ibn Khaldūn believed that the cognitive process (thinking) is carried out mainly in the heart. In other words, the intellect is the process of the heart rather than mind. He differs from the idea that the intellect is centred in the brain. He explains that the thinking refers to the reflecting process behind feelings and the "use of intellect in analysing, synthesising, as well as incorporating vague parts" (Mohd Nizam Sahad & Mohd Azolman Zulkufli, 2017, p. 306). He rests his understanding on the following verse of the Qur'ān:

وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلسَّمْعَ وَٱلْبَصَرَ وَٱلْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُوْلَٰئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مسؤولاولًا (الإسراء 36)
*And do not pursue1 that of which you have no knowledge. Indeed, the hearing, the sight and the heart[fu'ād] – about all those [one] will be questioned.* (Al-Isra 17:36, Interpretation of the meaning)

The word *fu'ād* here refers to the intellect which enables humans to acquire knowledge through their sensory organs. Hence, Ibn Khaldūn corroborates what is theorised by the classical exegetes and believes that the brain is the primary source of receiving information from the sensory parts of the body while the heart reflects and processes it (Shahrul, 2008).

Ibn Khaldūn classifies man's cognitive abilities into four levels (Ibrahim, 2015). The first level is the discerning intellect (Rosenthal, 2015) that enables man to comprehend

meanings beyond the physical world. It has differential ability and is able to identify what is beneficial for man and what is not. It also enables the humans to give meaning to the data acquired through senses. Consequently, man is able to distinguish between what is beneficial for him from what is harmful for him (Al-Naimi, 1994).

The second level is also known as *al-ʿaql al-tajrībī* (experimental intellect) which enables humans to identify and understand the relation that he has with the environment or with those who are around him. Rosenthal (2015) states that this level refers to "the idea and the behaviour that is needed in dealing with his fellow men and leading them" (p. 334). This level differs from the first level as it seeks to comprehend phenomena relating to social needs and the behaviours that are necessary in order to interact with other fellow beings in a society (Joni & Che Zarrina, 2009).

The third level is *al-ʿaql al-naẓrī* or the speculative intellect that deals with *taṣawwur* (worldview) and perception. This also enables humans to make comparisons and accumulation in order to perform new knowledge (Amir, 2013). Rosenthal (2015) explains: "It provides hypothetical knowledge of an object beyond sense perception without any practical activity. This is speculative intellect which consists of both perceptions and apperceptions."

As for the fourth level of intellect, Ibn Khaldūn believes that all three forms when synthesised, produce the fourth level or the highest form of intelligence which he calls: *al-ʿaql al-mazīd* (additional intelligence). This form of intelligence is developed when skills and theoretical knowledge are accumulated and then they are conveyed through intellectual discussions and are demonstrated through skills to solve the problems. In other words, it is distinguished by excellence and is equipped with practical knowledge that is useful for solving problems (Machouche & Bensaid, 2015).

## Ibn Khaldūn's understanding of educational psychology

Ibn Khaldūn believes that the society yields a natural phenomenon. The fundamental reason why people form societies and live therein is their need to survive which is materialised through mutual help, protecting one another and other factors. While elaborating the psychological character professed by each nation, he argues that mainly it's the geographical conditions that precede biological factors. Consequently, a person acquires behaviour and character by education rather than heredity (Abū Sayf, 1975). The mentioned understanding has certain implications in form of the role the education plays on the upbringing and the development of the child. Not only it is important to provide knowledge to the children, but it is also important to determine the type of knowledge which a child needs.

## Ibn Khaldūn's classification of the sciences

In Ibn Khaldūn's understanding, sciences (*ʿulūm*) are classified in multiple ways. In terms of studying, they are classified into two categories: First, those that are studied for their own sake such as the sciences associated with the Divine Law and the sciences of traditions. Second, those sciences that serves as the tool or an intermediation for the first category. This includes grammar, logic, etc. For Ibn Khaldūn, it is not possible to acquire the former category of sciences without acquiring those that fall in the second category. Therefore, the noblest sciences (revelation of the Divine Law) need to be studied for their own sake but must be coupled with the second category (Abū Sayf, 1975, p. 147). Ibn

Khaldūn also classifies knowledge into abstract and concrete. The natural order requires that concrete knowledge is acquired before the abstract knowledge.

As for the methods of teaching, following are some of the principles that one should follow for teaching:

- All the controversial issues need to be put forth before the attempt is made to judge the issue.
- While teaching, the teacher must ensure that he has acknowledged and catered for the individual differences of his students.
- It is important to employ comparison and observation during the teaching.
- Experimentation is primarily beneficial for the teacher as compared to the student. It is so because the teacher is experienced enough to ensure preventive measures for the potential dangers.
- The teacher should avoid to his fullest a conflict with the religious principles and fundamentals.
- It is important to acknowledge while teaching that the science that caters and provides for our souls and spirits is far more important than the one dependent on empiricism (Abū Sayf, 1975, p. 148).

As for the role of the teacher, it varies according to the nature of the science or discipline. Knowledge can be gained from the books alone if one is in search for piety and straightness. However, in case where the knowledge requires observation and discovery, the teacher is essential. As for those who favour books more over teachers, they should consider the following:

- How is knowledge supposed to benefit if the purpose is merely to copy from the books?
- The teacher is blessed by God the ability to decide between the right and the wrong. A student, therefore, depends upon him in this regard.
- The teacher also disseminates his personal experience which is valuable and sometimes outweighs the benefits of merely reading from the book.
- Teachers, being scholars, are honoured by God to be the successors of the Prophets. Therefore, it is essential that the knowledge is acquired directly from its source (Abū Sayf, 1975, p. 148).

Apart from this list, there are certain obligations that a teacher must meet that his profession requires. For example, it is important and essential that he explains all that is unknown and strange as to avoid misunderstanding and misinterpretation. Additionally, he must experiment with new things before explaining them to the learners. He should engage in studies that polish his innate abilities. Moreover, his knowledge should be vast enough that he is capable of correcting the professionals of his field and is also able to compete with their incompetency. He must take divine guidance as the governor of his behaviour. Additionally, he should timely respond to the queries of all the learners and provide the required evidence. Last but not the least, he should be continuously in search for new information and discoveries of at least his field. Being the successor of the Prophet, a teacher should possess certain qualities, some of which are innate while others are acquired as a result of his continuous struggle for discovery. This includes straightness and passion that are necessary in

order to lead the learner to the right direction. Apart from that, this also includes the ability to provide the demanded evidence in matters that cannot rely upon the empirical verification and the capability to manage and provide for learners' individual differences. Most importantly, he should be blessed with the spiritual light and guidance from God (Abū Sayf, 1975, p. 149).

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# 15 Ibn Rajab Al-Ḥanbalī

## Introduction

He is Zayn al-Dīn, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān bin Aḥmad ibn Rajab bin al-Ḥasan al-Baghdādī, al-Ḥanbalī, famous by the name Ibn Rajab Al-Ḥanbalī (Al-Syūṭī, 1973, p. 536). According to the preferred opinion, he was born in Baghdād in 736 AH and later migrated to Damascus with his father in 744 AH (Abū al-Falāḥ, p. 339). Like great scholars of the past who benefitted from their forefathers and their family lineage, Ibn Rajab too belonged to a family known for their Islāmic literacy. Among his teachers were his father Abū al-ʿAbbās Aḥmad bin ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, who from his early childhood encouraged him to acquire religious knowledge and would ask him to accompany him in attending different academic circles (Al-ʿAsqalānī, 1349 AH, p. 429). His grandfather, Aḥmad bin al-Ḥasan was known as the great jurist and the scholar of his time and owned an academic chair in al-Baghdād from which many students benefitted. Ibn Rajab himself began to attend his grandfather's academic gatherings (*majālis al-ʿilm*) from the age of three onwards (Ibn Rajab, Al-Farq bayn al-Naṣīḥah wa al-Taʿyīr, p. 11).

Ibn Rajab travelled to different places and cities to acquire religious knowledge and would mostly engage himself in gaining, disseminating knowledge, warning people, and endeavouring to guide them with regards to their *tarbīyah* (righteous upbringing). He became prominent among people of his time as people from all classes of societies appreciated his efforts and would regularly visit his circles for benefitting from his speeches and knowledge (Abū al-Falāḥ, p. 339). Ibn Rajab has contributed significantly to the different fields of Islāmic sciences. Some of the scholars have enumerated more than 50 works that the Muslims have inherited so far (Al-ʿAjamī, 1986).

## Ibn Rajab's understanding of human life

Like the mainstream Muslim understanding of human beings, Ibn Rajab believes that man is created from clay (*ṭīn*). He defines the word *ṭīn* by the dust that is mixed in water. However, being created from clay does not mean that he should be attributed to dust or the clay (Ibn Rajab, 1999, p. 21). He believes in the exceptional creation of human beings. This uniqueness is constituted on the bases of the creation of their father Adam (may Allāh be pleased with him). This exceptional creation of Prophet Adam secures his place as an exceptionally unique creation of Allāh. There are number of reasons why human beings are unique among many other creations of

Allāh. One reason is the honour that is bestowed upon him from Allāh based on the verse of the Qur'ān (Interpretation of the meaning):

وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِىٓ آدَم (الإسراء 70)

- *And We have certainly honored the children of Adam*. (Al-Isrā'17:70, Interpretation of the meaning)

The second is the teleological reason as man is honoured with a special purpose and that is to worship Allāh in a manner that He has prescribed which is regarded as a trust in the Qur'ān. Allāh says:

إِنَّا عَرَضْنَا ٱلْأَمَانَةَ عَلَى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَٱلْجِبَالِ فَأَبَيْنَ أَن يَحْمِلْنَهَا وَأَشْفَقْنَ مِنْهَا وَحَمَلَهَا ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ ۖ إِنَّهُ كَانَ ظَلُومًا جهولا (الأحزاب 72)

- *Indeed, We offered the Trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains, and they declined to bear it and feared it; but man [undertook to] bear it. Indeed, he was unjust and ignorant.* (Al-Aḥzāb 33:72, Interpretation of the meaning)

Third cause which makes man distinctive is the role that he is given to mankind. Allāh says in the Qur'ān:

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَٰئِكَةِ إِنِّى جَاعِلٌ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً (البقرة 30)

- *And [mention, O Muḥammad], when your Lord said to the angels, "Indeed, I will make upon the earth a successive authority."* (Al-Baqarah 2:30, Interpretation of the meaning)

Man is also considered to be special because he was bestowed with the knowledge that Allāh did not bestow upon any other creation. This was manifested when He asked Prophet Adam to mention the Names that Allāh taught him upon the enquiry of angels who were interested in knowing the purpose of such creation from whom it was expected to shed blood on land and carry out acts of corruption. Adam became the cause of angels' humility when they sought knowledge from him and also became the cause of envy for the *Iblīs* (devil) when he was blessed with such honour and was granted abode in the Paradise (Ibn Rajab, 1999, pp. 55–56).

 Ibn Rajab reminds his readers of the old animosity that exists between the devil and the human being. He is adamant on somehow deviating from the path that leads him back to the paradise from where his father Adam exited (Ibn Rajab, 1999, p. 56). Like mainstream Muslim understanding, Ibn Rajab considers human creation to be a compound of both physical and spiritual aspect (i.e., *jism* and *rūḥ*). Both aspects are intertwined with each other in a way that separating them would entail extreme pain and difficulty for the bearer. This pain is endured by both the body and the *rūḥ* (soul/ spirit). According to Ibn Rajab, when the soul enters the human body, it is integrated with the body to the extent that both become one. Therefore, once they are disintegrated, this endurance is unlike any other (Ibn Rajab, 1999, p. 100). Ibn Rajab believes that the *rūḥ* (soul) of an individual cannot predict its fate and its eternal

abode – whether that abode is the hellfire or the garden of paradise. However, the one who insists on sins and disobedience, he can assume his abode to be in the hellfire (Ibn Rajab, 1999, p. 100). Consequently, Ibn Rajab does not believe in the infallibility of the soul or the *rūḥ*.

Allāh, the Almighty, has created man with a combination of natural instincts and impulses. All of these instincts fall under the category of two main natural instincts: fear and longing. By nature, a human being longs for what benefits him and fears what he believes to cause him harm. From these two instincts branch out other instincts and impulses. These impulses and instincts are not shared with equal vigour by all individuals rather they vary from person to person which causes an impact on their behavioural pattern on daily basis (Al-Shaybānī, 1988, pp. 94–95). Ibn Rajab establishes his understanding of righteous and evil acts on the concept of these two instincts. All those that are beneficial for mankind are made permissible by Allāh, The Almighty, and those that cause harm to an individual and have serious ramifications, are indeed made impermissible by Allāh. Therefore, all that appeals to human nature (*fiṭrah*) is permissible and that which does not is made impermissible even if it does not appear to be evil (Ibn Rajab, 1999, p. 268). However, it is extremely important to realise that the only right way to meet the expectations of oneself and his soul is to carry out the acts of obedience as they would satisfy what one's nature covets. And the one who performs acts of disobedience, he falls short in meeting the expectations of his self and therefore does not pay its rights that he is obliged to pay. Consequently, he acts unjustly against his own self thereby causing distress and harm to his own self (Ibn Rajab, 1999, p. 268).

According to Ibn Rajab, the very cause of difficulty and harshness of life is due to the disobedience of Allāh and sins. When a person disobeys Allāh or carries out a sinful act, he becomes the subject of God's anger which consequently leads to a difficulty in this life and the Hereafter, contrary to the one whose life becomes a source of happiness because of carrying out acts of obedience (Ibn Rajab, 1999, p. 77).

The primary purpose of man's spiritual nurturing is the preservation of man's innate nature (*Fiṭrah*) with which man is born (Abd al-Raḥmān Albānī). Ibn Rajab believes that "recognition of truth, serenity over it and its acceptance is laid in the innate nature of man by Allāh and He has put into man the love for truth and has casted hatred for what is against it" (Ibn Rajab, Jāmiʿ al-ʿUlūm, pp. 221–222). He goes on quoting the Ḥadīth of the Prophet (ﷺ):

> I have created My servants as one having a natural inclination to the worship of Allāh, but it is the Satan who turns them away from the right religion and he makes unlawful what has been declared lawful for them and he commands them to ascribe partnership with Me, although he has no justification for that. (Muslim (a))

It is inevitable for man to worship someone. If he does not worship Allāh, he worships his self, *Shayṭān*, or the other creation of Allāh. Therefore, living according to a specific type of code is inevitable. Therefore, when he frees himself from the Islāmic code of life, he finds himself entangled in other code that is founded by the creation itself.

Worshipping someone means that whatever a person loves, he makes it his ultimate purpose of life. He loves for it, hates for it, and is influenced by it in almost every aspect of life (Ibn Rajab, 1399, p. 28). Thereafter, he quotes the following verse of the Qur'ān:

أَلَمْ أَعْهَدْ إِلَيْكُمْ يَبَنِىٓ آدم أَن لَّا تَعْبُدُوا ٱلشَّيْطَٰنَۖ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ (يس 60)

- *Did I not enjoin upon you, O children of Adam, that you not worship Satan – [for] indeed, he is to you a clear enemy?* (Yāsīn 36:60, Interpretation of the meaning)

Ibn Rajab concludes by alluding that whoever does not worship Allāh in true sense and does not obey Him, then in fact he worships *Shayṭān*. Whoever does not purify himself from the worship of *Shayṭān* cannot be sincere in the worship of ar-Raḥmān (Ibn Rajab, 1399 AH, p. 29). Allāh has created this world a place of trials and tribulations. He puts his slaves on trial and He tests them with both; good and bad. When anything good comes to man from Him, he is tested with gratefulness and whenever anything evil befalls him, he is tested with patience. Ibn Rajab considers the trials of worldly gains to be more challenging for man than the trials of harms (Ibn Rajab, 1399 AH, p. 29). To conclude, the best of mankind in Ibn Rajab's opinion is the one who believes in Allāh and carries out good deeds. In other words, a faithful and practicing believer is the best person (Ibn Rajab, 1999, p. 91).

## Ibn Rajab's understanding of social psychology

Ibn Rajab believes that the propriety and the appropriacy of a society depend on the obedience of Allāh and managing the affairs according to the guidelines provided by Him. There are two types of expectations that God has from His creation. There are certain expectations that are associated with the individual and then there are those that are from the society as a whole. For example, Allāh says:

كُنتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ ٱلْمُنكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِۗ وَلَوْ آمن أَهْلُ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمۚ مِّنْهُمُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَأَكْثَرُهُمُ ٱلْفَٰسِقُونَ (آل عمران 110)

*You are the best nation produced [as an example] for mankind. You enjoin what is right [Al-Ma'rūf] and forbid what is wrong [Al-Munkar] and believe in Allāh. If only the People of the Scripture had believed, it would have been better for them. Among them are believers, but most of them are defiantly disobedient.* (Al-'Imrān, 3:110, Interpretation of the meaning)

He professes his opinion by referring to the example of the Angel's descent from the heaven on the Night of Decree (*Laylah al-Qadr*). The reason why the mercy of Allāh descends from the heavens in form of angels is because people adorn themselves with the obedience of Allāh by means of fasting and offering prayers. These angels descend from the heavens just to observe the slaves of God, bowing and prostrating in front of their Lord in humility. They are sent by God because they had apprehensions at the time of Adam's creation. Allāh sends them in order to prove His wisdom in choosing mankind over all creation (Ibn Rajab, 1999, pp. 204–205).

Ibn Rajab believes that near the end of times, when the corruption would overcome the land, there will appear, by the will of Allāh, men who would take up the responsibility of reforming the people and society. They will reform those who are corrupted and will be able to protect themselves from the trials. They are the people whom the Prophet call *ghurabā'* (strangers) (Ibn Rajab, 2002, p. 12). The Prophetic

Ḥadīth goes on as follows: "Islām initiated as something strange, and it would revert to its (old position) of being strange. So good tidings for the stranger" (Muslim (c)).

He classifies such reformers (*ghurabā'*) into two types:

1   There are those who reform people that are immersed in corruption.
2   Those who reform what people have corrupted from the Sunnah (the righteous path). This group is more virtuous than the former group (Ibn Rajab, 2002, p. 12).

### Social vices and their cure

The presence of a righteous person benefits the whole community just like the presence of evildoers causes harm to the community (Ibn Rajab, 1999, p. 130). Ibn Rajab believes that for the survival of community, the community needs to work as a whole to repel evil. Only then a community can survive (p. 139).

Ibn Rajab believes that there are two forms of trials that befall mankind:

•   One that is of doubts (*Shubuhāt*)
•   One that is of desires (*Shahwāt*)

When desires begin to root among people, they become overwhelmed by the material world and is fascinated by it. The material then becomes the very purpose of their living, and their social relations are influenced by it. They build and severe their relations solely for the material possessions and according to what they desire. Consequently, they shed blood, severe the ties of kinship, and engage in other forms of social vices. As for the doubts, they cause sectarian groupings and formations of different cults, all with the purpose to judge others with disbelief and to provoke hatred (Ibn Rajab, 2002, pp. 11–12).

There are number of social vices that Ibn Rajab has discussed. Some of them are listed below:

•   Animosity and grudge which is mainly caused because of falling prey to one's own desires (Ibn Rajab, 1999, p. 146).
•   Cheating and deception that harms the cheater before harming others (Ibn Rajab, p. 46).
•   Cursing the fellow Muslim which is carried out either with the intention of harming others or out of rivalry (Ibn Rajab, p. 46).
•   Revealing weaknesses and shortcomings of a fellow Muslim (Ibn Rajab, p. 42).
•   Being negative about a fellow Muslim (Ibn Rajab, p. 37).

Ibn Rajab considers the eradication of such vices from society to be essential for the survival of that society or community. It is so because when such vices prevail, the whole community suffers. Therefore, he states: "When the evil spreads, mankind in general moves to destruction" (Ibn Rajab, 1999, p. 78). While acknowledging the importance of environmental impact on man's attitude and behaviour, one can refer to the story of the man from the children of Israel who murdered 99 innocent people. Upon repentance, he was advised to leave the place as the land was immersed in evil. His redemption was affirmed on the basis of his travel to the land where pious lived

(Bukhārī). He believes that the devils among humans are more dangerous for people than the devils among *Jinns* (Ibn Rajab, 1999, p. 77).

For cure, Ibn Rajab sees advising and counselling to be the most important aspect of reforming human behaviour based on the Prophetic Ḥadīth: "The Religion is *Naṣīḥah* (sincerity, advise, etc." We said, "To whom?" He said "To Allāh, to His Book, To His Messenger, and to the leaders of the Muslims and their masses" (Muslim (d)). Ibn Rajab looks at *Naṣīḥah* to be a treatment which is carried out by a believer for his Muslim brother for the purpose of helping him overcome his short-coming. Therefore, while emphasising on the importance of confidentiality, he argues that it is not befitting for a believer to spread the evil or to propagate it, rather he must conceal the shortcomings of his brother and counsel him with utmost sincerity (Ibn Rajab, p. 37).

## Ibn Rajab's understanding of holistic development of human being

He presents a holistic model for human development. He has penned numerous strategies and methods for the development of man as a whole. He has theorised human development from a number of aspects. These include the following:

- Spiritual development
- Ethical development
- Emotional development
- Development of intention and will
- Physical development
- Sexual development

Ibn Rajab categorises knowledge into two categories:

1 Intrinsic knowledge (*'ilm al-bāṭin*)
2 Extrinsic knowledge (*'ilm al-ẓāhir*)

The inward knowledge is the fear of Allāh with high esteem and the outward knowledge entails knowledge regarding the commandments and the prohibitions made by Allāh (Ibn Rajab, 2003, p. 112). The inward knowledge is essential for the actions and practice that is performed by the human body. Thus, in order for the man to act in submission to Allāh, he first needs to inculcate or internalise the knowledge of Allāh, His esteem, honour, and dignity. Once such honour is settled in his heart, his body would necessarily submit itself to Him (Ibn Rajab, 2003, p. 45).

Hence, for the overall development of man, it is essential that his heart is immersed in the love, honour, and esteem for Allāh. Following are brief descriptions of Ibn Rajab's understanding of how human being can acquire his developed state in different aspects.

## Spiritual development

It is undeniable that the development which is emphasised the most by Islām is the spiritual development of mankind. The objective of this development is to make

humans faithful to their Lord. This faith rests on the concept of *Tawḥīd* and sub-mission to God alone. That is the reason, the very purpose of each messenger and prophet sent by God was to deliver the message of *Tawḥīd* and to practically manifest its teachings through their actions and lives as a whole. Allāh states in the Qur'ān:

وما أَرْسَلْنَا مِن قَبْلِكَ مِن رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا نُوحِىٓ إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ لَآ إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَٱعْبُدُونِ (الأنبياء 25)

- *And We sent not before you any messenger except We revealed to him that, "There is no deity except Me, so worship Me."* (Al-Anbiyā' 21:25, Interpretation of the meaning)

For a believer, the Qur'ān adopts the approach by a number of ways to develop such faith in him. Sometimes, the Qur'ān reminds mankind of the greatness of God and His power over His creation (Qur'ān 10:101). In other occasions, the Qur'ān enables man to visualise the events of the Day of Resurrection where God will reveal His ultimate power in front of mankind and other creation (Qur'ān 22:1). Additionally, Qur'ān refers to the people of the past and their fate when they transgressed. All such approaches are adopted to develop man spiritually and to inculcate in him the love and honour for God (Al-Ḥajjājī, 1996, pp. 123–124).

Therefore, Ibn Rajab states: "Faith in Allāh and His Messenger is the function of the heart and tongue which is then followed by the action of body parts" (Al-Ḥajjājī, 1996, p. 141). He further adds, the wellness of the heart cannot be achieved without the faith in Allāh (i.e., *īmān*) (Ibn Rajab, 1999, p. 240). He further adds:

> The faith which is established in the hearts is the foundation of every good. It is the goodness with which man is blessed in this world and the Hereafter and with it the salvation is acquired of this world and the Hereafter. And with it, one can attain salvation from the miseries of the world and the Hereafter. Whenever the faith is rooted in the heart, all body parts begin to give birth to good actions and the tongue to the fair speech. (Ibn Rajab, 1999, p. 240)

He goes on quoting the Prophetic narration: "Beware! There is a piece of flesh in the body if it becomes good (reformed) the whole body becomes good but if it gets spoilt the whole body gets spoilt and that is the heart" (Bukhārī (b)).

In other words, when the faith is entered and settled in the heart of a believer and he has felt its sweetness, then the faith is manifested through his tongue and his body parts by means of a fair speech and righteous deeds (Ibn Rajab, 1999, p. 240). Sometimes, this sweetness dominates the overall disposition of the man to the extent that he begins to dislike what he was initially inclined to because of the displeasure of Allāh. His pleasure and the pleasure of God become one (Ibn Rajab, 1999, p. 162).

To conclude, for Ibn Rajab, the essential element for the spiritual growth and the development of man is the faith in Allāh and His Messenger. This is then reflected in his actions and speech. Once the faith begins to take roots and grow this causes a lasting impact on the disposition and the temperament of man so much so that his will becomes one with the will of God. He acts according to the pleasure of God; he likes what is pleased to God and dislikes what is displeasing to God. This is the ultimate state of man's spiritual development.

## Ethical development

Ibn Rajab defines good manners and ethical character by permeating within one's character, manners that the Islām has ordained and acts ethically with which Allāh has commanded him to do in His Book (i.e., Qur'ān) and the Prophet (ﷺ) did in his Sunnah. This is based on the Ḥadīth of the Prophet (ﷺ) where the mother of the believers 'Ā'ishah was asked about the manners of the Prophet (ﷺ) and to which he responded: "His manners are Qur'ān" (Bukhārī (c)). Adorning oneself with such manners is to act according to the Qur'ān by practising what is commanded and avoiding what is prohibited. The Prophet did so, and his whole character imbued with the teachings of Qur'ān to the extent that there remained no difference between his disposition and the Qur'ānic teachings (Ibn Rajab, Jāmi' al-'Ulūm, p. 221). Ibn Rajab considers the ethical development of an individual essential for acquiring the status of a *Mujtahid* (diligent) in worship (Ibn Rajab, 1985, p. 84). In other words, for a person to consider himself a devout worshipper, it is essential for him that he equips himself with the manners of Islām. He presents the parable of one of the righteous predecessors (*salaf*) that he was elevated in paradise because of his good conduct (Ibn Rajab, 1985, p. 84). He states that on the Day of Judgement, a person will be brought and will be elevated in rank and status in paradise over the one who lacked in good conduct. He will complain about it, and it will be said to him that his conduct is mainly the reason why he was awarded such status. And he will be speechless (Ibn Rajab, 1999, p. 263).

Thereafter, Ibn Rajab alludes righteousness and goodness. For him, every act of obedience to God is a righteous action while every act of disobedience is a form of evil. He goes on mentioning the verse of Qur'ān

لَّيْسَ ٱلْبِرَّ أَن تُوَلُّواْ وُجُوهَكُمْ قِبَلَ ٱلْمَشْرِقِ وَٱلْمَغْرِبِ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱلْبِرَّ مَنْ آمَنَ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْآخِرِ وَٱلْمَلَٰئِكَةِ وَٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ وَآتَى ٱلْمَالَ عَلَىٰ حُبِّهِۦ ذَوِى ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ وَٱلْيَتَٰمَىٰ وَٱلْمَسَٰكِينَ وَٱبْنَ ٱلسَّبِيلِ وَٱلسَّآئِلِينَ وَفِى ٱلرِّقَابِ وَأَقَامَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَآتَى ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَٱلْمُوفُونَ بِعَهْدِهِمْ إِذَا عَٰهَدُواْ ۖ وَٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ فِى ٱلْبَأْسَآءِ وَٱلضَّرَّآءِ وَحِينَ ٱلْبَأْسِ ۗ أُوْلَٰئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ صَدَقُواْ ۖ وَأُوْلَٰئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُتَّقُونَ (البقرة ١٧٧)

- *Righteousness is not that you turn your faces toward the east or the west, but [true] righteousness is [in] one who believes in Allāh, the Last Day, the angels, the Book, and the prophets and gives wealth, in spite of love for it, to relatives, orphans, the needy, the traveler, those who ask [for help], and for freeing slaves; [and who] establishes prayer and gives zakāh; [those who] fulfill their promise when they promise; and [those who] are patient in poverty and hardship and during battle. Those are the ones who have been true, and it is those who are the righteous.* (Al-Baqarah 2:177, Interpretation of the meaning)

He enumerates six forms of righteous acts and believes that whosoever carries out these acts in fact perfects and completes his righteous conduct.

- The first form includes faith that comprises five articles.
- The second includes spending on the kith, kin, orphans, destitute, wayfarers, seekers (needy), and freeing slaves.
- The third one comprises establishing the prayer.
- The fourth one comprises giving *zakāh* (obligatory charity).

- The fifth one includes fulfilling the promise.
- The sixth one refers to being patient in good and difficult times and during the battle (Ibn Rajab, 1999, pp. 248–249).

While referring to the words of Ibn 'Umar, he states: "Indeed goodness is something that is simple, smiling face and soft speech" (Ibn Rajab, 1999, p. 246).

Among numerous good manners, he considers the following four manners to be the most important ones (Al-Ḥajjājī, 1996, pp. 175–177).

1   Patience (*ṣabr*)
2   Gratitude (*shukr*)
3   Selflessness (*īthār*)
4   Shamefulness (*ḥayā'*)

Among numerous aspects of evil conduct, Ibn Rajab believes following to be the worst manners of all (Al-Ḥajjājī, 1996, pp. 177–181):

1   Pride and arrogance (*al-Kibr*)
2   Miserliness (*shuḥḥ*)
3   Greed (*ḥirṣ*), incapability (*'iijz*), clumsiness (*ḥamiq*)
4   Envy (*ḥasad*) Superiority (*'uluw*)

## Development of will and intention

The development of will or intention here refers to the nourishment in the obedience of God. In other words, a person is expected to continuously examine his intention lest it does not deviate and desire other than the pleasure of God. Ibn Rajab considers intention to be a form of will. It is so because often intention is used synonymous to the word will (Ibn Rajab, Jāmi' al-'Ulūm, pp. 07–08). This is based on the following verse of the Qur'ān:

$$\text{مِنكُم مَّن يُرِيدُ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَمِنكُم مَّن يُرِيدُ الآخرة}$$

- *Among you are some who desire this world, and among you are some who desire the Hereafter.* (3:152, Interpretation of the meaning)

However, Ibn Rajab believes that "will" precedes "intention" as one purifies his intention after making a will for an action. He refers to the opinion of al-Fuḍayl b. Ziyād who states:

> I have asked Abū 'Abd Allāh (Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal) about making an intention for the action. I asked: 'How is intention (made)?' He said: 'One should examine himself when he wills for an act so that he does not intend to (act) for people'. (Ibn Rajab, Jāmi' al-'Ulūm, p. 7)

A person's intention requires examination and purification (Ibn Rajab, Jāmi' al-'Ulūm, p. 10). It is so because the action of the person depends on his intention. If the

intention is good, then the act is praiseworthy but if it is unwell, then his action is bad and evil (Ibn Rajab, Jāmiʿ al-ʿUlūm, p. 07). The right intention is not sufficient for the acceptance of any action rather it should be in accordance with the Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ) (i.e., *iṣābah*) as well (Ibn Rajab, Jāmiʿ al-ʿUlūm, p. 7). The one whose intention is to acquire the love of Allāh, and this becomes his ultimate purpose, Allāh provides him with something that is beyond his desire of this world (Ibn Rajab, 1985, p. 125).

Ibn Rajab believes that in order to develop one's will and intention, it is necessary that a person ingrains the love of Allāh in His heart, because every conscious act springs forth from the love and will. Therefore, whichever heart has love deep-rooted in it for Allāh, his actions are influenced by this love. Consequently, his actions are carried out to please Allāh and oriented to attain the benefits of the Hereafter. The more a person has love for Allāh, the more he wills and intends to please Allāh through his actions. Therefore, in order to nurture one's will and intention in the obedience of Allāh, one needs to ingrain love for Him in his heart (Ibn Rajab, 1985, p. 125).

## Emotional development

Muslim scholars discuss emotional development with regards to having feelings for others in order to please Allāh and to acquire His pleasure and love. Therefore, a person is expected to love for Allāh, hate for Him, be pleased for Him, grief for Him; all just to acquire His love (Al-Ḥajjājī, 1996, p. 195). Ibn Rajab discusses in detail how one can develop feelings for others in order to please Allāh through the action of his heart. For example, when discussing about love, he alludes that the ultimate purpose of those who are truthful in their love for Allāh develop feelings of love and affection for others solely to please Allāh. In other words, they love each other only to acquire the love of Allāh (Ibn Rajab, Mā Dhi'bān Jā'i'ān, p. 32).

This is what Allāh expects from his creation that the heart should be overwhelmed with the love of Allāh, and no other creation's love should dominate his heart as it was in the case of Abraham who was commanded to slaughter his son so that his heart is overwhelmed with the love of Allāh alone and no other love overtakes that position (Ibn Rajab, Mā Dhi'bān Jā'i'ān, p. 32).

Ibn Rajab describes two different levels of love for Allāh:

1    The first level of love is when one begins to love what Allāh loves and begins to dislike what is forbidden by his Lord.
2    The second level of love is when one's heart is overwhelmed with the love of Allāh until he is ready to go the extra mile by engaging in numerous voluntary actions (*nawāfil*) and he even avoids what is disliked despite being permissible (*makrūhāt*). In this level of love, he is ready to bear the difficulties and exerts himself (*ijtihād*) in order to acquire the love of Allāh (Ibn Rajab, 1985, pp. 126–127).

Therefore, Allāh is pleased with those who are immersed in His Love which is manifested in their outward and inward actions. Consequently, loving for Allāh simply means that a man does not perform an action either inwardly or outwardly, except that it is carried out only to please Him. Such feeling can be developed by the following means:

- Getting to know one's Lord is the most effective way one can acquire His love. The more one knows about God's names and attributes, the more one is increased in love for Him (Al-Ḥajjājī, 1996, p. 140).
- Sacrificing for Him is the second most important way to acquire His love as it was carried out by the magicians at the court of Pharaoh when they sacrificed themselves despite his anger and displeasure (Al-Ḥajjājī, 1996, p. 140).
- Carrying out obligatory and voluntary acts with the intention to acquire His love (Al-Ḥajjājī, 1996, p. 140).
- Carrying out acts of obedience in isolation and secretly is another cause by which one can acquire the love of Allāh (Ibn Rajab, 1999, p. 162).
- A person can increase his love for Allāh by getting closer to Him and communicating with Him and invoking Him (Ibn Rajab, 1999, p. 289).
- Love is also increased by meeting expectations of the *kalimah tawḥīd* (there is no (true) God but Him…) (Ibn Rajab, 1999, p. 289).
- Allāh's love can be acquired through one's attachment to the mosques (i.e., houses of Allāh) (Ibn Rajab, 1985, p. 71).

## Physical development of an individual

Islām presents a holistic view when it comes to the development of human beings. Not only does Islām encourage its adherents to take care of their well-being from a psychological and spiritual perspective, but it also encourages people to take care of their physical development and health as well. The following Ḥadīth is one example among numerous others: "Your Lord has a right on you, your soul has a right on you, and your family has a right on you; so, you should give the rights of all those who has a right on you" (Bukhārī (d)).

Ibn Rajab explains that it is not befitting for an individual to exert himself more than what his body can bear. He states: "Whoever burdened himself with an act of worship what causes him difficulty until his body is ached because of it, then this is not what he is obliged to do" (Ibn Rajab, 1999, p. 263). He further adds: "The one who burdened himself with the voluntary acts (of worship) which causes harm to his body … he is forbidden to do so" (Ibn Rajab, 1999, p. 268). The criteria that he sets is that as long as these voluntary (*nawāfil*) acts do not make it difficult for him to carry out his obligations, they are not forbidden to be carried out (Ibn Rajab, 1999, p. 269).

He also discourages obesity and calls plump bellies to be the head of all the diseases. He considers obesity to be the major cause of death. He states: "If the people of graves were asked: 'What is the cause of your death?' They would say: 'obesity…'" Therefore, consuming less food yields numerous benefits such as the softness of the heart, light physique, purity of soul, humility of self and much more whereas excessive consumption causes the opposite. Hence, overconsumption of food deters productivity as it leads to lethargy and laziness. Consequently, a person is mostly unable to do what he intends (Ibn Rajab, Jāmi' al-Ulūm, p. 371).

## Sexual development

Muslim scholars explain sexual development in terms of preserving the human sanctity and chastity by presenting forth number of ways that do not only preserve a person's honour but at the same time honour him with grace and elegance. Inclination towards

the opposite gender is in the innate nature of man. Allāh has permitted men to enjoy intimacy with women in a specific way that is ordained by marriage (*nikāḥ*). Anyway, other than the above is considered to be impermissible, and man is forbidden to carry out any such act that renders pleasure outside the marriage. He has also ordained certain preventive measures for man such as lowering his gaze in the presence of females. Ibn Rajab considers gaze to be one of the arrows of *Iblīs* (Satan) (Ibn Rajab, 1999, p. 163). Despite the difficulty in lowering the gaze, the person once he is accustomed to it, he begins to find pleasure in his heart which arises because of the fear of Allāh (Ibn Rajab, 1999, p. 239). A person is therefore encouraged by Islām to marry when he reaches the age of puberty. The Prophet (ﷺ) said: "O young people! Whoever among you is able to marry, should marry, and whoever is not able to marry, is recommended to fast, as fasting diminishes his sexual desires" (Bukhārī (e)). Based on the mentioned narration, Ibn Rajab considers fasting to be one of the major sources of diminishing the sexual urges (Ibn Rajab, 1999, p. 163). Therefore, anyone who is unable to marry due to a valid excuse, he should resort to fasting in order to tame and control his sexual desires.

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Muslim (c). *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim: The Book of Faith*, Chapter: Clarifying that Islām started as something strange…, 145.

Muslim (d). *The Book of Faith*, Chapter: Clarifying that the religion is *naṣīḥah*, 55a.

**Section III**

# 19–21st Century Scholars, Academics, and Clinicians

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# 16  Allāmah Muhammad Iqbāl (Pakistan)

## Introduction

Allāmah Muhammad Iqbāl is considered to be one of the greatest poets, philosophers and the social scientists of the modern era. His thoughts and observations bore fruit for the future, and even today scholars of Urdu and Persian Language, poets, and literary persons alike honour his works and approach him with deep admiration and awe (Malik, 1971, pp. 3–4).

## Iqbāl's concept of *Khudī*

In the year 1915, Iqbāl published one of his finest works in form of a collection of poetry by the name *Asrār-e-Khudī* (secretes of the self) in the Persian language. Many critics and philosophers have regarded this collection to be his masterpiece where he alludes the idea of khudī (self) from a number of aspects – spiritual and religious. It is important to note that Iqbāl wrote his poem in crucial times when the subcontinent was being colonised by the British and the world was facing the First World War. He lamented on the state of the Muslims and realised that the Muslims have lost their identity. Their religious and philosophical tradition is worn out and practically dead (Iqbāl, 1986, p. 125). With his poetry, he intended to revive and rejuvenate the sense of Muslim identity in the hearts of Muslims. He has explained the nature of individual life; its motive power, ways through which it can be developed and nurtured; its goals and how those goals can be achieved (Ali, 1988, p. 208).

Iqbāl uses the term *khudī* synonymous to the word *rūḥ* (soul or the spirit) used by the Qur'ān (Khaliq, 2011). Iqbāl's use of the word *khudī* received criticism because of the negative connotations underlying the word. It is often used synonymous to the words selfishness and egotism (Schimmel, 1963, p. 42). Iqbāl was fully aware of the negative connotations underlying the term and admitted that the word was chosen with great reluctancy as ethically it is used in a bad sense in both Urdu and Persian languages (Vahid, 1964, p. 243). Iqbāl explains that he wished to use a colourless word for self which has no ethical significance. As he did not find any such word in Persian and Urdu, he chose the word *khudī* as there he found certain references of simplicity associated with the term especially in Persian language (Vahid, 1964, p. 243). For him, the word *khudī* refers to self-reliance, self-respect, self-confidence, self-preservation, and even self-assertion (Vahid, 1964, p. 244). He believes in hardness but never equates hardness with oppression or self with selfishness. He also clarifies to the reader that *khudī* does not imply pride in his usage as it is commonly perceived in Urdu language (Forster, 1951, p. 298).

From an Islāmic perspective, man is composition of both *jism* (body) and *rūḥ* (soul) where the latter is the inner self of man and the body is its vessel (Ibn Taymīyah, 2004). In Iqbāl's view, this soul is what makes man unique among other creations. However, one has to make a significant effort and stride on a long journey to be able to transform himself and to realise what he bears within himself. The example to illustrate this journey is that of a seed and the fragrance. Each seed has the potential to release the fragrance but in order to do that, he has to go through a journey and pass-through certain conditions and overcome certain challenges. Not all of them are able to reach that stage and thus few bloom into the flower and offer the fragrance (Khaliq, 2011). Iqbāl condemns self-destruction. In his view, the purpose of life is to obtain self-realisation and self-knowledge and only after reaching such status, man can acquire the status of being the viceregent of Allāh (*khalīfah*) (Vahid, 1959).

In order to understand Iqbāl's philosophy of the self, one has to understand other associated terms that he uses such as love, perfect human (*insān-e-kāmil or mard-e-momin*), etc. He considers *khudī* to be something of very mysterious in nature. Normally, man is alien to the nature of the self; hence, mostly it is not understood. In *Asrār-e-Khudī*, he details its characteristics and also alludes countless possibilities of progress that it bears (Khaliq, 2011). According to Iqbāl, the poem was based on two principles: First, that the personality is the central fact of the universe. Second, that personality "I am" is the central fact in the constitution of man.

## Levels of self-development

The main idea on which Iqbāl focuses on in his poem is that knowing oneself leads to the perception of God. And it is only through self-realisation that real meaning of the purpose of man's creation becomes evident (Zeb & Qasim, 2015, p. 203). While presenting his thought on the self, Iqbāl does not forget to take into consideration the basic human needs that are necessary for the survival of the human beings. His whole concept of the self's development can be categorised into three levels:

1  Self and the "I am ness" (intrapersonal)
2  Self and the other (interpersonal)
3  Self and the God (transpersonal)

The first level can be likened with the Maslow's first level of psychological needs of the human beings. At this level, the self is just concerned with and has knowledge of its own self. It does not think beyond itself. As for the second level, it can be likened with Maslow's psychological and social needs. After fulfilling the basic needs, the self now begins to think beyond itself and starts to be influenced by others. The third level can be likened with self-actualisation where one satisfies the need to recognise God through his own true recognition. In Iqbāl's view, this is the perfect man who has recognised God and has attained a spiritual power after striding on the path of self-actualisation (Zeb & Qasim, 2015). He indicates that the pathway to self-realisation is challenging and demands action and love. However, once a person acquires the self-consciousness, it makes him shine like a star, a drop of water that shines like a pearl and enables the feeble grass leaves grow out of the hard ground. Having acquired self-consciousness the self experiences the awakening which is characterised by burning the passion of desire and the creation of ideals. This awakening of the self leads to the purification

process. It purifies itself with the power of love and only through love faith can be fused into the soul and lead it to the perception of God (Zeb & Qasim, 2015).

Iqbāl believes that in order to acquire perfection, it must endure challenges offered by three stages: The first stage requires man to inculcate in itself the habit of obedience. He states: "Endeavor to obey, o heedless one! Liberty is the fruit of compulsion" (Elahi, 1986, p. 73). Thus, without the habit of obedience, such freedom and liberty can lead him astray. Consequently, to confine oneself within the boundaries of obedience leads one to the real liberty and freedom. He gives the example of the air that is turned into a beautiful fragrance only after it is confined in the flower bud. Similarly, the perfume becomes musk when it is imprisoned and trapped in the naval of the dear (Elahi, 1986, pp. 73–74).

The second stage that oneself must endure is the stage of self-control. According to Iqbāl, the one who is unable to control himself is controlled by others. Self-control is acquired through strong belief in God and obedience to His commandments. Faith in God liberates him from the fear of different kinds (Zeb & Qasim, 2015, p. 208). As for the final stage, one is required to liberate his personality by "discovering the ultimate source of law within the depth of his consciousness." This does not mean that one must liberate himself from the shackles of law as Iqbāl himself clarifies (Iqbāl, 1986, p. 171).

## Factors that strengthen the self

Iqbāl refers to a number of factors that strengthen the personality of an individual. Some of these are briefly explained below.

### Desire

Throughout his writing, he has greatly emphasised on the desire which provides sustenance to the self. Consequently, the self that lacks desire, in fact, dies. Iqbāl uses number of words for desire. These words include "*ārzū*," "*ishtiyāq*," "*tamannā*" (Hassan, Iqbal's "*Khudi*," pp. 3–4).

### Love

Iqbāl emphasises strongly on the importance of love for strengthening the self (Browne, 1920, p. 143). He uses the word in a wide sense and refers to it as the desire to assimilate and to absorb. For him, its highest form is the creation of values and ideals and the endeavour to realise them (Hassan, Iqbal's "*Khudi*," p. 6). For him, it is more than elixir. The latter is expected to turn baser metals into gold, but love turns all baser passions into itself (Iqbāl, 1961, p. 67). It is fascinating to note that Iqbāl's lover cannot be likened what is generally portrayed in different Urdu and Persian poems. For him, he is not a pathetic lamenting creature, rather he associates kingdom and dominion with love thereby envisioning love to be an empowering force (Arberry, 1968, p. 35).

### *Faqr*

Iqbāl uses the term *Faqr* in multiple occasions. It refers to the number of meanings in his dictionary. For him, it refers to an inner attitude of detachment and superiority to

material possessions. Unlike asceticism, which encourages man to turn away from the world by claiming it to be evil, he believes in making use of the material world for the pursuit of good and worthy ends (Hassan, Iqbal's "*Khudi*," p. 11). According to Chishty (1962), the two main ideas underlying Iqbāl's concept of *Faqr* is "*Fikr*" (thought) and "*Zikr*" (remembrance). The former concept refers to the feeling of the presence of God in one's heart and employing one's limbs in carrying out the obligatory duties with utmost love and respect. As for the *Fikr*, it refers to reaching the unknown through the process of inferring (p. 44).

### Ṣayyādī

Literally, the word refers to hunting. Iqbāl uses the word to "denote a kind of heroic idealism based on daring, pride and honor. It is most often symbolised by the words such as 'lion' or the falcon (*shāhīn*), the emblems of royalty" (Hassan, Iqbal's "Khudi," p. 16). Iqbāl's falcon does not build a nest because it does not settle or rest; it does not live in comfort, rather it inhabits the skies. He encourages the younger generation to live the life of *Ṣayyād* or the hunter that seeks no ease or comfort rather it aims for the skies (Hassan, Iqbal's "*Khudi*," pp. 16–17).

One can conclude that Iqbāl's theory suggests that only through the development of *Khudī*, a person's character can be developed (Khaliq, 2011).

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# 17 Malik Badri on His Contributions to the Revival of Islāmic Psychology (Sudan)

## Introduction and context

Professor Dr Malik Badri is regarded as the doyen of modern Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy movement in the past decades. The previous chapters have provided some of the classical and contemporary scholars and thinkers in the evolution of Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy. This chapter will focus on the prestigious office, honours, and awards of Malik Badri and present additional information about his educational and academic background, employing developmental work, selected literature of his work, and the development of a new technique in behavioural therapy. The report of an interview with Professor Dr Malik Badri, Chair of Ibn Khaldun in the Faculty of Revealed Knowledge and Human Science, was conducted on the 14th of January 2017 at The International Islāmic University of Malaysia, on his contributions to the revival of Islāmic psychology.

Professor Malik Badri is regarded by many as the Father of Modern Islāmic Psychology. He was a Fellow of the British Psychological Society and in 1989 he was awarded the title of Chartered Psychologist (C.Psychol). He was awarded an honorary D.Sc. from the Ahfad University. He was the Professor of Psychology at Istanbul Sabahattin Zaim University in Turkey. He held the Chair of Ibn Khaldun in the Faculty of Revealed Knowledge and Human Science of IIUM, Malaysia. He was awarded the Zubair Prize for Academic Excellence which is the highest academic award in Sudan, and the best contribution in Islāmic Medicine for the year 2000 by the Islāmic Medical Association of South Africa for his book on the AIDS Crisis. He was made an Honorary D.Sc. and Distinguished Professor (Emeritus Professor) by the Academic Board of Ahfad University, Omdurman, Sudan. He was appointed as Vice Chancellor of the University of Science and Technology of Sudan. He is the Founder of the International Islāmic Psychology Association, and President of the International Association of Muslim Psychologists. He was made an Honorary President of the Sudanese Psychological Society. He was also the Distinguished Professor of Clinical Psychology in the Department of Psychology at Ahfad University in Omdurman, Sudan. During the year 1980–1984, he was an elected member of the WHO Committee on Traditional Medical Practices. Nilain University, Sudan, has honoured him with the development of a Malik Badri Center for Islāmic Counseling and Psychotherapy. His other awards were Distinguished Scholar of Psychological Sciences from the Institute of Arab Psychological Sciences; University of Imam Mohammad bin Saud, Riyadh; and the Arab Psychology Board established the Malik Badri prize for the best research in psychology. He was also awarded the Association of Muslim Social Scientists (UK)

Lifetime Achievement Award in 2016, in recognition for his profound contributions to the field of Psychology, Psychotherapy, Islāmic Psychology, and Clinical Psychology, as well as eminent career and scholarly achievements.

## Contribution to development of a new technique in cognitive behavioural therapy

What I want to focus on now relates to Malik Badri's contribution in developing a new, innovative technique in cognitive behavioural therapy. This technique was ascribed the name of "cognitive systematic desensitisation," (Badri, 1966, 2014) and was developed as a result of his criticism of the stimulus-response paradigm of the behaviourism of the early as though patients were Pavlovian dogs. Badri (Khan, 2015) stated that behaviourism

> needed to be humanised. In this modification, I could combine behaviour therapy with talking and listening to the patient instead of moving him up the hierarchy as if he were an animal to be conditioned. I was surprised to hear from him [Victor Meyer] that my alterations were innovative changes that should be published. (p. 163)

He stated that

> As a psychologist aspiring to Islamise psychology, I refused this behaviouristic extremism because it was based on an animalistic and a mechanistic conception about human nature influenced by Darwinism and secular humanism. It is in direct conflict with the Islāmic belief about human nature and its spiritual fitrah. (Khan, 2015, p. 165)

In fact, this new technique was mentioned in a number of books and journals on behaviour and cognitive therapy including Meyer and Chesser's (1971) "Behaviour Therapy in Clinical Psychiatry," and Rehm's (1981) "Behaviour Therapy for Depression: Present Status and Future Directions."
  Malik Badri's technique is as follows:

- "Instead of silently imagining anxiety-provoking scenes as prescribed in Wolpe's method, I asked the patient to loudly voice in detail what she was imagining. This enhanced her involvement and her ability to imagine vividly."
- "Secondly, in place of restricting the therapy to the agreed upon hierarchy that represents only a sample of feared items, I encouraged the patient to 'horizontally' imagine and speak about other scenes of comparable anxiety provoking instances. This was done to facilitate a transfer from clinic to real life."
- "Thirdly, as an alternative to the unreliable instruction of raising a finger to signal anxiety, I used a quicker and more reliable instruction of simply asking the patient to stop talking whenever she experienced much anxiety."
- "Fourthly, in combining the gradual approach of desensitisation with cognitive therapy, behaviour rehearsal and spiritual therapy, I have shown how this combination can be of special significance in treating Muslim patients" (Khan, 2015, p. 164).

This innovative technique is the precursor in the evolution of classical behaviour therapy to cognitive behavioural therapy. Professor Malik Badri, without having

awareness of doing so, has actually used cognitive behavioural therapy that was introduced years after the publication of his classical paper (Badri, 1966).

The following were questions posed to Professor Malik Badri during the interview.

**Professor Malik Badri, can you briefly tell me about yourself?**
My full name is Malik Babikir Badri. Babikir Badri is the name of my father who established the first girls' education in Sudan in 1907. When I was born in the little town in Rufaa, a small Sudanese town on the Blue Nile, my father was 71 years old. I continued studying at primary and secondary private schools established by my father. Then I went to American University of Beirut first to study pharmacy, then changed to physics, biology and eventually moved to study psychology and education. I obtained B.A. (with Distinction) and M.A. degrees from the American University of Beirut in 1956 and 1958, respectively. I completed my PhD at the University of Leicester, England in 1961. I went to study Behaviour Therapy at the Academic Department of Psychiatry, the Middlesex Hospital Medical School (University of London) in 1966 where I obtained a Postgraduate Certificate of Clinical Psychology. I taught at many universities, for example, in Jordan, Sudan, Ethiopia, Malaysia, England, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Lebanon, and Morocco. Now, I am holder of the Chair of Ibn Khaldun in the International Islāmic University Malaysia (IIUM). I have remained for many years a distinguished Professor of Psychology at Ahfad University, Sudan.

**How long have you been interested in the Islāmisation of psychology?**
Yes, this question will take me back to when I was a student at the American University of Beirut. The first course on psychology I did was taught by an American Lecturer. In 1953, the hero of psychology was Sigmund Freud, and psychology one way or another was based on psychoanalytic theory and practice. It was quite obvious to me at that time, as a young Muslim from the Sudan, that the whole issue of psychosexual development and the id directs human behaviour in an unconscious manner [Psychoanalytic approach]. That was considered as a science at that time. I used to argue with my Professor, and he would tell me that if I do not accept Freud what was the alternative? There was no alternative at that time. So, by the time, I finished my undergraduate education, I started to think about formulating a form of psychology that is based on our Islāmic faith and our culture. Here I must say I am indebted to two great scholars who did their best to remould Western psychological thoughts in an Islāmic fashion. I was greatly influenced by the writings of Mohammad Qutb, particularly his book titled *Islām: The Misunderstood Religion* and by the writings of Ala al-Mawdudi. These two people were important in trying to give me, a young student, self-confidence in Islām as a way of life, and to see the contradictions. Mohammad Qutb was particularly very good in showing the contradictions of Freudian's thoughts. To me that was very important as an undergraduate student. When I finished my PhD and returned to teach at the American University of Beirut in the early sixties, it was then that behaviour therapy came into existence. I said that I must go and see this new approach in psychology and psychotherapy.

I travelled to London, UK, and met Hans Eysenck, but I was not impressed by him as a personality. But I was impressed by his writings: *Uses and Abuses of Psychology*, *Sense and Nonsense in Psychology*, followed by his third book, *Fact and Fiction in Psychology* (Eysenck, 1954, 1957, 1972). These books were useful in exposing the Freudian myths, So, I met Hans Eysenck (senior clinical psychologist) and he said that

I do not train anyone as I only write books, so go and see Dr Victor Meyer (1971) at the Middlesex Hospital as he would be happy to train me in the field of behaviour therapy. It was then that I could see an alternative to the garbage [Freudian's psychoanalysis] that we were forced to study as an undergraduate student in psychology. I think this is the beginning of my interest in the Islāmisation of psychology.

**Who are the academics and clinicians who had a big influence on your professional development as a behaviour therapist?**

I think Hans Eysenck influenced me by his writings but not his actual clinical practice of psychotherapy. But the person who really taught me and was humble, sociable, and extroverted person who trained many people in behaviour therapy was Dr Victor Meyer. He was one of the founders of Behaviour Therapy and he was so good at finding ways of using systematic desensitisation and aversion therapy at that time. He was very skilful and, of course, he was the man who invented this therapeutic technique for the treatment of obsessional compulsive which is based on the technique of Exposure and Response Prevention. I was there with him when he treated his very first patient. Now this has become the best psychotherapeutic intervention in the treatment of obsessional compulsive disorder. I do remember the first case of a British Professor of pathology who was working very hard in his laboratory, and he worked until the evening. He wanted to finish his work at home. He took his briefcase together with his microscope and the specimen of a dangerous virus or germs. When he got into his car, the sample fell, and his hand had covered his car seat, so he panicked and washed his hand with detergents. He later on developed an obsessive-compulsive disorder of hand washing. When he came to the hospital, his hands were reddish in colour as a result of compulsive washing his hand with detergents. It was Victor Meyer who ventured into a new technique in behaviour therapy which is now a common mode of treatment. I was influenced by him and also by Stanley "Jack" Rachman, a central figure in the development of exposure and response prevention (ERP) (Rachman, 2009). As a friend I was influenced by Miller Mair, a psychologist, who later became an influential figure in British clinical psychology. These were the British psychologists who had really influenced my approach in Behaviour Therapy and later on in Cognitive Behaviour Therapy.

**Professor Badri, you talk about the influence of British psychologists on your professional development of behaviourism as an approach in psychology, were they any other influences, for example, American psychologists who were very much involved in the development of Behaviour Therapy. Were there any other psychologists?**

Yes, this is a very good question. I think British psychologists were the first to practice and popularise behaviour therapy at that time. America was still rather influenced by psychoanalytical approach during this period. In fact, during my training, a number of notable professors came to England to study with Victor Meyer at the Middlesex Hospital. In general, the man who actually came up with behaviour therapy was John Wolpe, an American with South African origin. I was influenced by him as he was the developer of the whole field of behaviour therapy. I was so happy to meet him in the 1980s at a university in Philadelphia. He invited me to lunch, presented me with his latest papers, and offered me membership in his Association for The Advancement of Behaviour Therapy. I was not only influenced by his thought but about his humility and ability to accept various opinions from different people and his open-mindedness. The

other psychologist, non-British, was an American Professor who came to study in London. Later, he became an eminent professor in cognitive behaviour therapy. I could not remember his name. These are the two people who influenced me in behaviour therapy.

**Professor Badri, can you remember your first lecture on psychology from an Islāmic perspective?**

I do remember my first university public lecture. It was at the University of Jordan in 1963 at the Department of Psychology. This was before going to London to study to train in behaviour therapy. I spoke about Islām and Psychology and about the important worldview in changing the study of psychology. I do remember of this lecture very well because of the resistance of the psychologists in the department during questions and answers time. How come you speak about Islāmic psychology? Psychology is a pure science. Now Malik, why do you speak about Islāmic psychology? Is there a *fasiq o*r evil physics or an un-Islāmic chemistry? Then why speak to us about an Islāmic psychology? Or Islām coming into psychology? Islām has nothing to do with Islāmic psychology whatsoever. This was a lot of arguments and discussion. The people who were at the conference and who were not psychologists were more understanding.

After coming from London, in 1971, the Dean of the University of Riyadh asked me to present my paper on "Muslim psychologists in the lizard's hole" in Arabic. This paper was presented in the annual conference of the Association of Islāmic Social Scientists in Indianapolis in the USA, in 1969. I had the same resistance from the psychologists as of the public lecture. Most of them were Egyptian lecturers who were trained in the psychoanalytic approach, and they were very hostile. One of the open-minded professors who had studied in America told me not to be surprised that these people were angry about your criticism of Freud and psychoanalytical psychology and behaviour therapy. He said: "Do not be surprised because if you take away Freud, they do not know what to teach. In fact, they are receiving their salary from Freud." The students attending this presentation were happy about my presentation and the non-psychologists professors and lecturers. I do remember these two lectures because they expressed the attitude of psychologists at that time. However, psychologists talked about "Soviet psychology" but not Islāmic psychology. [This was the general opinion of the Arab psychologists of the sixties who were guided by a Western scientific paradigm and there was no room for religious "dogma."]

**Professor Badri, you mentioned** "**Muslim psychologists entering the lizard's hole." Can you elaborate on this?**

Yes indeed. The title of my paper "Muslim psychologists in the lizard's hole" was presented at the Association of Islāmic Social Scientists in Indianapolis in the USA, in 1969. The idea of this lecture on the "lizard's hole" title comes from the famous Ḥadīth of the Prophet (ﷺ). It was narrated from Abu Hurairah that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: "You will most certainly follow the ways of those who came before you, arm's length by arm's length, forearm's length by forearm's length, hand span by hand span, until even if they entered a hole of a mastigure (lizard) you will enter it too." They said: "O Messenger of Allāh, (do you mean) the Jews and the Christians?" He said: "Who else?" (Ibn Majah). What I mean by this is that Muslim psychologists are accepting Western psychology with all of the inherent secular and culture-bound

aspects, without thinking. Many of them are good Muslims and when they go home, they put their garment and do their prayer and when they come to the university, they become Freudian. There are a lot of contradictions in the way they behave [cognitive dissonance]. That is why I have used this idea that the Muslim psychologists are in the lizard's hole.

This idea became popular, Saudi economists also used this term as "Muslim Economists in the Lizard Hole." John Sullivan, a very good friend of mine, an American, working in hospital as a counsellor/psychologist in Indianapolis. We are still very good friends. He said to me that when I read your paper on "Muslim psychologists in the lizard's hole," I realised I was in the lizard's hole. So, I changed my approach in psychology and became a counsellor with the Muslim Student Association. He later started his own practice as a Muslim counsellor. He wrote a very good book in Islāmic counselling.

**Professor Badri, you talked about Muslim psychologists in the lizard's hole, Freud and psychoanalysis. What is wrong with Freudian's psychoanalysis? Why is psychoanalytical therapy not compatible with Islāmic beliefs and practices?**
If this question was asked in the 1960s and 1970s, there would be limited response in what is wrong with psychoanalysis. Now everyone knows what was wrong with psychoanalysis. For us as Muslims what is wrong with Freudian's psychoanalysis is what is wrong with Western psychology in relation to the nature of man. Who is man? Is man some animal who evolved from apes and has no soul? Or is man a chosen creature created by Allāh who can worship Allāh and become higher than angels. Or we can go against his *Fiṭrah*, his spiritual predisposition, refuse to worship Allāh and become worse than animals. Now, the issue is that the nature of man is an important cornerstone to decide what kind of psychology we should have. Psychoanalysis, unfortunately, not only accepts the Darwinian thought but also for us to consider that man is driven psychologically with mainly unconscious sexual and also aggressive impulses which will direct him from birth to grave. Everything that man says or does is explained in this understanding – man even when not only in his consciousness even during his dreams. Indeed, I think the whole thing is based on the fallacious conception about man.

Now, of course, many Western psychologists have abandoned Freud and in a number of British universities they are teaching Freud's psychoanalysis from a historical viewpoint rather than something to be taught in practice and to be applied. A book that came out I think that Muslim psychologists should read by Thornton (1986) on *Freud and Cocaine: Freudian Fallacy*. The author showed that Freud was using cocaine and that some of his theories, sexual in nature, were written while he was addicted to cocaine. His own colleagues, including Carl Jung, broke away from him because of the issue of his insistence in explaining all behaviour is driven by sexual and aggressive instincts and going against religion. Freud claimed that he was an atheist and psychoanalysis was introduced to expose the religion. In fact, has been a member of a Zionist organisation throughout his life. I think we need to study his life in detail so to understand why he has come out with these absurd theories.

**Professor Badri, one of the techniques that Freud uses was dream analysis. Can you say how dream analysis is congruent with Islāmic beliefs and practices?**
This is a very important question. Freud considers dream analysis or the understanding of dream as the royal road to the understanding the unconscious. All dreams

are wish fulfilment. When we dream then our ego is not acting unconsciously so the id would be active because the id is driven mainly by sexual aspects all our dreams are wish fulfilment related to sexual and aggressive issues. But if according to Freud, the dream comes as symbols to try to simplify the issue, they come as symbols because he says that if you dream about your real intention then you will be disturbed as you wake up from your sleep. It comes in a disguised manner. You have not resolved your Oedipus complex in which you sexually hate your father and love your mother. If it comes to you in a dream that you are having a relationship, sexual, or otherwise, with your mother this will disturb you and you will wake up. So, it will come to you in the form of the cow. You will see a cow in your dream, and you will feed the cow grass. Actually, the cow is your mother and giving grass to the cow to eat is sexual relationship with your mother. Now this is the royal road. What kind of royal road is this?

Now dreams are symbolic, yes. It is not an invention of Freud's. Since ancient times, we know this. In [the Qur'ān] Surah Yusuf, we know that the King saw in a dream that seven lean cows were eating seven fat ones [and that there were seven green ears of corn and seven dry ones]. Prophet Yusuf said: "For seven consecutive years, you shall sow as usual and that which you reap you shall leave it in the ears, (all) except a little of it which you may eat. Then will come after that, seven hard (years), which will devour what you have laid by in advance for them, (all) except a little of that which you have guarded (stored). Then thereafter will come a year in which people will have abundant rain and in which they will press (wine and oil)" (Qur'ān 12: 47–49). In relation to the prisoner who saw in a dream that he was carrying a breadbasket over his head from which birds are eating (Qur'ān 12: 36), Prophet Yusuf interpreted that this prisoner will be crucified.

These symbolisms are well-known, but the issue is how come whatever we see in our dream is explained in a sexual manner. For example, if you see in your dream a box or something like a cavity, is it related to the female sexuality? If you see a pencil or anything similar, it is the symbol of male sexual organ? What is this? If I see a rare cow in my real life and then I see a cow in my dream, how come it becomes my mother? But I have already experienced and seen a cow eating grass, what is the real issue? Followers of Freud would see this dream as wish fulfilment and all wish fulfilment would come from the unconscious and when it comes from the unconsciousness it becomes sexual and aggressive. Other psychologists refuse all this and maintained that dreams have no meaning at all. It is only certain parts of the brain firing and the person tries to make sense out of this. Dreams have meaning and there are people whose dreams come true. There are certain people who can interpret dreams. So, the best understanding of dreams comes from the Ḥadīth of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ).

Abu Hurairah narrated that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said:

> "Dreams are of three types: The true dream, dreams about something that has happened to the man himself, and dreams in which the Shayṭān frightens someone. So, whoever sees what he dislikes, then he should get up and perform Salah." And he would say: "I like fetters and I dislike the iron collar."

And he would say: "Whoever has seen me (in a dream) then it is I, for indeed Shayṭān is not able to resemble me." And he would say: "The dream is not to be narrated except to a knowledgeable person or a sincere advisor" (Tirmidhi). That is, the dream from Shayṭān. The third type is the Prophetic dream, dream from "*Rahmah*," which

gives you good tidings. We cannot say that dreams are non-sense, nor can we say that dreams are only wish fulfilment of an aggressive or sexual nature. Indeed, the Prophet (☙) gives us a simple understanding of dreams and its symbolic nature.

**Professor Badri, what would you say are the differences between secular Western psychology and Islāmic psychology?**

Secular Western psychology and Islāmic psychology are very different in certain areas and near each other in other aspects. Not all secular Western psychology is anti-Islāmic. Though the philosophical and conceptual background is anti-Islāmic the application is useful. For example, all the field of behaviour therapy assumes that man has no nature at all. In behaviourism, man is simple like a dry leaf blown around by the environment. This is not Islāmic. But when you come to learning, when you come to learning by conditioning, which is the basic building block of behaviourism, this is science we accept it and use it. There is no problem with it and our Muslim scholars have actually applied it. The [Islāmic scholars] have applied systematic desensitisation, they spoke about learning by conditioning, they spoke about it in detail. Read about Al-Ghazâlî and others. When we read about cognitive psychology, go and read Ibn Taymiyyah, Ibn Qayyim al Jawziyyah. "I was astonished to find that our early scholars and healers had already mastered cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) and used it in treating the emotionally disordered. I realised that, had the modern Muslim psychologists read into the works of Al-Ghazâlî, Al-Balkhī, Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawzīyah, Ibn Sīnā, Al-Rāzī and similar great scholars; they would have come up with these so-called modern technologies many years before Europe. They could have been the pioneers and teachers instead of being the blind followers" (Khan, 2015, p. 167).

The polymath scholar Ibn Qayyim al Jawziyyah spoke about this aspect of cognition and how it develops in detail. He spoke about the human soul that is active all the time. What we call the psychic today, this psychic is active during the day and during the night, non-stop. He says that everything starts with a thought [cognition]. If you accept a thought, then it becomes a motivation. If you accept the motive, then you will do it in real life. If you repeat it, it becomes a habit. So, he says that when you have the thought, then fight it if it is a bad thought. If you do not fight it, it would become a motivation. If you do not fight the motivation, then you will find difficulty to stop this behaviour in real-life. If you do it once, then make *Istighfar* [is also known as *Astaghfirullah* which is the act of seeking forgiveness from Allāh] and fight it. If you do not and it repeats itself, then it becomes a habit. And it is not easy to change. People who speak about cognitive psychology, they speak about the emotions following our thoughts. To help people, you will need to change their thoughts. After changing their thinking, then the emotion will change. This is mentioned by Ibn Qayyim al Jawziyyah. He is an Islāmic scholar, and he gave it an Islāmic dimension. That is what our students should actually know about the work of Islāmic scholars. For instance, where psychology merges with exact sciences like physiological psychology, that is the marriage between physiology and psychology, psycho-pharmacy, genetic psychology, behavioural genetic, we are facing the scientific aspects of psychology. We make use of it, and it is Islāmic. Whatever is actually useful to man and here is no secular connotation, it is Islāmic. We have no problem with it.

Here, where the issue is about changing psychology, we are essentially trying to adapt it; to see the things that is opposed to our culture [and religion]. Those aspects that are opposed to our culture and Islām are those who have no scientific evidence.

But when we come to study perception and learning, we have no problem. So secular psychology and Islāmic psychology are not two different poles, but it is a process whereby we are trying to adapt and to Islamise those aspects that have become secular. But they are useful, when we change cognitive psychology, using an Islāmic conception. For example, when a patient comes to us and he says that I am bad, Allāh does not like me because I did something wrong and he is depressed, then, when we change his thoughts about Allāh, and His forgiveness and His love to the humans He created, we are really changing the patient's thoughts. Not only changing his thoughts but also changing his spirituality. So, we are using the methods that have been developed in the West, but we are using it in an Islāmic fashion. When we do so, we will discover that our early Islāmic scholars have already gone through the same route.

Professor Badri, thank you for your answers. I wish you well in your blessed efforts at changing the secular face and contents of contemporary psychology.

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# 18  Amber Haque (US/India)

## Overview

Professor Dr Amber Haque is a professor, researcher, and practitioner in psychology for more than 30 years in the United States, Malaysia, UAE, and Qatar. He is currently the National Coordinator of Muslim Family Services in New York, US. He is also a non-residing visiting professor at Cambridge Muslim College. He was previously a Professor in Clinical Psychology at the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies, Doha, Qatar, and at the United Arab Emirates University, Al Ain, UAE. He was previously an Associate Professor and Department Chair at the Department of Psychology International Islāmic University Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. He also worked as a psychologist in Michigan for over 12 years and published extensively in areas of both mental health and indigenous psychology. In the past, he has served as a visiting scholar at Cornell University and UPENN and visiting Professor at IUS Bosnia.

He undertook his BA (Hons) Psychology at Patna University in India; MS in Clinical Psychology at the Eastern Michigan University and he completed his PhD in Psychology at the Western Michigan University. Amber Haque is an experienced teacher and he taught professional/clinical psychology having experience of more than 30 years in USA, Malaysia, UAE, and Qatar. He was involved in the teaching, curriculum design, and supervision of postgraduate students and he taught 30 plus psychology courses in five major universities. His research interests include clinical psychology, mental health, indigenous psychologies, health-related behaviours, American Muslims, mental health, and Islāmic Psychology. He has served as reviewer/editorial board member on 30 plus international refereed journals including the Journal of Muslim Mental Health, Journal of Islāmic Research Pakistan, Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology, Spirituality Psychology and Counseling International Journal of Research in Education and Psychology. He has had extensive media coverage on his works, and they are in local newspapers in the USA, Malaysia, and UAE. He has presented at national and international conference papers and/or travelled in 51 countries.

## Publications

Professor Dr Amber Haque has published more than 80 papers in the psychology/mental health area, including research articles, reviews, and reports in refereed

journals, six edited books, etc. His Google Scholar Citations: 1654, h-index 18, i10-index 26. Some of his edited books and peer-reviewed papers include the following:

**Forthcoming Publications**

Haque, A. & Rothman, A. (Eds.). Clinical Applications of Islāmic Psychology. Seattle: USA: International Association of Islāmic Psychology.

**Selected Publications**

Haque A., & Rothman, A. (2021). *Islāmic Psychology around the Globe. Seattle*: USA: International Association of Islāmic Psychology.

Haque, A., Gilstrap, L., & Ghuloum, S. (2020). *Mental Health in Qatar: Challenges and Prospects*. Newcastle Upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishers.

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The following are the responses to the interview questions.

**How can we explain Islāmic psychology in layman's terms?**

- Islāmic psychology (IP) is an old discipline which is also known as the *ilm al-nafs* or psychology of the self. *Nafs* itself is a broad term studied in its many forms and complex interplay with an individual's *ruh*, *qalb*, *'aql,* and *iradah*. These terms are derived from the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth and explained by many early Muslim scholars. So, IP is primarily the study of human *nafs* from an Islāmic perspective.

**What first sparked your interest in the study of Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy?**

- My interest in IP grew when I joined International Islāmic University Malaysia (IIUM) as an Assistant Professor of Psychology. We were required to teach all psychology courses from an Islāmic perspective. Later, as Department Head, I had to ensure that all courses taught within the psychology department had an Islāmic component. Malik Badri's book was also an impetus for me back in 1982.

**What led you to specialise in Clinical Psychology or Islāmic psychology?**

- After my Bachelor's degree in psychology, I completed my Master's in clinical psychology in 1983. I then worked as a clinical psychologist in Michigan, which led me to do my PhD. However, my interest in IP developed primarily after I moved to Malaysia from the United States. I did not do Islāmic psychotherapy with clients because I became an academician after my doctoral studies and did research and writing on IP.

**Who has been the biggest influence in your professional life in the field of Islāmic psychology? Why?**

- The biggest influence on me was the environment at IIUM. Also, their vision and mission and the impact from scholars who worked there towards embracing the Islamization of Knowledge movement. As a psychologist and Head of the psychology programme, I was expected to talk about Islāmic psychology in

forums, seminars, and conferences. I also had a keen interest in writing, so the more I talked and wrote about IP, the more interest I developed in this field.

**What would you say have been the most significant developments within the field of Islāmic psychology since your scholarly interest in the subject began?**

•   It seems that the field of IP grew after our department of psychology in Malaysia took a deep interest in IP and its curriculum development. Malik Badri was a professor and researcher in my university in Malaysia, and he also left an indelible influence in the field of IP. Parallel to his work in Malaysia, scholars in other countries wrote extensively on IP; Othman Nagati being one of them. The IP-oriented psychology at IIUM trained many international students, and they went back to their countries and started IP in Turkey, Bosnia, Indonesia, etc. While the work was going on in different parts of the world, the publications starting from IIUM were a significant impetus to other scholars interested in the field.

**What do you consider to be the most significant event in the evolution of modern Islāmic psychology?**

•   Publications and programme developments at the international level are two significant events in modern IP that have led many young scholars to be deeply interested in the subject. Courses taught in many countries from the 2010s such as India, Indonesia, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom, and even the United States has led to a great interest in young Muslims around the world.

**What do you think we lack in terms of depth and knowledge regarding Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy?**

•   There is still a lack of Qur'ānic understanding, in terms of both theoretical knowledge and practice. The solution lies in integrating scientific knowledge and revealed knowledge with keen interest and participation from scholars of both disciplines.

**What would you like to see change in the current trends in the Islāmic psychology movement?**

•   I would like to see the universities supporting the courses in IP. The marketing and convincible approach to attracting students and scholars is still meagre. There need to be scholarships to encourage students to join IP, create jobs, and research positions as gainful employment opportunities for graduates of IP programmes. We also need translation of works of international languages into English as the origins of IP have been mainly in non-English speaking and Muslim countries. There is also a need for quality research that is evidence-based and published in refereed journals. We need a strong IP Association and sincere cooperation among different institutes and universities to work towards the common goal of enhancing and promoting IP worldwide.

**What accomplishment in Islāmic psychology are you most proud of?**

•   I am most proud of the IP courses and the diplomas offered now in different parts of the world. I wrote and taught the first IP curriculum in 2002 in Malaysia and

see that the curriculum now is more comprehensive and taught as a programme and not just as one course. I am also proud of many more IP professionals now than they were in the early 2000s.

**Islāmic psychology is an evolving discipline. How do you suggest the professionals and students keep up with all of the new developments?**

- It will help if the developments in IP become a part of a course or seminar as current topics. Student tests and research topics may also revolve around the recent developments in IP. Communicating the IP developments through social media can also be a part of the modern trend.

**How do you see the future of the discipline?**

- I see a bright future for IP as the movement has grown significantly in the last couple of decades. Once there are jobs and benefits of the applications of IP with clinical cases, it will become more popular. The insurance companies also need to reimburse for IP services. IP therapists and counsellors should be licensed at the national/international level.

**What would you say is the most effective way of engaging with non-Muslim psychologists when promoting Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy?**

- As the research in religious, multicultural, and indigenous psychologies have grown in the last few decades, the need for IP is recognised by many people around the world, academics, scholars, and professionals alike. In order to be effective, the IP professionals must be knowledgeable of the field and a good marketer. Evidenced-based research will promote IP among non-Muslim psychologists.

**What one piece of advice would you give to someone who wants to become an Islāmic psychotherapist or counsellor?**

- Be passionate about IP as what you do has benefits for this world and the hereafter as you are establishing Allāh's Deen in this world.

# 19 Abdur Rasjid Skinner (UK)

## Overview

Professor Abdur Rasjid Skinner is a Consultant Clinical Psychologist and Jungian Psychotherapist with over 40 years of experience in dealing with a variety of psychological problems. He is a Chartered Psychologist and Associate Fellow of the British Psychological Society. He completed his BA and took Double Honours in Anthropology and Psychology from the University of Durham, and M.Sc. in Abnormal Psychology from Queen University Belfast, Northern Ireland. He is a Chartered Clinical Psychologist and trained Jungian Analyst.

When he was asked in an interview (Iqbal, 2001) what made him embrace Islām, he stated that

> It all began on my 19th birthday when I saw pictures of the mosques in Isfahan, [Iran] which impressed me with the beauty of Islām. At about the same time I was drawn to the Qadri Sufi Tariqah and felt the desire to taste the *haqiqat* (truth). This led me to say the *shahadah* (declaration of faith) in the London Central mosque in 1976.

He explained that he obtained his Islāmic education by studying all of Sahih ul Bukhari and Muslim in order to give him a solid base of knowledge. He went on to state that

> I took advice from several teachers especially Sheikh Nazim al Haqqani. A book that particularly influenced me was Imam Ghazâlî's '*Ihya Ulum ud Din*'. I follow *Tariqat* (spiritual path) and try to do as much *zikr* (remembrance of Allāh) as I can. (Iqbal, 2001)

He was for some years the President of The Association for British Muslims.

Abdur Rasjid Skinner has worked with others over many years developing the clinical application of an Islāmic understanding of the self. He held a Consultant position at Lynfield Mount Hospital Bradford, UK, and was a visiting lecturer in Clinical Psychology at Leeds and Sheffield Universities. Abdur Rasjid Skinner now works with *Ihsaan*, a Bradford, UK based clinic that offers Islāmic ally-based psychological therapies. He is a lecturer at the Cambridge Muslim College in the United Kingdom where he oversees and teaches the International Association of Islāmic Psychology certified course titled Islāmic Psychology and Islāmic Psychotherapy. Abdur Rasjid Skinner is a visiting professor in clinical psychology at the University of

Karachi in Pakistan and is a Fellow of the Royal Anthropological Institute. He is the author of several influential papers and has been an important contributor and pioneer in the field of Islāmic psychology. He has presented papers at numerous conferences nationally and internationally on Islāmic Psychology.

## Publications

Kaplick, P., Skinner, R., & Benmebarek, Z. (2021). Thérapie Cognitivo-Comportementale Islamique Intégrative: Une Intervention Compatible avec la Charia pour Patients Musulmans Déprimés. *Nafssaniat*, 72, 46–53.

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Skinner, R. (2010). An Islāmic Approach to Psychology & Mental Health. *Mental Health, Religion & Culture*, 13(6), 547–551.

Skinner, R., & Kaplick, P. M. (2017). Cultural Shift in Mental Illness: A Comparison of Stress Responses in World War I and the Vietnam War. *JRSM Open*, 8(12), 1–5.

Skinner, R. ((1989) 2018). Traditions, Paradigms and Basic Concepts in Islāmic Psychology. *Journal of Religion and Health* (1–8). doi:10.1007/s10943-018-0595-1

The following are the responses to the interview questions.

### How can we explain Islāmic psychology in layman's terms?

• It puts the spiritual part of Man at the heart of understanding the Self and thus mental illnesses and their treatments.

### What first sparked your interest in the study of Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy?

• The inadequacy of "Western" models to explain personal and clinical experiences.

### What led you to specialise in Clinical Psychology or Islāmic psychology?

• Following a sense of *Fitra.*

### Who has been the biggest influence in your professional life in the field of Islāmic psychology? Why?

• Malik Badri, because his book "The Dilemma," first made me aware that I was not alone in wanting to critique "Western" Psychology from an Islāmic perspective.
• He was the *Qutb* for bringing about a "movement."

### What would you say have been the most significant developments within the field of Islāmic psychology since your scholarly interest in the subject began?

• An international association, and the development of integrated clinical services in the United Kingdom and USA.

**What do you consider to be the most significant event in the evolution of modern Islāmic psychology?**

- Probably Malik's book, *The Dilemma of Muslim Psychologists*.

**What do you think we lack in terms of depth and knowledge when it comes to Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy?**

- A more developed Islāmic conceptual basis from which to better evaluate psychodynamics, and non-Western intrusions into psychology such as Mindfulness and Marxism.

**What would you like to see change in the current trends in the Islāmic psychology movement?**

- Less competitiveness.

**What accomplishment in Islāmic Psychology are you most proud of?**

- My 1989 paper (republished in 2018) as it influenced Malik's thinking, and helped shift the way of thinking about IP [Islāmic Psychology] from an Islāmiisation of Western Psychology to a Psychology based on Islāmic paradigms.

**Islāmic psychology is an evolving discipline. How do you suggest the professionals and students keep up with all of the new developments?**

- A good quality Journal.

**What do you see as the future of the discipline?**

- Hard to say. It has the potential to become a major force for *Dawah* and a major challenger to the hegemony of Western Psychology, particularly in its clinical application, or may remain a niche area within the Muslim community.

**What would you say is the most effective way of engaging with non-Muslim psychologists when it comes to promoting Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy?**

- Promoting it as indigenous psychology and more research studies demonstrating its effectiveness.

**What one piece of advice would you give to someone who wants to become an Islāmic psychotherapist or counsellor?**

- Keep humble, and try to maintain the connection with Allāh, The Almighty.

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# 20 Akhbar Husain (India)

## Overview

Professor Dr Akbar Husain is Professor at the Department of Psychology, Faculty of Social Sciences, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh (India). He completed his B.A. (Hons.) (Psychology & Economics), M.A. (Psychology), M.Phil. (Psychology), PhD (Psychology), and D. Litt. (Spiritual Psychology) at Aligarh Muslim University, India. He has over 40 years of teaching and research experience. He has successfully supervised Post-Doctoral theses, PhD theses, and M. Phil. dissertations at the Aligarh Muslim University. His areas of specialisation include Applied Personality & Social Psychology; Clinical-Health Psychology; Spiritual & Positive Psychology; Counseling Psychology; Psychological Assessment; and Islāmic & Sufi Psychology. He has authored, co-authored, and edited 42 books, and contributed 276 research papers, theoretical articles, and book chapters in National and International Journals and Books. Prof. Husain has attended and presented papers, given invited talks/lectures, and keynote addresses in the several national and international conferences and seminars. He was Editor of the Journal of the Indian Academy of Applied Psychology (2002–2005) and Journal of Educational Research, University of Malaya (2009). Professor Dr Akbar Husain is also a reviewer of various National and International Journals of Psychology. He has standardised numerous psychological tests and completed research projects. He is a Life Member and Annual Member of various National and International Associations.

Akbar Husain was offered Founding Member of the International Board of the International Transpersonal Association, USA in 2009. In recent years, he has been involved in conducting the research on various topics such as spiritual values/virtues, spiritual fitness, idyllic personality, social support, religious/spiritual coping, stress management, standardisation of *Taqwa* and *Fiṭrah* scales, etc. related to the area of Spiritual Psychology and Islāmic Psychology. In addition to these, his current areas of research are Clinical-Health Psychology, Counseling Psychology, Positive & Spiritual Psychology, Psychological Testing, and Islāmic Psychology. He is a founding member of the International Board of the International Transpersonal Association, USA and member of the Nyenrode Spirituality in Business Community, Netherlands. Akbar Husain received the Sir Syed Innovation Award 2018 Outstanding Researcher of the Year.

## Publications related to Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy

- Husain, A. (2021). *Quranic Guidance, Therapy & Islāmic Counselling Interventions*. New Delhi: Qazi Publishers & Distributors.

- Husain, A., Nazam, F., & Khatoon, Z. (2018). *Manual Islāmic Counselling*. New Delhi: Global Vision Publishing House.
- Husain, A. (2018). *Applied Islāmic Psychology: A Fresh Interpretation*. New Delhi: Global Vision Publishing House.
- Husain, A. (Ed.). (2017). *Contemporary Trends in Islāmic Psychology*. Hyderabad: Centre for Study and Research.
- Husain, A. (2006). *Islāmic Psychology: Emergence of a New Field*. New Delhi: Global Vision Publishing House.

This is the synopsis of the book on "Islāmic Psychology: Emergence of a New Field,"

This book discusses a number of Qur'ānic concepts of human behaviour and experience in support of Ḥadīth in a very appealing style. The author of the book has also incorporated the contribution of Muslim thinkers, Abu Hamid Al-Ghazâlî, Shah Waliullah, and Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi for their prolific writings and literary works directly linked to the discipline of psychology. The book contains fourteen chapters. The content and subject matter of the book reflects the testing of various Qur'ānic concepts of human behaviour and their particular relevance in the discipline of psychology. Of necessity, choice of content was made because of the extraordinary depth of the field of Islāmic psychology. The topics selected for inclusion in this book are considered to be most closely linked with the various fields of psychology, namely, psychopathology, guidance and counselling, personality development, and psychotherapy. This book has a considerable utility as a reference work for Muslim researchers and scholars in the discipline of psychology. For the Clinical psychologists, it can be a guide for the understanding, prevention and treatment of spiritual diseases.

## Other selected publications

- Husain, A., & Singh, R. (2019). *Spirituality in Practice*. New Delhi: The Readers Paradise.
- Husain, A., & Nazam, F. (2018). *Applied Positive Psychology*. New Delhi: Research India Press.
- Husain, A., & Maqbool, S. (2017). *New Directions in Spiritual Psychology*. New Delhi: Global Vision Publishing House.
- Husain, A., Hilal, H., & Anas, M. (Eds.). (2016). *Annotated Bibliography: Spiritual Psychology in India*. Hisar, Haryana: Indian Association of Health, Research and Welfare.
- Husain, A., Kaneez, S., & Jahan, M. (Eds.). (2014). *Studies in Spiritual Psychology*. New Delhi: Research India Press.
- Husain, A., & Khan, S. (2014). *Applied Spirituality: Theory, Research and Practice*. New Delhi: Global Vision Publishing House.
- Husain, A., Beg, M. A., & Dwivedi, C. B. (2013). *Psychology of Humanity and Spirituality*. New Delhi: Research India Press.
- Husain, A., & Khatoon, N. (Eds.) (2012). *Understanding Spirituality*. New Delhi: Research India Press.
- Husain, A., & Saeeduzzafar. (2011). *Spiritual Virtues and Human Development*. New Delhi: Global Vision Publishing House.

- Husain, A. (2011). *Spirituality and Holistic Health: A Psychological Perspective*. New Delhi: Prasad Psycho Corporation.
- Husain, A. (Ed.) (2010). *Explorations in Human Spirituality*. New Delhi: Global Vision Publishing House.
- Husain, A. (2009). (Ed.) *Twenty-First Century Psychology: Spirituality, Behavior and Wellness*. New Delhi: Global Vision Publishing House.
- Husain, A., Jamaluddin, S., Hashim, O., Cheong, L.S., Nor, M.M., & Sulaiman, H. (Eds.) (2008). *Horizons of Spiritual Psychology*. New Delhi: Global Vision Publishing House.
- Husain, A. (2005). *Spiritual Psychology*. New Delhi: Global Vision Publishing House.
- Husain, A. (2002). *Spirituality: The Hidden Dimension Discovered*. New Delhi: P.R. Books.
- Husain, A. (Ed.) (2001). *Stress Research and Stress Management*. Volume One of the Special Series on Psychology for Healthy Living. Aligarh: Aligarh Muslim University.

Akbar Husain also published many papers on the following themes: spiritual care training, Islāmic lifestyles, maintenance of spiritual health, relationship between meaning in life and spirituality, spiritual meditative techniques, spiritual intelligence, religious/spiritual practices, and well-being.

The following are the responses to the interview questions.

**How can we explain Islāmic psychology in layman's terms?**

- Islāmic psychology integrates knowledge and practice. Knowledge is acquired through the Holy Qur'ān and practice is Sunnah.

**What first sparked your interest in the study of Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy?**

- My interest grew in the field of Islāmic psychology in the year 2005 when I joined Universiti Malaya, Malaysia and read two books during my stay there: *The Dilemma of Muslim Psychologists* written by Malik Babikar Badri and *Personality in Islāmic Perspective* edited by Mohammad Yasein and Amber Haque. I wrote one book on *Islāmic Psychology: Emergence of a New Field* published in the year 2006.

**What led you to specialise in Clinical Psychology or Islāmic psychology?**

- Islāmic counselling, Islāmic spirituality, and standardisation of psychological tests based on the Qur'ānic concepts such as *Taqwa, Fiṭrah,* and idyllic personality.

**Who has been the biggest influence in your professional life in the field of Islāmic Psychology? Why?**

- Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) Islāmic lifestyle and Professor G. Hussein Rassool's book on Islāmic Counseling. This book inspires me to conduct and examine the

effectiveness of Islāmic practices, i.e., prayer and recitation of the verses of the Holy Qur'ān in the alleviation of mental health problems.

**What would you say have been the most significant developments within the field of Islāmic psychology since your scholarly interest in the subject began?**

- There are at least three fields of psychology, namely, Psychological Assessment, Psychology of Religion and Spirituality, and Counseling Psychology in which my interest develop in the past few years.

**What do you consider to be the most significant event in the evolution of modern Islāmic psychology?**

- The credit goes to Malik Babikar Badri for introducing the field of Islāmic psychology in the contemporary world.

**What do you think we lack in terms of depth and knowledge when it comes to Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy?**

- Non-availability of textbooks.
- Psychological concepts and models based on the Qur'ān.
- Process of Islāmic psychotherapy.
- Cultivation of Islāmic values in psychotherapy and counselling.

**What would you like to see change in the current trends in the Islāmic psychology movement?**

- Islāmic psychology should advance knowledge in the sub-fields such as spiritual and positive psychology, religion, and health, Islāmic counselling and psychotherapy, work and organisational psychology, psychological testing, etc.

**What accomplishment in Islāmic psychology are you most proud of?**

- Contributions of Muslim philosophers, theologians, and physicians.
- Contributions of Muslim psychologists and mental health professionals in research and practice.

**Islāmic psychology is an evolving discipline. How do you suggest the professionals and students keep up with all of the new developments?**

- Websites and Blogs need to be created to disseminate information among the professionals and students about the recent developments in the field.

**What do you see as the future of the discipline?**

- I hope in the near future it will emerge as the scientific discipline and as the interdisciplinary field in other fields of behavioural and medical sciences such as Social Work, Management, Psychiatry, etc.

- There is a need to introduce the theory and practical courses related to the field of Islāmic Psychology at the PG. [Postgraduate] level in the discipline of Psychology, Islāmic/Religious Studies, and Muslim Theology.

**What would you say is the most effective way of engaging with non-Muslim psychologists when it comes to promoting Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy?**

- The most effective way of engaging Non-Muslim psychologists in Islāmic psychotherapy and counseling may be in terms of demonstration of the role of Islāmic practices in dealing with mental health issues, working with them in collaborative research, and suggesting them to read basic literature on Islām.

**What one piece of advice would you give to someone who wants to become an Islāmic psychotherapist or counsellor?**

- To become an Islāmic Psychotherapist or Counsellor, one should have thorough knowledge in understanding the Qur'ān and its commentary, Ḥadīths, and the significance of Islāmic practices in daily life.

# 21 Rania Awaad (Egypt/US)

## Overview

Dr Rania Awaad is a Clinical Associate Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioural Sciences at the Stanford University School of Medicine where she is the Director of the Muslim Mental Health Lab and Wellness Program and Director of the Diversity Clinic. She is also the Clinical Director, Khalil Center-San Francisco Bay Area. She completed her Minor in Environmental Studies, BA Arabic and Islāmic Studies, BS Biological Anthropology at University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI. She studied medicine at the Wright State University School of Medicine, Dayton, OH and obtained an MD Medicine. Prior to studying medicine, she pursued classical Islāmic studies in Damascus, Syria. She was honoured to receive *Ijaazah* (authorisation to teach) in several branches of the *Shari'ah* sciences at the hands of many renowned scholars, including many female scholars. She has received *Ijaazah* to teach *Tajweed* in both the *Hafs* and *Warsh* recitations from the late eminent Syrian scholar, Shaykh Abu Hassan al-Kurdi. In addition to completing several advanced texts of the Shafi'i madhhab, she is licensed to teach texts of Maliki *Fiqh, Adab,* and *Ihsan.* She pursued her psychiatric residency training at Stanford Hospital and Clinics where she also pursued a postdoctoral clinical research fellowship with the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). Her research and clinical work are focused on the mental health needs of Muslims.

Rania Awaad has also served as the first female Professor of Islāmic Law at Zaytuna College, a Muslim Liberal Arts College in Berkeley, CA where she taught courses on Shafi'i Fiqh and Women's Fiqh and Qur'ānic sciences for nearly a decade. In addition, she serves as the Director of The Rahmah Foundation, a non-profit organisation dedicated to educating Muslim women and girls. At Rahmah, she oversees the Murbiyyah spiritual mentoring program for girls. Dr Rania Awaad is a nationally recognised speaker, award-winning teacher, researcher, and author in both the Islāmic and medical sciences. Her courses at Stanford range from teaching a pioneering course on Islāmic Psychology, instructing medical students and residents on implicit bias, and integrating culture and religion into medical care to teaching undergraduate and graduate students the psychology of xenophobia. Her other interests include psychospiritual well-being and interfaith work as it relates to mental health. Rania Awaad also co-teaches a course to Stanford Psychiatry residents entitled, "Culture and Religion in Psychiatry." She has also produced a toolkit, fact sheet, CME. She has been the recipient of several awards and grants for her work including the Department Faculty Professional and Leadership Award, Stanford University, Top 25 Faith and

Spiritual Influencers of 2020, Holy TV Award, Community Achievement Award for exceptional commitment to promoting mental health well-being in the community, ACCESS California, LA County, Annual Leadership Award, Muslim Coalition of Connecticut, Islāmic Psychology Researcher of the Year Award, University of Southern California, American Psychiatric Association/Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (APA/SAMHSA), Minority Fellowship Award, and many other prestigious awards. She is a Fellow, Institute of Social Policy and Understanding, Senior Fellow, Yaqeen Research Institute, Fellow, National Islāmic Scholars Trust and Fellow, International Association of Islāmic Psychology.

Rania Awaad also has an interest in refugee mental health and has travelled to Amman, Jordan multiple times with the Care Program for Refugees (CPR) sponsored by the Al-Alusi Foundation, a local non-profit organisation. She has worked on developing and presenting a "train the trainers" curriculum to aid workers and therapists in Amman working with Syrian and Iraqi refugees. Rania Awaad is passionate about community mental health and lectures widely nationally and internationally, particularly in communities where mental health is highly stigmatised. She was invited by President Obama to present her work on Muslim Mental Health at a convention at the Department of Health in DC. Rania Awaad received this invitation as a leader who is nationally recognised for her work on the mental health needs of Muslim populations. She is particularly passionate about uncovering the historical roots of mental health care in the Islāmic intellectual heritage.

## Selected publications

- Awaad, R., Hamid, H. (Eds.) (manuscript). *Muslim Mental Health*. Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Association Publishing.
- Keshavarzi, H., Khan, F., Ali, B., & Awaad, R. (Eds.) (2020). *Applying Islāmic Principles to Clinical Mental Health Care: Introducing Traditional Islāmic ally Integrated Psychotherapy*. New York: Routledge.
- Awaad, R., Elsayed, D., Ali, S., & Abid, A. (2020). Islāmic Psychology: A Portrait of Its Historical Origins and Contributions, in H. Keshavarzi et al., *Applying Islāmic Principles to Clinical Mental Health Care: Introducing Traditional Islāmic Ally Integrated Psychotherapy*. New York: Routledge.
- Moffic, H.S., Peteet, J., Hankir, A., & Awaad, R. (Eds.) (2019). *Islamophobia and Psychiatry: Recognition, Prevention and Treatment*. Switzerland: Springer International Publishing.
- Awaad. R., Mohammad, A., Elzamzamy, K., Fereydooni, S., & Gamar, M. (2019). Mental Health in the Islāmic Golden Era: The Historical Roots of Modern Psychiatry, in H.S.Moffic et al., *Islamophobia and Psychiatry: Recognition, Prevention and Treatment.* Switzerland: Springer International Publishing.
- Awaad, R., Maklad, S., & Musa, I. (2019). Islamophobia from an American Muslim Perspective, in H.S. Moffic et al., *Islamophobia and Psychiatry: Recognition, Prevention and Treatment*. Switzerland: Springer International Publishing.
- Awaad, R., El-Gabalawy, O., Jackson-Shaheed, E., Zia, B., Keshavarzi, H., Mogahed, D., & Altalib, H. (2021). Suicide Attempts of Muslims Compared with Other Religious Groups in the US. *JAMA Psychiatry*, 78(9), 1041–1044. https://doi.org/10.1001/jamapsychiatry.2021.1813

- Awaad, R., Conn, Y.S, Nursory-Demir, M., Helal H., Maklad, S., & FarajAllāh I. (2021). Coping with Pandemics: Psychological and Spiritual Lessons from Islāmic History. *Yaqeen,* February 4.
- Awaad, R (2020). Coping with COVID: Best Practices for Mental Health Professionals during the Pandemic. *Institute of Muslim Mental Health*, April 20.
- Awaad, R. (2019). On Prophetic Wisdom and Speaking to Children in Times of Distress. *Muslim Matters*, March 19.
- Awaad, R., & Ali, S. (2015). A Modern Conceptualization of Phobia in al-Balkhi's 9th Century Treatise: Sustenance of the Body and Soul. *Journal of Anxiety Disorders*, 18 (37), 89–93.
- Awaad, R., & Ali, S. (2015). Obsessional Disorders in Al-Balkhi's 9th Century Treatise: Sustenance of the Body and Soul. *Journal of Affective Disorders*. 180, 185–9.

The following are the responses to the interview questions.

**How can we explain Islāmic psychology in layman's terms?**

- Since the dawn of time, humans have attempted to understand what makes us sick. This attempt at understanding the human psyche ultimately led to the field we today refer to as psychology. What sets Islāmic Psychology apart from other forms of psychology is ultimately the submission to Divine Revelation. An Islāmic psychological approach is one that puts our relationship with our Creator at the core, and our understanding of the world around us a derivative of our relationship with Allāh, *subhanahu wa ta'ala*. The field of Islāmic Psychology is also unique as compared to other psychologies in that it integrates Islāmic principles, ethics, and morals (divinely revealed as opposed to man-made) into psychological understandings of the self. This is also why Islāmic Psychology as a field is distinct from the field of Muslim Mental Health – where mental health professionals who are themselves Muslims by faith or non-Muslims who treat Muslim patients/clients, utilise Western/Unani/Chinese/Ayurvedic, etc. forms of healing that are not always derived from or in line with the Islāmic sacred sciences. While these forms of therapies can, in some cases, have healing properties, they do not centre *Tawhid*-based revelation at their core. Hence, they are limited in their ability to provide holistic healing in the same manner as Islāmic Psychology.

**What first sparked your interest in the study of Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy?**

- There is a long story of how I entered this field. In brief, it was my primary training in the Islāmic sacred sciences that led me into the field of psychology/ psychiatry. Humbled to be a teacher of the Islāmic sciences early in life, I quickly found myself faced with questions from students that went beyond what the textbooks taught. These were personal life questions that required more training than I personally had acquired in my Islāmic training. Then, being party to a series of mental health crises experienced by my own students or students taught by my fellow teachers ultimately shifted my focus. I had already embarked on a parallel path of studying medicine at the time, and these incidents led me to consider a field I had a good deal of animosity towards, psychiatry.

One of the first things I did as I entered the field was put my primary Islāmic studies to work and start unearthing primary texts of our early Muslim predecessors to see what they had to say about this new field I was entering, but with much trepidation. To my great surprise, there was so much material written about psychology in our primary Islāmic texts authored by early Muslim scholars from so many different disciplines that I was absolutely astonished how I had been through years of training in the Islāmic sacred sciences and had never once come across any of it. Not just myself, but it also escaped many of my colleagues and fellow teachers of the sacred sciences whom I consulted with about these discoveries. In those early days (and often still today), the stigma against Western Psychology was so great in the Muslim communities, I was a part of it that it was not touched with a ten-foot pole. But subhan Allāh, there are so many contributions and very advanced work in the field we today call psychology by early Muslim scholars who did not shy away from such discussions and contributed immensely to this field.

My early discoveries and writings about Muslim scholars such as Abu Zayd Al-Balkhī (9th C) and his contributions to the conditions we today call Obsessive Compulsive Disorder and Phobias, for example, opened up an entire line of research for me and ultimately led to the founding and creation of my lab: the Stanford Muslim Mental Health and Islāmic Psychology Lab. Though the Lab has multiple lines of research running through it, my favourite lines are the historical and Islāmic Psychology lines. These lines of research particularly focus on unearthing more of the great works of early Muslim thinkers and scholars in psychology from our Islāmic heritage and tradition.

**What led you to specialise in Psychiatry, Clinical Psychology or Islāmic psychology?**

- It was in serving the community as a teacher of the Islāmic sacred sciences that the importance of formally studying the human psyche and, by extension, counselling became apparent to me. Having already set out on a parallel path to become a physician, a series of mental health-related incidents in my community made it clear that both religious and community leaders were not equipped to handle such cases. I often reflect on the fact that I had not considered this field to be viable until the tail end of my medical studies, and even then held quite a bit of my own stigma and animosity towards the field of Western psychology/psychiatry. It is for these reasons that I strongly felt the Divine hand guiding me towards this field! So, it was by divine decree that my path course-corrected and I ended up pursuing psychiatry as the specialisation for my advanced medical training. I have since understood the wisdom in integrating my two specialisations: the *Shari'ah* sciences with psychiatric training. This integrative approach and work has been a major premise in my life and, with permission from Allāh, I am honoured to take part in the nascent but global revival of Islāmic Psychology.

**Who has been the biggest influence in your professional life in the field of Islāmic psychology? Why?**

- As is often the case, it is hard to pin down only one person who has influenced what truly were carefully placed building blocks put in my path by Allāh, The Almighty, steering me towards this field. My earliest memories of Islāmic Psychology were at the

hands of my spiritual teacher who spoke about the holistic methods of healing utilised in the Maristans, healing centres, of the Muslim world. I was but a teen then, but this concept stuck with me and would ultimately become a core part of my research and, in fact, the very name of the Islāmic Psychology organisation I founded: Maristan.org. Another memorable encounter with the very beginnings of IP revival efforts was a chapter entitled, "Islāmic Psychology" in Dr Mustafa Badawi's book *Man and the Universe*. I found myself resonating strongly with that chapter and would make all my students read it. Last, but certainly not least, the personal mentorship I received from Malik Badri, may Allāh have mercy on his soul, has had a tremendous impact on my work and career. Malik Badri often described Abu Zayd Al-Balkhī, the 9th-century Muslim scholar whom we both wrote extensively about, as a "precocious genius." Though, in many ways, Malik Badri himself was a modern precious genius and I am so honoured to have been mentored by him directly.

**What would you say have been the most significant developments within the field of Islāmic psychology since your scholarly interest in the subject began?**

- Truly, the most significant developments in the field of Islāmic Psychology since my career began has been the global receptivity and acceptance of the discipline itself. This was certainly not the case and the outset of my work including from Muslims themselves. Undoubtedly, when an idea is ready to be born, there are no floodgates that can hold it back. This strong revival movement for Islāmic Psychology has brought with its publications, books, conferences, diploma programmes, clinical training programmes, academic courses such as the one I teach at Stanford University called "Islāmic Psychology" paired with my academic lab at a world-renowned university that holds the name: the Stanford Muslim Mental Health and Islāmic Psychology Lab!

**What do you consider to be the most significant event in the evolution of modern Islāmic Psychology?**

- Very likely the most significant event in the evolution of modern Islāmic Psychology was the publication of Malik Badri's book, *Dilemma of the Muslim Psychologist*, in 1979. Since then, the field steadily but surely gained traction after a period of initial resistance. On a societal level, the modern revival of Islāmic Psychology speaks to a much larger phenomenon of Muslims worldwide throwing off the shackles of colonial and imperial brainwashing that viewed our Islāmic heritage as somehow deficient or inferior. On a discipline level, it is a recognition that Western Psychology lost its soul, quite literally, yet as Muslims we believe strongly in the mind-body-soul connection. Islāmic Psychology not only offers the opportunity for the soul to be welcomed back into this field but does so in the most indigenously authentic manner making psychology palatable again to modern-day Muslims.

**What do you think we lack in terms of depth and knowledge when it comes to Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy?**

- Islāmic Psychology requires the study of the Islāmic sacred sciences front and centre. One's understanding of Islāmic psychology will remain shallow unless and

until one fully studies the very sciences that contributed to '*ilm al-nafs* and actively consults primary Islāmic sources. The key to deepening one's understanding of Islāmic Psychology is a systematic course of study of the Islāmic sacred sciences. One cannot skip this essential first step if they hope to truly contribute to the field of Islāmic psychology. Relying on secondary and tertiary sources or taking shortcuts in one's Islāmic studies is a recipe for both a very shallow understanding and practice of Islāmic psychology.

**What would you like to see change in the current trends in the Islāmic Psychology movement?**

- I would certainly like to see more clinically relevant, practical, data-driven works that are firmly grounded in Islāmic principles and frameworks. Furthermore, I would hope this work would take a ground-up approach in ensuring the Islāmic Psychology work produced starts first with an Islāmic framework at its base as opposed to the top-down approach of Islāmizing or Arabizing psychological concepts and theories originally built within a secular frame. I would also like to see more students, and certainly practitioners, of Islāmic Psychology ground themselves in the very thing that defines Islāmic Psychology: Islām!

**What accomplishment in Islāmic Psychology are you most proud of?**

- I am most proud of the Islāmic Psychology revival movement itself! We have come a long way from Malik Badri's writings in the 1970s and 1980s where he was heavily criticised for attempting this modern revival. The number of research publications, books, teaching programs, university-level courses or diplomas, and clinical institutions offering Islāmic Psychology today is indeed astonishing. The revival of Islāmic Psychology was an idea whose time was ready to be born and carried out at the turn of the 21st century.

**Islāmic Psychology is an evolving discipline. How do you suggest the professionals and students keep up with all of the new developments?**

- Certainly, by attending Islāmic Psychology conferences and clinical trainings, reading new publications, participating in round table discussions, and most importantly in filling in their own gaps in the study of the Islāmic sciences that ultimately deepen and frame one's clinical practice of Islāmic Psychology.

**What do you see as the future of the discipline?**

- With *Tawfiq* from Allāh, *subhanahu wa ta'ala,* the field of Islāmic Psychology holds the potential to be relevant to all people – regardless of whether they are Muslim or not. This is akin to the field of Islāmic finance, for example, that has piqued the interest of many in the finance world today and has become increasingly implemented in non-Muslim sectors. Why? Because humans can innately recognise a fitrawy system versus a man-made system even if the former is not as popular. Islāmic finance is built upon the best system for us as humans because the rules that govern it were divinely designed by our Creator. So, when it

is put to the test against the un-Islāmic ally sanctioned practice of interest (*riba*), it will eventually win despite the massive global use and popularity of interest. Similarly, when Islāmic Psychology is built on a fitrawy framework of the human essence, it will naturally apply to all people and prove to be a superior way of understanding and healing the human psyche. Islāmic Psychology offers a truly holistic method of healing because it does not separate mind from body from soul as is in accordance with the Islāmic belief system. Thus, through Islāmic Psychology all humans can experience complete healing in a way they have likely not experienced previously from non-holistic models of healing.

**What would you say is the most effective way of engaging with non-Muslim psychologists when it comes to promoting Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy?**

- Cross-collaborations with our non-Muslim psychology colleagues and inviting them to attend Islāmic Psychology courses is a must. Many training programs today require cultural sensitivity courses and trainings in how to work with diverse populations. These DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion) requirements serve as great avenues for our non-Muslim colleagues to engage in learning about how to work with Muslim populations in general and be introduced to Islāmic Psychology in particular.

**What one piece of advice would you give to someone who wants to become an Islāmic psychotherapist or counsellor?**

- My first and foremost piece of advice for someone who wishes to engage in the Prophetic work of helping to heal others is to approach this work with a great deal of humility. Always remember that it is not we who heal, it is Allāh, *azza wa jal*, who heals. We are merely the vessel through which healing can take place. As such, this vessel must be "clean" at all times – certainly an unclean vessel cannot transmit healing! Now, in order to maintain a clean vessel, one must work on themselves spiritually – preferably at the hands of a wise guide who has walked down the spiritual path before. One must also know the boundaries of healing lest they transgress against them. The cornerstones of these boundaries are circumscribed by our *Shari'ah*. Thus, if one does not study the Islāmic sacred sciences, they will not be familiar with those boundaries. The inadvertent result, God forbid, may be that they lead themselves and those they are attempting to help heal astray as well. It is thus imperative for any individual hoping to become an Islāmic psychologist to take a spiritual inventory of what they know and what they have not yet learned. Through this, they then figure out the gaps in their Islāmic knowledge and spiritual practice. Their next step will be to undertake a course of study prior to, or at the very least, parallel with their psychology training in order to fill in these gaps. Additionally, they should seek out spiritual mentors and guides just as they seek out clinical supervisors for their professional clinical practice. In this way, they will be more equipped to become an Islāmic psychologist with permission and *Tawfiq* from Allāh *subhanahu wa ta'ala*.

# 22 Muhammad Tahir Khalily (Pakistan)

## Overview

Professor Dr Muhammad Tahir Khalily is currently the Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Shifa Tameer e-Millat University, Islamabad-Pakistan. He was born in the Swat valley, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He was Ex-Vice President (Academics)/Director, International Islāmic Institute of Clinical Psychology (IIICP)/ Professor of Psychology International Islāmic University, Islamabad. Muhammad Tahir Khalily has worked as Director Quality Enhancement Cell (QEC), Students Advisor and Director ORIC in International Islāmic University Islamabad and was a Head and Senior psychologist in the Psychology Department Roscommon Mental Health Service and clinical supervisor of the school of psychology National University of Ireland, Galway, Republic of Ireland.

He completed his MSc Psychology (University of Peshawar), Post. Magistral Diploma in Clinical Psychology, (University of Karachi), M.Phil. Clinical Psychology (University of Peshawar), and his PhD Psychology (University of Peshawar). He also completed an MSc in Addiction and Alcohol Treatment Policy (Trinity College Dublin, University, Ireland). He also has a Post-Doctoral Research Fellowship (Clinical Psychology) (University of Edinburgh, UK). He also completed a number of courses in Clinical Neuropsychology, EEG Neurofeedback Training, and a Higher Diploma in Healthcare Management (Mental Health). He is a Registered Psychologist of the Psychological Society of Ireland, an Associate Fellow (AFPsSI) of the Psychological Society of Ireland, and Chartered Member (CPsychol) of the British Psychological Society. He acts as an advisor to the International Association for Islāmic Psychology. He has more than 25 years of national and international teaching, research, clinical, supervisory, academic, administrative, and service development experience. He is one of the contributors to the promotion of development of Islāmic psychology in Pakistan.

## Publications

Muhammad Tahir Khalily has published over 60 peer reviewed papers on Islāmic psychology mental health, addictions, HIV/AIDS, psychopathology, and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. Among his various classical papers in Islāmic psychology and therapy, there are two selected classical papers.

- Ijaz, S., Khalily, M.T., & Ahmad, I. (2017). Mindfulness in Salah Prayer and Its Association with Mental Health. *Journal of Religion and Health*. 52(3), 1–11.
- Khalily, M.T (2011). Uncontrolled Anger and Its Management in the Light of Sunnah. *Journal of Insight*. 3 (3) 33–62.

## Books and chapters in books

- Saleem, T., & Khalily, M.T. (2021). Chapter 10. A Journey from Muslim Psychology to Islāmic Psychology in Pakistan, in A. Haque, & A. Rothman, *Islāmic Psychology around the Globe*. Seattle: Washington: International Association of Islāmic Psychology Publication.
- Khalily, M. T. (2018). *Taking Faith Seriously in Therapeutic Psychology*. Iqbal International Institute for Research and Dialogue, Islamabad Pakistan.
- Khalily, M. T., & Bhatti, M. M. (2019). *Gadget Free Life.* Iqbal International Institute for Research and Dialogue, Islamabad Pakistan.
- Khalily, M. T., Bhatti, M. M., & Saleem, T. (2019). *Hijacked Mind benign Rage and Malignant Violence of Humanoid*. Iqbal International Institute for Research and Dialogue, Islamabad Pakistan.
- Khalily, M. T., Rehman, A., & Bhatti, M. M. (2020). *Study Report on Challenges in Mental Health*. Islāmic Research Institute, Islamabad Pakistan.
- Khalily, M. T. (2016). Distinctive Leadership Styles in a Collaborative Strategy for Mental Health Care Delivery in Pakistan. In Forman, D., Jones, M., & Thistlethwaite, J. (illustrated), *Leading Research and Evaluation in Interprofessional Education and Collaborative Practice* (pp. 237–251). Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

Muhammad Tahir Khalily presented many papers at national and international conferences including USA, Turkey, Malaysia, South Africa, and Pakistan.

The following are the responses to the interview questions.

**How can we explain Islāmic psychology in layman's terms?**

- Islāmic psychology is the study of the human self (*Nafs*) formed as a result of the interaction between *Nafs Ammāra* and *Nafs Lawama* to attain the stage of *Nafs Mutmainnah.*

**What first sparked your interest in the study of Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy?**

- The need for an indigenous model to treat the individuals suffering from the maladies of the *nafs* is what first sparked my interest in the study of Islāmic psychology.

**What led you to specialise in Clinical Psychology or Islāmic psychology?**

- Initially, I developed an interest in clinical psychology aiming to treat individuals with talk therapy and afterwards developed an interest in IP/psychotherapy after

reading Malik Badri's books, Maulana Maududi's literature, Muhammad Qutb, and Maulana Ameen Hassan Islahi's books.

**Who has been the biggest influence in your professional life in the field of Islāmic Psychology? Why?**

- Malik Badri for his pragmatic approach.

**What would you say have been the most significant developments within the field of Islāmic psychology since your scholarly interest in the subject began?**

- When I first became interested in Islāmic psychology, I found Indigenously adopted psychotherapy grounded in Islāmic teachings and the emerging interest of the Young Scholars in the field of mental health in the context of Islāmic psychology to be the most significant developments in this field.

**What do you consider to be the most significant event in the evolution of modern Islāmic psychology?**

- In the last decade, the development in IP particularly in the Western world and the keen interest of the budding clinical psychologists, I believe, are the most significant events in the evolution of modern Islāmic psychology.

**What do you think we lack in terms of depth and knowledge when it comes to Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy?**

- Initially, psychologists shield away from religion due to dominant secular ideologies, frankly speaking, anti-Islām views. But Alhamdulillah, things have changed now, and practising clinical psychologists in academia and research are taking a keen interest in IP.

**What would you like to see change in the current trends in the Islāmic Psychology movement?**

- I would like to see more evidence-based and systematic work in this field.

**What accomplishment in Islāmic Psychology are you most proud of?**

- New publications, research studies, and institutionalised support in the field of Islāmic psychology are some remarkable accomplishments.

**Islāmic Psychology is an evolving discipline. How do you suggest the professionals and students keep up with all of the new developments?**

- One thing that concerns me the most is the disparity among psychologists claiming to practice Islāmic psychology. They are working in isolation and are

unable to interact with or tolerate people from other cultures. We must be open to new developments and take everyone on board.

**What do you see as the future of the discipline?**

- The future is promising and is the need of the hour.

**What would you say is the most effective way of engaging with non-Muslim psychologists when it comes to promoting Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy?**

- By inviting them to different seminars and conferences with dignity and respect and by publishing our research work in reputable journals, we'll be able to introduce Islāmic Psychology to non-Muslim psychologists.

**What one piece of advice would you give to someone who wants to become an Islāmic psychotherapist or counsellor?**

- I would advise them to have a basic understanding of Islām and Islāmic Psychology. They must be ordinary practising Muslims with a staunch belief that Islāmic teachings can transform individuals who wish to change and ameliorate their lives.

# 23  Suleyman Derin (Turkey)

## Overview

Professor Dr Suleyman Derin graduated from Marmara University, Turkey, Faculty of Theology, and in the same year he started my job as a research assistant in the Faculty of Theology. He completed his PhD in 1999 at Leeds University in the United Kingdom. The title of his thesis was "Towards Some Paradigms on the Sufi Conception of Love: From Râbia to Ibn al-Fârid." At that time, he was teaching at Marmara University, the Faculty of Theology, in Istanbul as a full-time professor. In his Masters and PhD classes, he teaches Sufism from a psychological perspective. He also has lectured on Sufism and Positive psychology, Rumi and Psychology, Al-Ghazâlî and psychology. He also presented a weekly radio programme in Turkey about Sufism and Islāmic Psychology. In this programme, he hosted Ustaz Malik Badri, and many Turkish psychologists and thinkers who work in the field of Islāmic Psychology. He is also a member of the Al-Balkhi Institute of Islāmic Psychological Studies and Research.

## Publications

Suleyman Derin has written several books in the field of Sufism as well as many articles, with an interest in Sufi *Tafsir*, Sufi psychology, and orientalist studies on Sufism. His latest book in English is

- Derin, S., & Toprak, T.B. (2021). Studies on Islāmic Psychology in Turkey: Present Situation, Possibilities, and Challenge, in A. Haque, & A. Rothman*, Islāmic Psychology around the Globe*. Seattle: Washington: International Association of Islāmic Psychology Publication.

The following are the responses to the interview questions.

**How can we explain Islāmic psychology in layman's terms?**

- It is the science of controlling your emotions, your relations, your attachments according to your heart rather than your *nafsani*/ egoistic desires. It is the understanding of our real identity according to Holy Qur'ān and Prophet's sayings rather than our own culture, our rudimentary conception of the self. Once

we tune in to the spiritual atmosphere of Islām we get to know our real existence alongside our false one.

**What first sparked your interest in the study of Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy?**

• People all around the world are suffering and this suffering is not due to the physical needs but mostly unmet spiritual needs. The Western paradigm of the psychology is not trying to cure these psychological/spiritual diseases. It is rather increasing them, by rejecting the existence of soul, the divine element of human nature. I was teaching Islāmic spirituality, *tazkiya,* and reading books on Islāmic spirituality, when I saw the spiritual power of Prophet (ﷺ) dealing with all kinds of suffering be it loss of siblings, wife, relatives, rejection from his hometown, being spiritually and physically tortured by his own people and even relatives, and still keeping his resilience then I thought we should carry this treasure to all humanity. After the Prophet, and his close *Sahaba* (companions), I found the same strong resilience in all the strong followers of the Prophet (ﷺ). How they achieved this should be studied and we should develop our own paradigms of the therapies.

**What led you to specialise in Clinical Psychology or Islāmic psychology?**

• I am Professor of Sufi studies at Marmara University, not a clinical psychologist. But in our culture people, students bring all kinds of problems to us. I helped people to solve their marriage problems, their motivational problems, and a lot of suffering for different reasons. I tried to use stories of the Holy Qur'ān, the companions how they dealt with suffering. This was more a cognitive process, trying to change the wrong assumptions in the minds of psychologically suffering people, just by changing your look at a particular situation, the suffering turns into a blessing. For example, a father was suffering for a long time for the loss of his beloved son. He went to many psychologists and received many different therapies, but when I told him that this loss is only temporal, and he will be waiting for him in paradise the father immediately came to his senses and saw this as a blessing since the child will be a great help to him in the hereafter.

**Who has been the biggest influence in your professional life in the field of Islāmic psychology? Why?**

• I followed for three years the Marhum Ustaz Malik Badri, when he was teaching in Istanbul Zaim University. He was a very inclusive person, and we develop with him a radio programme on the psychology of Prophets in the Qur'ān. He helped me a lot in understanding the place of Islām in psychology. I had a chance to have long talks with him about the field.

**What would you say have been the most significant developments within the field of Islāmic psychology since your scholarly interest in the subject began?**

• In my opinion, today we have many associations, centres, and even departments in Universities all around Islām and Psychology. Islāmic psychology has now

become a reality not a theory. Muslim psychologists and scholars are using the Islāmic methods in curing the patients. My special interest is mostly in positive psychology where we try to elevate people's positive aspects rather than the negative ones.

**What do you consider to be the most significant event in the evolution of modern Islāmic Psychology?**

- In my opinion, the opening of Islāmic Psychology clinics such as the Khalil Center in USA and similar centres all over the Islāmic world alongside with the IP [Islāmic Psychology] chairs in the universities.

**What do you think we lack in terms of depth and knowledge when it comes to Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy?**

- The biggest problem in my opinion is we lack field studies and research in the clinical situation. We have problem of measurement [methodological problem] in our Islāmic therapies. The Western world has a strong culture of testing, recording, and measuring their works. Once we reach to an acceptable level of publishing our works, then we will have a better future for IP.

**What would you like to see change in the current trends in the Islāmic psychology movement?**

- We need more cooperation between the fields of *Fiqh*, theology, and other Islāmic disciplines without excluding any of them. There is a trend among some Muslim psychologists that they think psychology is the only system that cures the diseases.

**What accomplishment in Islāmic psychology are you most proud of?**

- I believe we still need some time to have an accomplishment in the modern world, since we do not have worldwide famous paradigms and therapies. However, I believe very soon we will reach such a point.

**Islāmic psychology is an evolving discipline. How do you suggest the professionals and students keep up with all of the new developments?**

- We should follow up all the developments in the Western world, read them carefully, and also know all the Islāmic recourses such as the works of Al-Balkī, Al-Ghazâlî Ibn Sīnā on top of the modern ones like Malik Badri. Hence, we have a difficult job, doing so much reading from such distant times and places. Without doing this, we cannot successfully build our own paradigms of IP.

**What do you see as the future of the discipline?**

- I see the future very bright, now people are unhappy with the Western secular psychological approaches. More and more people are turning to spiritual

techniques such as yoga, meditation, and minimalism. If we act cleverly and catch the tides we can have a big say on human psychology and therapies.

**What would you say is the most effective way of engaging with non-Muslim psychologists when it comes to promoting Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy?**

- I would propose to discuss the core questions like the meaning of the life and the components of our nature. Most psychologists have no strong idea about the nature of human beings. They all get stuck somewhere, some of them think about man to be like the other animals with a bigger brain, while others think that we are the slaves of our past or environment. However, all these theories fail at some point. Islāmic understanding of human nature greatly helps to understand our real nature as well as to solve the problems. The Noble Qur'ān ask us: "Doesn't the one who created know the thing he created?"

**What one piece of advice would you give to someone who wants to become an Islāmic psychotherapist or counsellor?**

- My advice would be to study in a good university alongside getting training in IP courses which we have abundantly nowadays. We need to nourish our body and soul at the same time without forgetting one of them at the expense of the other. Secondly, we should not think that we are healers and professionals. I think we should learn IP firstly for ourselves and for our transformation, then we should learn it for others and use this field as a chance for spiritual development of our character. Thirdly, IP is not a profession for making money; it is dedication to the well-being of our brothers and sisters in humanity. Psychology is not an end in itself, but it is meant to higher goals. Lastly, we should never forget our place in front of other Islāmic disciplines, just because we treat few people successfully we are no better than the *mufassirs*, *fuqaha,* or the theologians of Islāmic faith. When it comes to solving the problems of human beings maybe they know better than us, may be seemingly a difficult Ḥadīth on human actions might be the real solutions to our problems. Hence, we should never repeat the mistake of some Western psychologists like Freud to imitate that we are a secular prophet, that we know everything on human nature. We are never above the Divine injunctions and our limited understanding of human psyche might be problematic. Since the Noble Qur'ān states that we have been given only a little knowledge on the nature of soul/*ruh.*

# 24 Hamid Rafiei-Honar (Iran)

## Overview

Professor Dr Hamid Rafiei-Honar works as an Assistant Professor at the Islāmic Sciences and Culture Academy (ISCA) Pardisan, Qom, Iran. He was previously a faculty member at the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth Research Institute conducting inter-disciplinary research projects in Islām and psychology. He also worked as a part-time faculty at the Imam Khomeini Education and Research Institute (IKERI) in Qom, Iran. He was previously the Vice President of the Islāmic Psychology Association (IPA), Head of Islāmic Psychology Education Committee, and Deputy Chairman of the Board. He was educated at the Hawzah Elmiyyeh Of Qom (Islāmic Theological Seminary) in *Fiqh* & *Usul Of Fiqh* (Methodology Of *Ijtihad*). He completed his BA in psychology and Islāmic Studies, MA in Clinical Psychology and his PhD from Imam Khomeini Education and Research Institute, Qom, Iran.

Hamid Rafiei-Honar had been awarded the top rank of the book of the year of Qom seminary, National Festival of Top Psychology Treatises with a Religious Approach and top Researcher at the Festival of Top Researchers of Qur'an and Ḥadīth Research Institute, Qom, Iran. He has supervised over 40 treatises on the development of Islāmic scales and psycho-education interventions, especially in the field of self-control and self-regulation, and examining doctoral dissertations in the field of psychology.

## Selected publications

- Rafiei-Honar, H., & Azarbayejani, M. (2021). Islāmic Psychology in Iran: Past, Present, & Future, in A. Haque & A, Rothman (Eds.) *Islāmic Psychology around the Globe*. Seale, Washington: International Association of Islāmic Psychology Inc, (pp. 108–152).
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The following are the responses to the interview questions.

**How can we explain Islāmic psychology in layman's terms?**

- In the name of Allāh! Islāmic psychology (IP) in simple language is the knowledge that seeks to study the human soul (*Nafs*: نفس) and its characteristics (*Nafsaniyaat*: النفسانيات) as God has created and introduced it; And then, uses its findings to create individual health, interpersonal adjustment, and social cohesion to lead people towards spiritual health and divine perfection.

**What first sparked your interest in the study of Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy?**

- My interest in Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy started when I was studying Islāmic teachings (verses of the Holy Qur'ān and the Ḥadīths of the Prophet (ﷺ) and his successors) in the context of psychological issues. For example, when I looked at verses 6 and 7 of Surah Al-Alaq which said:

$$\text{كِلا إِنَّ ٱلْإِنسَـٰنَ لَيَطْغَىٰ}$$
$$\text{أَن رَّءَاهُ ٱسْتَغْنَىٰ (العلق 6)}$$

- *No! [But] indeed, man transgresses. Because he sees himself self-sufficient.* (Al-'Alaq 96:6–7, Interpretation of the meaning)

I saw that the Qur'ān establishes a relationship between feelings of needlessness and psychological rebellion, I was eager to read more about this psychological fact of man and to know what factors destroy people's self-control.

**What led you to specialise in Clinical Psychology or Islāmic psychology?**

• After graduating from the Hawzah Elmiyyeh (Islāmic Theological Seminary in Qom, Iran), I started studying psychology at the university. I realised from the beginning that mainstream psychology is based on the three principles of materialism, secularism, and individualism; Principles that were not in line with Islāmic intellectual principles. On the other hand, I became interested in studying the history of psychology in the Islāmic context from the 8th to the 17th centuries. I found that although Muslim thinkers were concerned with psychological issues, ideas, and theories in the fields of personality, clinical, social, perception psychology, and psychotherapy, they did not base their arguments on these three principles. I quickly realised that psychology was actually originated in an Islāmic context but developed in a secular context. I have reflected the examination of these issues in some of my articles (see Rafiei-Honar, 2010; Rafiei-Honar, 2020). I realised that psychology must be led to its origin, the originality of the soul, theism, and transcendent collectivism.

**Who has been the biggest influence in your professional life in the field of Islāmic psychology? Why?**

• First, the ideas of three contemporary Muslim thinkers in Iran have attracted my attention and led me to study their works.

  1 Allamah Sayed Mohammad Hossein Tabatabai (1902–1981) is a famous Iranian philosopher and commentator on the Holy Qur'ān and the author of the famous book titled *Al-Mizan Fi Tafsir Al-Quran*. He is also a commentator on the works of Sadr al-Muta'allehin Shirazi, a famous Islāmic philosopher of the 17th century; the originator of the theory of substantial motion (see Rafiei-Honar & Azarbayejani, 2021).

  2 Allamah Shahid Morteza Motahhari (1919–1979) was one of the prominent students of Tabatabai who has many works in philosophy, theology, and ethics, and has dominated the theories of psychoanalysts such as Freud, Jung, and Eric Fromm; and he has written critiques about them.

  3 The late Allameh Mohammad Taqi Misbah Yazdi (1934–2020) is another prominent student of Tabatabai who had pure ideas in Islāmic philosophy, commentary, theology, and ethics. He is the author of 117 books. However, the works and personality of Misbah Yazdi have had the greatest impact on my professional life. Because I studied psychology at a university founded by Misbah Yazdi. I have studied his theology, morality, and philosophical works. He has worked on the relationship between science and religion, religious science, and psychological perceptions of religion. He believed that the science of psychology was the most important science among the humanities. He has provided specific explanation on the structure of the

human soul, and this is presented under the title of *Nafs*'s Pyramid (See Shameli, & Yousefi, 2021).

**What would you say have been the most significant developments within the field of Islāmic psychology since your scholarly interest in the subject began?**

- I can name at least three developments; One is designing tools for measuring Islāmic constructs such as *Zohd* (Adjust desire), *Tavaazo* (humility), *Keraamah* (dignity), *Taqva* (self-control), *Shokr* (gratitude), *Sabr* (patience), etc.

Second is the development of Islāmic psychological protocols and interventions to control stress and treat some disorders such as self-regulation therapy to treat depression, God-orientation spiritual psychotherapy to treat anxiety, Treatment based on closeness to God for control of anxiety, Treatment based on adjusting desire, Islāmic couple therapy, etc. The third one is the formation of IP associations at the national and international levels (see Rafiei-Honar & Azarbayejani, 2021).

**What do you consider to be the most significant event in the evolution of modern Islāmic Psychology?**

- In my opinion, an important event that should take place is the explaining the Islāmic epistemological paradigm (whether one of the three paradigms of positivism, critical, interpretive; or the fourth paradigm next to these); Then developing a suitable methodology of Islāmic psychology and after that the development of methods and techniques for data collection and analysis in IP.

**What do you think we lack in terms of depth and knowledge when it comes to Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy?**

- My colleague and I have mentioned this elsewhere (Rafiei-Honar & Azarbayejani, 2021), IP faces shortcomings and limitations that need to be addressed. These restrictions include science methodology, the challenge of secular psychology education, the gap between theory and practice in Islāmic findings, the type of interaction between cultural psychology and Islāmic psychology, and lack of communication with Islāmic countries to develop Islāmic psychology. I think one of the most important challenges of IP has been the methodology. IP must prove its scientific and Islāmic nature at the same time, and in this regard, researchers in IP have emphasised the use of all methods, including rational, experimental, narrative, revelation, and intuitive. However, this claim has not been able to determine the methodological position in this knowledge. In the meantime, first of all, it is not clear on which methodological paradigm (positivist, interpretive, critical) researchers have based each of the mentioned methods? And does the acceptance of all the mentioned methods mean the simultaneous acceptance of all the methodological paradigms in IP? Secondly, there is no distinction between data collection methods and data analysis methods; thirdly, the place of qualitative methods in IP is not well defined; And the place of analysis of religious text from non-text is not determined; and fourthly, it is not clear exactly where and at what stage of the development of IP each

of the mentioned methods can be used? Of course, in response to some of these questions, Islāmic thinkers have recently begun efforts.

**What would you like to see change in the current trends in the Islāmic psychology movement?**

• Consistent with some psychologists (Kaplick & Skinner, 2017), I also believe that there are three general trends in the history of IP, including the refinement approach of secular psychology, the comparative approach of psychology and Islām, and the approach of establishing independent knowledge of IP. In a meta-synthesis study (Rafiei-Honar, 2020), I have shown that these three approaches have emerged in four historical periods since the 1950s. In the 1950s and 1960s, the first wave of establishment began and quickly subsided, then from the 1970s to 2000s, two waves of comparison and refinement began at the same time. So that some researchers sought refinement and others sought comparison. But it was after 2000 and almost after the establishment of the first scientific societies of Islāmic psychology (such as the Islāmic Psychology Association in Iran, 2004) that a new wave of Islāmic psychology was established. This has led to the formation of associations, courses, training programs, and psychological service centres in various countries. I am interested in authors and researchers from different countries coming together; shared his works; and identified differences in their views on the establishment of IP. We need to compile "Theories of Personality in IP," "Theories of Islāmic Psychotherapy," and "Theories of Social Psychology from the Perspective of Islām," etc., which have been compiled by the thinkers of the Islāmic world.

**What accomplishment in Islāmic psychology are you most proud of?**

• At the social level, I am glad that interactions between thinkers are taking shape at the level of different countries; we need to form a single Islāmic nation. In my opinion, it is a great honour to start IP courses at the international level. But on an individual level, praise be to God, I have succeeded in designing a religious scale called the Islāmic Self-Control Scale (Rafiei-Honar & Aynehchi, 2015), which is being used by various students and researchers. I have also developed a theoretical model and then a treatment protocol based on Islāmic sources to reduce the symptoms of depression, which is called Islāmic self-regulation of treatment (Rafiei-Honar, 2018). In addition, in Iran, based on my theoretical model of self-regulation, protocols for controlling adolescent aggression, self-control in cyberspace, and reducing spouse incompatibility have been designed.

**Islāmic psychology is an evolving discipline. How do you suggest the professionals and students keep up with all of the new developments?**

• I have some operational suggestions: getting acquainted with and using Islāmic tools and interventions, subscribing to Islāmic Journals, interacting with international associations, and participating in webinars and conferences.

**What do you see as the future of the discipline?**

• In my opinion, the coming decades will be the decades of introduction and expansion of IP worldwide. However, probably the beginning of differences of

opinion between Islāmic psychologists in explaining the basic constructs of the psyche and their functions, including the *Nafs, Qalb, Aql*, as well as the subject and purpose of IP, and differences over which country and which association are recognised.

**What would you say is the most effective way of engaging with non-Muslim psychologists when it comes to promoting Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy?**

- The problem of our lack of communication with non-Muslim psychologists goes back to our belief in the interaction between Islām and psychology. To solve this problem, I have proposed Shared establishment model (Rafiei-Honar, 2020). In this model, which is influenced by the thought of Misbah Yazdi (2013); process of IP starts from a stage of comparison between Islām and psychology, goes through refinement, and ends with establishment. But in this approach, not all of Islām will be compared to all of psychology. Rather, science and religion are linked only in two realms: (1) Descriptions that help man reach his lofty goal; and (2) In prescriptions that lead to human well-being.

Hence, I believe that Muslim psychologists should not comment on the following areas: or insist on finding and declaring the opinion of Islām; because these areas have no religious or non-religious aspect, and its use is desirable for everyone. These two areas are:

1 Descriptions and being that are not directly related to the lofty goals of human beings (e.g., neuropsychological findings, cognitive stages in developmental psychology, sensory and perceptual psychology, and evolutionary stages of some mental disorders).
2 Prescriptions and musts in Ultimate human well-being have no role (for example, in developmental psychology, in order for a child to understand cognitive concepts such as volume or height earlier, he or she "must" be given special training; Or in educational psychology, in order to increase students' academic motivation, it is "necessary" to use the Socratic style of speech and dialogue).

Now, if mainstream psychology is informed that we, in IP, do not seek the collapse of existing psychological knowledge; but in some areas, it was completely in line with them and we have a common understanding, but in some areas, the views of the parties must be heard and by choosing the most appropriate way, especially in Muslim communities, conditions for peaceful coexistence between Islāmic and non-Islāmic psychologists will be provided, and the word of Islām will be heard properly.

**What one piece of advice would you give to someone who wants to become a Islāmic psychotherapist or counsellor?**

- My operational suggestions are
  1 Teaching religion
  2 Mastering the intellectual foundations of psychotherapy and counselling theories

3   Comparing the view of Islām with current theories of therapy, and reviewing them from an Islāmic perspective
4   Cultural adaptation of existing theories with the Muslim community
5   Using Islāmic interventions alongside integrated interventions, and
6   Trying to formulate Islāmic interventions and compare them with mainstream psychological therapies.

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# 25 Saleh Bin Ibrahim Al-Sanie (Saudi Arabia)

## Overview

Professor Dr Saleh bin Ibrahim Al-Sanie is Professor of psychology at the Imam Muhammad ibn Saud Islāmic University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. He was the Vice Dean, Deanery of Registration and Admissions, and Deputy Chair of the Department of Psychology, College of Social Sciences, Imam University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. He also worked as a lecturer, an Assistant Professor and an Associate Professor at the Imam Muhammad ibn Saud Islāmic University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Saleh bin Ibrahim Al-Sanie completed his BA (Psychology) at the King Saud University, Riyadh, MA (Educational Psychology) at the Indiana University, Indiana, USA, and his PhD (Criminal Psychology) at the Imam Muhammad ibn Saud Islāmic University. He is an affiliated member of American Psychological Association; a member of the World Mental Health (psychological); previously Executive Committee member and Secretary general of the Saudi Educational & Psychological Association; member of the International Association of Muslim Psychologists; a member of the International Council of Psychologists; and a member of the Australian Society for Psychology. He has supervised many postgraduate degrees in Psychology at Saudi Universities and Educational Institutes. He attended and participated in many international conferences, seminars, and symposiums in Saudi Arabia, Arab and Islāmic countries, and worldwide.

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- Al-Sanie, S.B.I. (2002). *Studies in Psychology from Islāmic perspective* (Part Two). Riyadh: Dar Alam Al Kutub.
- Al-Sanie, S.B.I. (2002). *Family Breakdown Causes and Solutions Proposed*. Al Aumah Book No. 83, Quarter.

- Al-Sanie, S.B.I. (2000). *Religiosity and Psychological Health*. Deanship of Scientific Research. Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: Al Fedyleh Library.
- Al-Sanie, S.B.I. (2000). *Religiosity and Psychological Health*. Deanship of Scientific Research. Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: Imam Muhammad ibn Saud Islāmic University.
- Al-Sanie, S.B.I. (1999). *Studies on Islamization of Psycho*logy (Part One). Riyadh: Dar Alam Al Kutub.
- Al-Sanie, S.B.I. (1994). *Religiosity as Therapy for Crime*. Deanship of Scientific Research. Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: Imam Muhammad ibn Saud Islāmic University.

The following are the responses to the interview questions.

**How can we explain Islāmic psychology in layman's terms?**

- We can explain Islāmic psychology in a general term by saying: Islāmic psychology is to present the topics of psychology with an Islāmic perspective based on a correct understanding of the sciences of the Noble Qur'ān and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet, while benefiting from what was presented by Muslim and non-Muslim scholars.

**What first sparked your interest in the study of Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy?**

- What prompted me to study Islāmic psychology is my belief that Islām is a way of life, and all aspects of life must be presented through an Islāmic perspective. I did not find a response to accepting the issue of employing religion in American Universities, psychological proposition, so I returned to my country and presented my PhD thesis on religiosity and the treatment of crime.

**What led you to specialise in Clinical Psychology or Islāmic psychology?**

- What prompted me to specialise in Islāmic psychology is that we have wealth in Islām. We must present our specialisation through this wealth, which came with a divine message for the benefit of humanity, so I see it as the duty of every specialist in all branches of science, to present his specialisation through an Islāmic perspective.

**Who has been the biggest influence in your professional life in the field of Islāmic psychology? Why**?

- The one who had the greatest impact in my professional life in the field of Islāmic psychology is from within myself with the conviction that Islām is the solution to all life's problems and draws happiness for him in this world and the hereafter. In terms of people, there are many of them who are my teachers, the most important of whom are Professor Dr Muhammad Othman Najati and Professor Dr Malik Badri. These two scholars encouraged and motivated me in the field Islāmic psychology.

**What would you say have been the most significant developments within the field of Islāmic psychology since your scholarly interest in the subject began**?

- The most important developments in the field of Islāmic psychology since the beginning of my interest in this topic can be summarised in five points:

1 Setting courses in psychology departments in some Saudi universities and a few universities in the Islāmic world.
2 Presenting Master's and Doctoral theses in the departments of psychology from an Islāmic perspective.
3 Holding seminars and conferences specialised in presenting psychology topics from an Islāmic perspective.
4 Some researchers tend to write their research topics from an Islāmic perspective.
5 The interest of a large number of students of psychology at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels in Islāmic psychology topics.

**What do you consider to be the most significant event in the evolution of modern Islāmic psychology?**

• It is difficult to identify a single event and consider it the most important event in the development of Islāmic psychology, but we can say that the spread of the concept of Islāmic psychology on a large scale until it entered the Dictionary of Psychology, issued by the APA [American Psychology Association] in 2000. The steady increase in the number of researchers interested in this field and increase in the number of students in the Islāmic world and the West are the most important developments.

**What do you think we lack in terms of depth and knowledge when it comes to Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy?**

• I think that many researchers in Islāmic psychology lack to refer to the texts of the Noble Qur'ān and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet and then refer to reliable books of Interpretation and explanations of the Sunnah. And often the researcher is satisfied with mentioning the verse or Ḥadīth without referring to the words of the commentators or commentators of the Ḥadīths. The researcher depends on his own understanding of the meaning of the verse or Ḥadīth, which misses many of the meanings and connotations contained in the text. The words of our lack of reference to the former Muslim researchers, especially the heritage scholars, who left a wealth that they could benefit from in contemporary psychology.

**What would you like to see change in the current trends in the Islāmic psychology movement?**

• What I hope is that the psychology departments in all the universities of the Islāmic world adopt the topics of Islāmic psychology and set courses for them at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels, such as courses Introduction to Islāmic Psychology, Studies in Islāmic Psychology, and Psychological Heritage among Muslim Scholars.

**What accomplishment in Islāmic psychology you are most proud of?**

• For me as a researcher, I am proud that my doctoral dissertation was one of the first in Saudi Arabia that researched a topic in Islāmic psychology, and it was

printed by Imam Muhammad bin Saud Islāmic University in Riyadh under the title: Religiosity is the treatment of crime. The third edition of thesis was published Al-Rushd Library in Riyadh. As well as my books, the most important of which, which were completed through projects devoted to my scientific studies, are religiosity and mental health, and an introduction to the Islāmic rooting of psychology, and the psychology of terrorism is an Islāmic enlightenment.

**Islāmic psychology is an evolving discipline. How do you suggest the professionals and students keep up with all of the new developments?**

- I see that keeping pace with developments in the field of Islāmic psychology is through participating in seminars and conferences interested in this subject, joining scientific societies specialised in this field, following up on published research, books, and scientific messages in this field, and joining groups of interest in this field that are currently present in the means of communication.

**What do you see as the future of the discipline?**

- I see that the future of Islāmic psychology is promising and that it will spread and positively employ it in all fields of modern psychology.

**What would you say is the most effective way of engaging with non-Muslim psychologists when it comes to promoting Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy?**

- I see that dealing with non-Muslim psychologists is through our positive attitudes and inviting them to seminars and conferences interested in Islāmic psychology. We need to present our research from the perspective of Islāmic psychology at conferences of international psychological organisations and societies, as well as by publishing our research in their scientific journals.

**What one piece of advice would you give to someone who wants to become an Islāmic psychotherapist or counsellor?**

- Advice is to start with a correct understanding of the texts of the Noble Qur'ān and the Sunnah of the Prophet, their Interpretations and explanations, as well as paying attention to what previous Muslim scholars have presented since the first century AH, as well as benefiting from the pioneers of contemporary Islāmic psychology.

والحمدلله رب العالمين وصلى‌الله وسلم على نبينا محمد وعلى آله وصحبه ومن تبعه بإحسان إلى يوم الدين.

# 26 Pavlova Olga Sergeevna (Russia)

## Overview

Dr Pavlova Olga Sergeevna is an Associate Professor at the Department of Cross-Cultural Psychology and Psychological Problems of Multicultural Education, Moscow State University of Psychology and Education. She worked as Vice-rector and Dean of the Socio-Psychological faculty of the Moscow Open Social Academy. Since 2017, she has been the Head of the Association for Psychological Assistance to Muslims, created on her initiative. She has been Visiting Professor at the Bolashaq Academy (Karaganda, Kazakhstan), and the Indonesian Islāmic University (Yogyakarta, Indonesia). She completed a programme of teacher-defectologist and practical psychologist of special pre-school institution at the Moscow State Pedagogical University, a Master of Theology at the Russian Islāmic University and a PhD at the Moscow State Pedagogical University. She completed a foreign internship in the Kingdom of Morocco (Tetouan) at the Abdel Malik Assadi University at the Faculty of Theology at the program "Arabic language and Moroccan culture."

Pavlova Olga Sergeevna is a member of the International Association of Islāmic Psychology, International Association of Muslim Psychologists, and the International Association for the Psychology of Religion, and the Russian Society for Religious Studies. She is the Chairperson of the Association of Psychological Assistance to Muslims. She is also a UN expert in education in the field of psychology, social psychology, ethnopsychology, intercultural communication, psychology of Islām and Muslims. She has been participating in the editorial board of the journal *Islām in the Modern World* and has been the deputy editor-in-chief of the journal *Minbar. Islāmic Studies.* She is on the editorial board of the following journals: *Mental Health, Religion & Culture; Psikohumaniora: Journal of Psychological Research* (Indonesia); and International Journal of Islāmic Psychology. She is the Chief Editor of the journal: *Islām: Personality and Society*. She has published 4 monographs and 130 articles on the issues of Cross-Cultural Psychology and Islāmic Psychology. Her research interests are focused on the study of the socio-psychological features of ethnic groups in the North Caucasus and the psychology of Islām and the religious identity of Muslims.

## Selected publications

- Pavlova, O.S., Algushaeva, V.R., Verchenova, E.A., Khaybullin, I.N., & Erofeev V.A. (2021). From Theory and Research to Practice: The Experience of

Participating in the International Educational Program on Islāmic Psychology in Indonesia. *International Journal of Islāmic Psychology*, 4(1), 12–18.

- Pavlova, O.S. (2020). *Psychology: Islāmic Discourse*: Monograph/O.S. Pavlova. – M.: Association of Psychological Assistance to Muslims, ANO SPC Al-Wasatiyya – Moderation.
- Pavlova, O.S. (2019). Association of Psychological Assistance to Muslims in Russia: Activities, Problems and Solutions. *Minbar. Islāmic Studies*, 12(4), 1069–1090.
- Pavlova, O.S. (2018). Psychological Counselling for Muslims: The Analysis of Foreign Literature [Elektronnyi resurs]. Sovremennaia zarubezhnaia psikhologiia = *Journal of Modern Foreign Psychology*, 7(4), 46–55. doi:10.17759/jmfp.2018070406. (In Russian., abstract in English).
- Pavlova, O.S., Bariyeva, N.Y., & Bairova, Z.M. (2018). Islāmic Psychology Abroad: The State and Development Prospects. *Minbar. Islāmic Studies*. 11(4), 850–865. (In Russian).
- Pavlova, O. (2018). The Values and Social Identity of Russian Muslims, in N. Lebedeva., R. Dimitrova, & J. Berry (eds), *Changing Values and Identities in the Post-Communist World. Societies and Political Orders in Transition*. Cham: Springer.
- Pavlova, O.S. (2018). Psychology of Islām: The Institutionalization of Scientific Discipline in the Russian Context. *Minbar. Islāmic Studies*, 11(1), 169–181. (In Russian).
- Pavlova, O.S (2015). Psychology of Religion in the Islāmic Paradigm: The Current State and Prospects. *Islām in the Modern World*, 11(4), 207–222. (In Russian).
- Pavlova, O.S. (2015). Religious and Ethnic Identity of the South-west and South-East Caucasus' Muslims: The Substance and Ratio Specifics. *Islām in the Modern World*, 11(2), 75–86. (In Russian).

The following are the responses to the interview questions.

**How can we explain Islāmic psychology in layman's terms?**

- Islāmic psychology is the examination of the psyche and the mental through the Islāmic view, in the light of the Koran [Qur'ān] provisions and *Sunnah,* as well as the ideas of Muslim scholars of the past about the soul and person's behaviour. It is a deepening understanding of Islāmic positions through secular psychological knowledge, both theoretical and practical. It is an interdisciplinary field of knowledge at the intersection of psychology and Islāmic theology.

**What first sparked your interest in studying Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy?**

- Awareness of the richest psychological potential containing in the primary sources of Islām and Islāmic scientific thought. The use of these resources in professional psychological work with believing clients significantly increases its effectiveness.

**What made you specialise in Clinical Psychology or Islāmic psychology?**

- Since I teach cross-cultural psychology and a multicultural approach to psychological counselling at the university, the topic of cultural-specific counselling has

been of interest to me for a long time. In this context, I see Islāmic psychology as one of the culturally specific areas of counselling. Modern integrative approaches to religious and professional knowledge significantly enrich and contribute to the development of both psychology and Islāmic thought.

**Who has been the biggest influence in your professional life in the field of Islāmic psychology? Why?**

- Professor Dr Malik Badri is our teacher, the founder of the modern under-standing of Islāmic psychology. It was his book "Contemplation: An Islāmic Psychospiritual Study" that was translated into Russian, back in 2008. By the grace of the Almighty, I read this book and understood an absolutely new and very deep field of knowledge being opened up for me. Meeting Malik Badri at the International Conference on Islāmic Psychology in Istanbul in 2018 became the most important event not only in my life, but also in the life of all Russian Muslim psychologists. Malik Badri was not only an outstanding scientist with psychological and religious knowledge, but also an amazing personality. His attentive attitude to people, ease of communication contributed to the fact that the knowledge of Islāmic psychology penetrated into every heart!

**What do you think have been the most significant developments within the field of Islāmic psychology since your scholarly interest in the subject began?**

- The creation of international professional communities such as the International Association for Islāmic Psychology, the International Association of Muslim Psychologists, and the creation of the Association for psychological assistance to Muslims in Russia. Thanks to these organisations, there is a professional growth of specialists all over the world; literature is published, educational programs are carried out.

**What do you consider to be the most significant event in the evolution of modern Islāmic psychology?**

- Firstly, it is understanding the need to actualise Islāmic knowledge in the context of psychological counselling. Secondly, it is the development of a professional community in the field of Islāmic psychology. And, of course, the emergence of educational programmes in this area.

**What do you think we lack in terms of depth and knowledge when it comes to Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy?**

- We need to develop our own scientific fundamental basis, paradigm, metho-dology, thesaurus, as well as various branches, for example, Islāmic personality psychology, Islāmic social psychology. At present, we observe secondary char-acter of Islāmic psychology in relation to dominant psychology; we use its

methods and approaches adapting them to the religious paradigm. It is time we developed our own methods and approaches, our own tools.

**What would you like to be changed in the current trends in the Islāmic psychology movement?**

- The growth of professionalism of Muslim psychologists will contribute to the growth of trust in this area of knowledge. This will benefit more and more people. Personal development and spiritual growth of Muslims, building harmonious relationships with loved ones, strengthening Muslim families, forming psychological well-being – this should be the focus of the efforts of specialists.

**What accomplishment in Islāmic psychology are you most proud of?**

- The creation of the Association for Psychological Assistance to Muslims in Russia. In less than five years of our existence, we have been able to build an understanding of the importance of the Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy development among Russian-speaking Muslims. We publish two journals: the scientific and educational journal "Islām: Personality and Society" and the international peer-reviewed scientific journal "Minbar. Islāmic Studies"; we conduct research and educational programmes in this area. Russian psychologists are developing psychological education among religious leaders, as well as providing psychological assistance on a hotline. Cooperation with foreign colleagues is actively developing. We are respected in a professional psychological environment and trusted by Muslims.

**Islāmic psychology is an evolving discipline. What do you advise the professionals and students to keep up with all the new developments?**

- This area requires a constant growth of specialists, not only professional growth, but also spiritual one. Joining efforts, experience exchange, knowledge of the latest scientific discoveries, and their integration with the fundamental religious core – this is the guarantee of development!

**What is the future of the discipline, in your opinion?**

- The list of the top 100 Russian psychologists includes outstanding specialists with a Christian worldview, Christian psychologists. I hope that Islāmic psychologists will also reach the highest level in the Russian and international professional space.

**What do you think is the most effective way of engaging with non-Muslim psychologists when it comes to promoting Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy?**

- In a professional psychological environment, the most effective thing is to promote the value of a multicultural approach to psychological counselling. Considering ethnic, religious, regional, and other characteristics of the client in the course of counselling became an important milestone in the construction of culturally specific models of counselling in the second half of the 20th century. In

this context, psychological counselling for Muslims is professional psychological assistance using knowledge about the characteristics of the client's faith that are significant for his personality: his religious beliefs, religious language, sacred stories and legends, ritual practices, as well as traditions and customs of Muslim peoples. Using the potential of religious coping in the course of psychotherapy of believing clients is another major direction in the development of Islāmic psychology.

**What piece of advice would you give to someone who wants to become an Islāmic psychotherapist or counsellor?**

- For this it is necessary to obtain a high-quality professional psychological education, religious education in the field of Islāmic theology, as well as to specialise in the field of psychological counselling for Muslims. At the same time, it is important to develop one's own spiritual potential in order to contribute to the development of the client's spirituality during psychotherapy.

# 27  G. Hussein Rassool (Mauritius/UK)

## Overview

Professor Dr G. Hussein Rassool is Professor of Islāmic Psychology & Consultant, Riphah Institute of Clinical and Professional Psychology/Centre for Islāmic Psychology, Riphah International University, Pakistan. He is also the Director of Studies, Department of Islāmic Psychology, Psychotherapy & Counselling, Al Balagh Academy. He is also the Chair of Al-Balagh Institute of Islāmic Psychology Research. Previously, he held a number of positions including Professor of Islāmic Psychology and Director, Riphah Institute of Clinical and Professional Psychology, Riphah International University. He was also the Professor of Islāmic Psychology, the Dean of the Faculty of Liberal Arts & Sciences, the Head of Department of Psychology, and the Director of Research and Publishing at the International Open University (Islāmic Online University). He is a student, teacher, educationalist, author, and Islāmic psychotherapist. He is an experienced and innovative educational consultant and an academic researcher in the field of Psychology, Education, and Mental Health. He was the first appointed Professor of Islāmic Psychology in an academic establishment at the Islāmic Online University and Riphah International University.

He received his primary education at the Champ De Lort Government School, Port Louis, and various Madrassahs. He graduated with a BA (Psychology) at the Open University (UK) and got his Master's degree in Health and Education at King's College (Chelsea College), University of London. He received his Doctor in Philosophy from University of London. He undertook various teaching courses and completed the Further's Education Teacher's Certificate (City & Guilds), and the Certificate in Education at the University College, University of Wales, Cardiff. He completed his Certificate in Counselling at the Middlesex University, and a Certificate in Supervision & Consultation, Maudsley Hospital, Institute of Psychiatry, London, UK. He was the holder of the Florence Nightingale Foundation Scholar sponsoring his doctoral studies.

G. Hussein Rassool held various posts in the National Health Service as Tutor (Mental Health). He was the Education & Training Co-ordinator/Maudsley Drug Training Unit/Institute of Psychiatry, National Addiction Centre, London, Lecturer in Addictive Behaviour & Psychological Medicine, Senior Lecturer in Addictive Behaviour & Psychological Medicine at St George's Medical School (University of London), Department of Addictive Behaviour & Psychological Medicine, London. He also held a Chair of Mental Health & Addiction at the University of Sao Paulo at

Ribeirao Preto, Brazil. He is the academic advisor for DOHA Academy of Tertiary Studies, Mauritius, and Department of Islāmic Studies/ISRA, Charles Strut University, Australia. He has worked as a consultant in many countries in the world including Brazil, Mauritius, Hong Kong, Malta, United Kingdom, and Pakistan, advising Governmental departments, academic institutions, and voluntary sector organisations.

He developed the curriculum for the BSc Psychology (Islāmic) at the Department of Psychology, Islāmic Online University. He also developed a first University accredited Certificate course in Islāmic Psychology at the Centre for Islāmic Psychology, Riphah Institute of Clinical and Professional Psychology, Riphah International University. He is currently undertaking the integration of Islāmic ethics and Islāmic Psychology in the undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in psychology at the Centre for Islāmic psychology/Riphah Institute of Clinical and Professional Psychology, Riphah International University. He is currently the Chair of the PhD committee at the Riphah Institute of Clinical and Professional Psychology, Riphah International University. He has supervised many postgraduate research degrees in the universities and academic institutions in the United Kingdom, Australia, Pakistan, Mauritius, and Brazil. He is a member of the Institute of Learning & Teaching, Fellow of the Royal Society of Public Health, and Fellow of the International Association of Islāmic Psychology. He is also on the Advisory Board of the International Students of Islāmic Psychology and an Advisor to the A-Balkhi Institute of Islāmic Psychological Studies and Research. His research interests include Islāmic psychology, psychotherapy, and counselling; psychosocial and spiritual problems; indigenous psychology; mental health, curriculum development; Islāmic studies. He set up a Research Laboratory in Islāmic Psychology while he was the Director of Centre for Islāmic Psychology, Riphah Institute of Clinical and Professional Psychology, Riphah International University. He participated in many national and international conferences and delivered keynote addresses, seminars, and workshops in the United Kingdom, Brazil, USA, Brunei, Malta, Pakistan, Malaysia, Mauritius, and Saudi Arabia, among others.

## Selected publications

He has published over 150 papers and reviews in peer-reviewed journals. His books have been translated into Indonesian Basa, Turkish, Arabic, and Russian languages. His Google Scholar Citations: 2407, h-index: 24, i10 index: 50

- Rassool G. Hussein & Luckman, M. (2023). *Foundations of Islāmic Psychology: From Classical Scholars to Contemporary Thinkers*. Oxford: Routledge.
- Lauloo-Pir, M & Rassool G.Hussein. (2021). *The Evil Eye Is Real* (2021). London: Islāmic Psychology Publication (IIP) & Institute of Islāmic Psychology Research (RIIPR). Amazon/Kindle.
- Rassool, G. Hussein. (2021). M*other of All Evils: Addictive Behaviours from an Islāmic Perspective*. London: Islāmic Psychology Publication (IIP) & Institute of Islāmic Psychology Research (RIIPR). Amazon/Kindle (2021).
- Rassool, G. Hussein. (2021). *Islāmic Psychology: Human Behaviour and Experience from an Islāmic Perspective*. Oxford: Routledge. [English, Basa Indonesian].

- Rassool G. Hussein. (2021). *The Science of the Soul* (*Ilm an Nafs*): *Themes in Islāmic Psychology*. Islāmic Psychology Publication (IIP) & Institute of Islāmic Psychology Research (RIIPR). Amazon/Kindle.
- Rassool G. Hussein. (2020). *Health and Psychology: An Islāmic Pers*pective. Volume 1. London: Islāmic Psychology Publication (IIP). Amazon/Kindle.
- Rassool G. Hussein. (2020). *Health and Psychology: An Islāmic Perspective*. Volume 2. London: Islāmic Psychology Publication (IIP). Amazon/Kindle.
- Khan, A., Rassool, G.Hussein., Mabud, S., & Ahsan, M. (2020). *Sexuality Education from an Islāmic Perspective.* Newcastle Upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Ltd.
- Rassool G. Hussein. (2019). Evil Eye, Jinn Possession, and Mental Health Issues: The Islāmic Perspective. Oxford: Routledge.[English, Turkish].
- Rassool G. Hussein. (2018).*Alcohol and Drug Misuse. A Handbook for Students and Health Professionals*. East Sussex: Routledge, (2nd edition).
- Rassool G. Hussein. (2016). *Islāmic Counselling: An Introduction*, Routledge, Hove East Sussex. [English, Turkish, Russian & Arabic].
- Rassool G. Hussein. (2014). *Cultural Competence in Caring for Muslim Patients*, Palgrave McMillan, Hampshire.
- Rassool G. Hussein. (2011). *Addictive Behaviours: Theory & Clinical Practice*, Palgrave McMillan, Hampshire.

## Forthcoming publications

- Juraida L., Boda, S.B., & Rassool, G. Hussein. (2023). *Islāmic Psychology: A Practitioner's Guide to Spiritual Interventions.* Focus Series. Oxford: Routledge.
- Rassool, G. Hussein. (2023). *Advancing Islamic Psychology Education: Model, Application, and Implementation*. Focus Series. Oxford: Routledge.
- Rassool, G. Hussein. (2023). Chapter 2. Religious and Cultural Mental Health Conceptualizations, in Sameera Ahmed & Mona M. Amer, *Counselling Muslims: Handbook of Mental Health Issues and Interventions*. New York: Routledge.
- Rassool, G. Hussein. (2023). Chapter 8. Postmodern Psychotherapy and Counseling Models, in Sameera Ahmed & Mona M. Amer, *Counselling Muslims: Handbook of Mental Health Issues and Interventions*. New York: Routledge.
- Aboul-Enein, B.H., Rassool, G. Hussein., Benajiba, N., Bernstein, J., & Mo'ez Al-Islām E. Faris. (2023). *Contemporary Islāmic Perspectives in Public Health*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

The following are the responses to the interview questions.

**How can we explain Islāmic psychology in layman's terms?**

- I am going to be biased about the definition and use the following. Islāmic Psychology "is the study of the soul, mental processes and behaviour according to the principles of psychology and Islāmic sciences" (Rassool et al., 2020a). The study of the science of soul, mental processes, and behaviour according to the principles of empirical psychology, rationality and divine revelation from the Qur'ān and

Sunnah. In the conceptualisation of Islāmic psychology, aspects of the soul, cognitive, affective, and behavioural processes are studied within the evidenced-based paradigm (compatible with Islāmic beliefs and practices) and Islāmic sciences.

**What first sparked your interest in the study of Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy?**

- Whilst I was practising as an Islāmic psychotherapist, I realised the need to bring the spiritual dimension in the therapeutic process with my Muslim clients. I also realised that there were ideologies and techniques from mainstream psychology that were not congruent with Islāmic beliefs and practices. When I was involved in developing courses for the BA Islāmic Psychology at the Islāmic Online University (now Islāmic Open University), I realised the need to "Islamise" the knowledge of psychology based on the Qur'ān, Sunnah, classical, and contemporary scholars. That is to integrate Islāmic ethics and sciences in contemporary psychology.

**What led you to specialise in Clinical Psychology or Islāmic psychology?**

- My clients undertaking psychotherapy. In addition, influence of the works of mainly Malik Badri, Maulana Ala Maududi, the works of Ibn Tamiyyah and Ibn Qayyim, and others. The "Islāmisation of Knowledge" movement also sparked my interest. The books by Shaykh Salih Al-Uthaymin (2009) *The Islāmic Awakening* (Birmingham Al Hidaayyah Publications); and Dr Abu Ameena Bilal Philips's (2005) book on Fundamentals of Tawheed (Riyadh: IIIP) also increased my awareness. Undertaking a BA Islāmic Studies and studying the sciences of Ḥadīth, Fiqh, Tafsir, Seerah, Qur'ān also increased my interest in Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy.

**Who has been the biggest influence in your professional life in the field of Islāmic psychology? Why?**

- Professor Dr Malik Badri for being the father of modern Islāmic psychology. I spent 10 days in his company and made a face-to-face interview about his life and works (see Chapter 19 of this book). I was attracted by his modesty, charisma, and wisdom. My interests in the Golden Age of Islām and the classical scholars including al-Balkhī, and Imam Ghazâlî also shaped my thinking.

**What would you say have been the most significant developments within the field of Islāmic psychology since your scholarly interest in the subject began?**

- The clinical application of Islāmic psychotherapy or counselling in the United Kingdom and the interest in Islāmic psychology on a global scale.
- The identification of three schools of thoughts that have emerged in the "Islām and psychology movement": The Orientalist approach, Integrationist approach, and the "Tawhid Paradigm" approach. The Orientalist group, with minimalist Islāmic traditions embedded within their framework, instead of decolonising psychology is globalising Islāmic psychology. The Integrationist group, with a mixture of orthodox psychology, mixed with Sufi ideologies and practice, uses a mixture of Islāmic traditions and folk psychology; and the "Tawhid Paradigm"

approach is based on the Qur'ān and Sunnah embedded with the framework of the theory and practice of secular psychology that are congruent with Islāmic beliefs and practices. However, all three approaches claim that they are Islāmic psychology in line with the traditions of *Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jamaa'ah* (those who adhere to the Sunnah whether that be in matters of belief (*'Aqeedah*) or matters of actions which are subject to *Shari'ah* rulings). These indicated approaches are reflected in their conceptual framework and clinical and educational practices (Rassool, 2019, 2020b).

**What do you consider to be the most significant event in the evolution of modern Islāmic psychology?**

The translation of the work of classical scholars on *'Ilm an Nafs* in English, the proliferation of Islāmic psychology, and psychotherapy literature. In addition, the emergence of clinical services offering Islāmic psychotherapy and counselling, diversity of courses in Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy and the appearance of International Conferences in Islāmic psychology, and the decolonisation of knowledge in psychological sciences.

**What do you think we lack in terms of depth and knowledge when it comes to Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy?**

The lack of conceptual framework that is applicable in clinical practice.

There is a limited literature on research into the effectiveness of Islāmic psychotherapy and counselling.

- Clinical application of Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy.
- There is limited development of the curriculum approaches in Islāmic psychology and psychology.
- Most of the courses are in the realm of continuing professional development.

**What would you like to see change in the current trends in the Islāmic psychology movement?**

- Decolonisation of the professional and student's association and international organisations that serve the interest of scholars, clinicians, and students of Islāmic psychology.
- Some organisations serve the interest of their leaders or members sharing the same school of thought rather than the Ummah as a whole.
- There are a few scholars who are omitted in their literature because of their diversity in their school of Islāmic creed.
- The selective literature and their biased narratives of Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy.
- The development of the curriculum approaches in Islāmic psychology and psychology.
- More diversity rather than competitiveness amongst the current contemporary scholars of the Islāmic psychology movement.
- Development of undergraduate and postgraduate of psychology courses based on an Islāmic perspective.
- Misplaced epistemological certainty in producing a global model with bias sample.

- Lack of intellectual discourse.
- Logical fallacy cherry picking in the literature in Islāmic psychology.

**What accomplishments in Islāmic psychology are you most proud of?**

- Development of a Centre for Islāmic Psychology, Riphah Institute of Clinical and Professional Psychology, Riphah International University, Pakistan in July 2019.
- The development of a BA (Islāmic Psychology) at the Islāmic Online University in 2014.
- The development of the first accredited Certificate in Islāmic psychology (2019) and Advanced diploma in Islāmic psychology & psychotherapy, Riphah International University, by a global accredited academic institution.
- Rassool (2020) highlighted at least three approaches in curriculum development currently prevailed in Islāmic Psychology educational programmes. These approaches have been labelled as The "sprinkle" approach, the "Bolt-on" approach, and the "integrated or embedded" approach.
- My books on Islāmic counselling and Islāmic psychology.

**Islāmic psychology is an evolving discipline. How do you suggest the professionals and students keep up with all of the new developments?**

- Muslim psychologists should become producers of knowledge rather than consumers of knowledge in the psychological sciences.
- Reading, reading, and reading; and reflecting.
- Undertaking authentic course in Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy. Not the one that focus on psychopathology and ascribed label of psychology to the course.
- Avoidance of courses who indulge in philosophy, epistemology, ontology, and Sufism.
- The introduction of clinical supervision. Provide adequate preparation of clinical supervision course for clinical supervisors.

**What do you see as the future of the discipline?**

- Optimistic. The future is Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy.
- Educational and research development.

**What would you say is the most effective way of engaging with non-Muslim psychologists when it comes to promoting Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy?**

- Da'wah as part of the role of the Muslim psychologists and psychotherapists.
- More awareness courses on the role of Islāmic psychology in meeting the needs of multi-cultural clients.
- Publication of research papers in peer-reviewed journals.

**What one piece of advice would you give to someone who wants to become an Islāmic psychotherapist or counsellor?**

- Study mainstream psychology and psychotherapy.

  - Be a positive role model. Show people that you are a Muslim.

- • Study Islāmic sciences.
- • Undertake an accredited course at postgraduate level.
- • "Whoever takes a path upon which to obtain knowledge, Allāh makes the path to Paradise easy for him" (Tirmidhi (a)).
- • "Whoever is asked about some knowledge that he knows, then he conceals it, he will be bridled with bridle of fire" (Tirmidhi (b)).

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**Section IV**

# Epilogue

# 28 Shifting the Paradigm
## Decolonising Psychology Knowledge

## Introduction

Educational development in Islāmic psychology is perhaps the one field that has been given the least consideration and least development. It has been argued that

> Since the end of the colonial period, epistemologies and knowledge systems at our universities have not changed considerably; they remain rooted in colonial and Western-centric worldviews. The curriculum remains largely Eurocentric and continues to reinforce white and Western dominance and privilege, while at the same time being full of stereotypes, prejudices and patronising views about non-white people and cultures. (Keele's Student Union et al., 2018)

The challenges faced by post-colonial Muslim majority countries have primed Muslim pedagogics to develop new frameworks to incorporate the traditional forms of Islāmic education with the Western knowledge, in the form of "Islāmisation of Knowledge." Bocca-Aldaqre (2019) suggested that "The field of Islāmic education has seen a major development in the last decades: theories, methods and curricula have been developed to create an educational framework that would be authentically Islāmic" (p. 1).

Rassool (2021) suggested that "Since the late twentieth century, the Islāmisation of Knowledge movement has primed Muslim scholars and psychologists to reflect on embracing indigenous or cross-cultural psychology and to decolonise psychological knowledge" (p. 583). However, despite the significant influence of the "Islāmisation of Knowledge" movement and the development of pseudo conceptual framework in Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy, there is still a dearth of the literature on epistemological and pedagogical discourse in the integration of Islāmic ethics and sciences in the curriculum at undergraduate, postgraduate levels, and in continuing professional development courses. How do the course developers arrive at the educational contents in Islāmic psychology without a framework of philosophical principles of Islāmic education and curriculum development frameworks, is perplexing? The aims of this chapter are to examine the teaching of psychological knowledge and decolonisation strategies.

## Teaching psychological knowledge

The American-Eurocentric psychology worldview, based on the Judeo-Christian traditions, has permeated in the colonised world and remained institutionalised in many

countries in the post-colonial era. The influence of Westernised systems and beliefs continues to spread around the world at a rapid pace due to the momentum gained by globalisation in recent years. Globalisation, like its predecessor colonisation, entails going beyond teaching our students the principles of cross-cultural psychology to inspire them to think critically about those principles and their applications. The impact of globalisation is apparent in the attitudes, values, and behaviours of the indigenous populations as a result of dilution of religious and cultural beliefs and practices that help form cultural identity and collectivistic obligations.

The evidence of colonial impact can be seen in mapping the growth and expansion of hegemonic psychology at undergraduate and postgraduate courses in post-colonial Muslim countries.

However, there is a concern that the globalisation and Americanisation of the discipline of psychology (academic and clinical practice) are problematic and have also been subjected to criticisms resulting in perpetuating traditions of colonialism and neo-colonialism. Moghaddam and Harre (1995) observed in the international context, the most important factor shaping psychology remained the power inequalities between and within nations which is an unethical issue. They argued that "Third World" psychologists are trained in the United States and in other Western countries, without regard to the question of the appropriateness of their training. Indeed, the continued exportation … and inappropriately trained personnel from Western to Third World societies strengthens ties of dependency and continues exploitative traditions established through "colonialism" (1995, pp. 53–54). Watters (2010) has identified the problematic influences of globalisation in regard to cross-cultural psychological practices. According to Watters (2010), "We are engaged in the grand project of Americanizing the world's understanding of the human mind" (p. 1). Watters suggested that

> America has been the world leader in generating new mental health treatments and modern theories of the human psyche. We export our psycho-pharmaceuticals packaged with the certainty that our biomedical knowledge will relieve the suffering and stigma of mental illness. We categorise disorders, thereby defining mental illness and health, and then parade these seemingly scientific certainties in front of the world. (American Psychiatric Association, 2021)

Bulhan (1985) emphasised that the ferocity of European colonisation was not limited to occupation of land and appropriation of tangible physical resources but also extended to the occupation of mind/being. This occupation of mind has led Muslim psychologist to follow "His Master's Voice" in "propounding theories of personality, motivation and behaviour which are in many ways contradictory to Islām" (Badri, 2016). He went on to argue that

> These theories and their applications are carefully sugar-coated with the attractive cover of 'science' … leads many of them [Muslim psychologists] to consciously and unconsciously accept blindly, and at times dogmatically, theories and practices that are, to say the least, unsuitable for application in their Muslim countries" (pp. 2–3). I called this a form of "psychological *taqleed.*

That is, the blind following of secular psychology by Muslim psychologists.

Currently, personality assessment tools developed in America are quite popular in the post-colonial low and middle-income countries. The use of imported psychological tests is taught in undergraduate and postgraduate courses in psychology but are also used in clinical practice. Most of these tests are not subjected to examination of their psychometric properties (reliability and validity) with the local population. This leads to the inappropriate export of Western theories and models and so contributes to the marginalisation of indigenous knowledge systems and to cultural homogenisation.

## Decolonisation strategies

Decolonisation of psychological knowledge refers to the undoing of Orientalist and Eurocentric world view of psychology or the "freeing of minds" from colonial ideology and supremacy. It is shifting the paradigm of secular and Western knowledge in psychological sciences to more attuned psychological knowledge based on in-digenous religio-cultural worldview. Gómez-Ordóñez et al. (2021) suggested two general strategies to decolonise the mind, one is re-assertion of the "viability of endogenous lifestyles" and the second decolonial strategy is to "turn the analytic lens to re-think and de-naturalise the modern individualist lifestyles that masquerade as natural standards in hegemonic psychological science" (p. 55).

Adams et al. (2015) have proposed two conceptual frameworks that inform the approach to decolonising psychological science: The theoretical perspectives of liberation psychology and cultural psychology. Liberation psychology emerged as a reaction to the dominant Eurocentric hegemonic psychology. Liberation psychology refers "to the use of psychological approaches to understand and address oppression among individuals and groups" (Martín-Baró, 1994, cited Comas-Díaz & Riveta, 2020, p. 3). However, Mohr (2019) has argued for an Islāmic ally grounded liberation psychology based on the *Tawhid* paradigm as the overarching metaphysical principle, and justice as the practical implementation. Another strategy is the application of a cultural psychology. This approach refers to the study of "the way cultural traditions and social practices regulate, express, transform, and permute the human psyche, resulting less in psychic unity for humankind than in ethnic divergences in mind, self, and emotion" (Shweder, 2012, p. 1). That is, cultural psychology attempts to explain the significant influence of culture on the cognitive, affective, and behavioural aspects of the individual and community. With this perspective, we observe the worldview of the individual or community in their cultural context.

Indigenisation of knowledge is another approach in the process of decolonisation of hegemony psychology. This is a strategy whereby the local narrative and wisdom are reclaimed to produce forms of knowledge that resonate with local context and serve the local communities (Adams et al., 2015). This is a process of enabling the psychological disciplines to reflect local context of culture and wisdom. Sinha (1993) discussed two routes of indigenisation of psychology: endogenous and exogenous. The endogenous approach to the indigenisation of psychology is culture-oriented and taking native concepts and categories based on religio-philosophical traditions. The exogenous approach to the indigenisation of psychology is the amalgamation of cultural variables with concepts, theories, and methods imported from outside the culture. This is the process whereby the concepts and theories are adapted in a particular culture and are congruent with cultural beliefs and practices, for example, the

adaptation/replication of Western theories, methods, and outcomes (e.g., tests/scales) in different cultural setup (Adair et al., 1993; Sinha, 1997). It is beyond our scope here to catalogue different approaches to liberation psychology, cultural psychology, in-digenisation of psychology (endogenous and exogenous), indigenisation from within and from without.

There are inherent problems associated with attempts to indigenise psychology "from within" or "from without" (endogenous and exogenous) that attempt to in-digenise psychology "from within" or "from without" is between "Scylla and Charybdis."[1] Long (2014) argues that "indigenisation from without" is a paradox because "Western psychology is saturated in a secular metatheory that cannot ac-commodate the Islāmic worldview; any attempted revision must remain, in spirit, no different from the original articulation" (p. 17). The other alternative "indigenisation from within" necessitates an expansion of the work of classical Muslim scholars, which Long regards as being problematic. He asserts that "In light of the present-day homogenisation of world culture, one may well ask whether Muslim societies consider traditional forms of social organisation to be desirable any longer." Long (2014) ar-ticulates that the "indigenisation from within" approach from those Muslims, without professional training in psychology, who have focused solely "on the details of Islāmic spirituality to the virtual exclusion of the secular discipline. In these cases, it is not psychology that is being Islāmicised but Islāmic spirituality that is being ad-vocated" (p. 17).

Rassool (2021) also reminded us as Muslim psychologists as to "Whether we are able to develop a unified Islāmic theoretical framework from "indigenisation from without" or "indigenisation from within," bearing in mind that "it must adhere to authentic sources and proofs that are employed to understand human nature and behaviour from an Islāmic perspective" (p. 19). However, what is of significant importance is to re-concile the insights gained from psychology's theories and evidence-based interventions with the principles of Islāmic beliefs, ethical behaviours, and practice. The objective is to advance a new paradigm that views psychology and the spiritual dimension of human nature, not as two opposing fields, but as complementary and holistic approaches in the understanding human behaviours and experiences. The ultimate goal is to prepare clinicians with the best approaches to deal with psychosocial and spiritual problems faced by the Muslim *Ummah* (community). This remains a challenge. A simple model of decolonising psychology is presented in Figure 28.1.
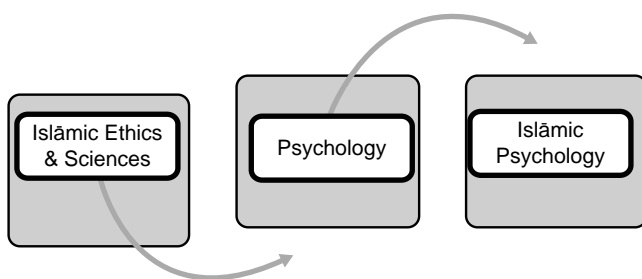


*Figure 28.1* Decolonising psychology.

## Philosophy of education

It would be worthwhile to briefly review some of the scholars' philosophy of Islāmic education as educational epistemology and a didactic discourse is closely related to Islāmic theology and traditions. Bocca-Aldaqre (2018) categorises the development of Islāmic pedagogy in three phases: Its foundation (VIII–X centuries), codification (XI–XIV centuries), and stagnation (XV–XIX centuries). However, the stagnation was arrested by 20th and 21st Islāmic reformers because of the dissatisfaction with the secular and educational pedagogy based on Judeo-Christian traditions. There are several scholars, both classical scholars including Al-Ghazâlî and Ibn Khaldūn Al-Ḥaḍramī, and contemporary thinkers including Al-Attas and Al-Farūqī who have contributed to philosophy of Islāmic education.

Al-Ghazâlî's philosophy of education is still applicable and relevant in contemporary society. The basic premise of his educational philosophy is the concept of God and His connection with humankind. Al-Ghazâlî views education as a skill or technique and it is the relationship between student and teacher "which proceeds gradually, developmentally and continuously throughout the student's life, the purpose of which is to cultivate harmoniously" (Alavi, 2007, p. 312). Al-Ghazâlî's aim of education is the provision of knowledge of acts of worship (Al-Ghazâlî, 1962) so that man can adhere to the teaching of Islām to obtain salvation and happiness in the hereafter. In summary, Al-Ghazâlî's aims of education (Al-Ghazâlî, 1962, 1963; Watt, 1963; Abu-Sway, 1996) include the following:

- Teachings of religion from happiness and salivation.
- Formation of character.
- Cleansing the heart, as a result of which the "light of knowledge" will brighten his heart.
- Moral development.
- Earning a living.
- Societal development and obligation (*Fard-e Kifaya*).

During the time of Al-Ghazâlî, self-directed learning and life-long learning were at the vanguard of learning and teaching methodologies, as the educational curriculum was not strictly defined (Abu-Sway, 1996). Al-Ghazâlî has two dimensions of his curriculum: Obligatory (*Fard-e-Ain*-Individual obligation) as the compulsory curriculum which includes the Qur'ān, logic and hygiene, and the optional (*Fard-e-Kifaya*). The role of *adab* (manners, ethics), according to Al-Ghazâlî, is both physical and spiritual education *(ta'dib al-zahir wa al-batin)*. It focuses on four facets of a man, namely his words, deed, faith, and motivation (cited in Asmaa Mohd Arshad, 2012, p. 252). The contents of the learning programme include the role of the society and the environment; social psychology; and the understanding of child psychology. The methodology of teaching includes role model, imitation, teacher as role model, relaxation, recreational activities, encouraging inspiration and reflection but not memorisation (conditioning). Al-Ghazâlî (1962) also discusses the role of parents in developing a child's initial education in language, cultural traditions, religious and moral beliefs. The role of teachers is viewed as more critical in the education than the parents. The role of students is also examined, and they should follow the codes of ethics, a kind of etiquette in seeking knowledge.

Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, a key figure in "Islāmisation of Knowledge" movement, has proposed philosophy of Islāmic education based on *Ta'dib* concept, not *Tarbiyah* (Al-Attas, 1999). According al-Attas, the concept of *Tarbiyah* is similar to the term of Western education that was derived from the Latin term "educere" from which the English word "education" derives the concept and is not adequate to represent the concept of education in Islām. In contrast, the concept of *Ta'dib* has not only physical and material essence but also have moral and spiritual implications. To this end, Islāmic education is the

> recognition and acknowledgement, progressively instilled into man, of the proper places of things in the order of creation, such that it leads to the recognition and acknowledgement of the proper place of God in the order of being and existence. (Al-Attas, 1999, p. 21)

Islāmic education focuses on the holistic nature of man and constitutes the spiritual, intellectual, religious, cultural, individual, and social dimensions. Thus, the core of Islāmic education must include elements that relate to the nature of:

- Religion (*din*)
- Man (*insan*)
- Knowledge (*ilm* and *ma'rifah*)
- Wisdom (*hikmah*)
- Justice (*'adl*)
- Right action (*'amal* as *adab*)
- University (*kulliyyah-jami'ah*) (Al-Attas, 1979, p. 43).

Al-Attas' (1979) framework of Islāmic education is directed towards the "balanced growth of the total personality … through training Man's spirit, intellect, rational self, feelings and bodily senses … such that faith is infused into the whole of his personality" (p. 158). The foundation of Islāmic education should be grounded with the concepts of *Tawhid*, the teaching of the Qur'ān, *Shari'ah*, and *Sunnah*. Al-Attas (1979) suggested that the curricula contents of Islāmic education should include the principles and practice of Islām, the religious sciences (*'ulum al-shar'iyyah*), legitimate elements of *tasawwuf*, psychology, cosmology, and ontology, Islāmic philosophy, Islāmic ethics and moral principles and *adab*, knowledge of the Arabic language and the Islāmic worldview (pp. 43–44). Ismail (2020) pointed out that "The underlining of *adab* as Islāmic education by al-Attas is in line with classic Islāmic scholars, especially al-Al-Ghazâlî" (p. 346).

Al-Farūqī's central theme in Islāmic education is the concept of *Tawḥīd*. In the context of educational discourse, the concept of *tawḥīd* "is the affirmation of the unity of the sources of truth. God is the Creator of nature from whence man derives this knowledge" (Al-Farūqī, 1983, p. 45). This worldview of *tawḥīd* "reflects the essence and intrinsic philosophy and paradigm of knowledge rooted on Islāmic vision of reality and truth. It embodied the comprehensive and holistic vision of education that seeks to integrate the fundamental element of revealed and acquired knowledge" (Abdul Rahman et al., 2015, p. 235). That is the integration of knowledge that is rational (*'aqlī*) with the revealed knowledge (*naqlī*). Bocca-Aldaqre (2018) suggested that

While for traditional Islāmic pedagogy revealed sciences are the basis or the guide following which to develop experimental knowledge, or to orient reasoning, for al-Farūqī this distinction just represents another form of dualism and is as such contrary to the principle of tawḥīd. (p. 3)

The fundamental principles and philosophy of education advocated by Al-Farūqī include the following:

* Education is the cornerstone and building block of any state and its crucial foundation and prerequisite. This entails the effort of "educating the mind, reforming the heart and organising the arms (*al-arkan*)" (Al Faruqi, 1981).
* *Tawḥīdic* principle formed the basic foundation of educational framework that emphasised on the value of truth and knowledge.
* Education was rooted on the classical example of Muslim based idea of *al-tabyin*, "to make clearly understood" (Abdul Rahman et al., 2015, p. 237).
* The provision of free and holistic education for all and mostly operated at a mosque at any convenient time.
* The integration of divine knowledge and rational knowledge.
* The creation of "disciplines that would be at the same time humanistic but would be able to keep into account the communitarian (*umma*) dimension of the Islāmic model" (Bocca-Aldaqre, 2018, p. 3).

It is worth noting that Al-Farūqī's (1968) framework is based on the five principles of Islām. These include Oneness of God; Unity of Creation; Unity of Truth; Unity of Life; and Unity of Human (pp. 13–64). From these principles, according to Al-Faruqi, scholars who are responsible for the development of the Islāmisation process need to be an expert in modern science and Islāmic knowledge of those fields. The scholars should demonstrate the relevance of Islām to modern disciplines and compare and relate Islāmic values and ethics with modern social sciences. The above characteristics were later formulated into a 12-point framework.

In Islāmic educational theory, knowledge is gained in order to actualise the human potential and to perfect (*Ihsan*), the moral character and the holistic dimensions of the nature of man.

It seemed that Al-Ghazâlî, Al-Attas, and Al-Farūqī shared similar vision in the development of Islāmic education in the integration of Islāmic ethics and sciences, the Qur'ān, and Sunnah into education. Nasr (1984) proposes that there is a need for Muslim scholars to integrate positive elements of modern science in which "God reigns supreme," and that the education's "ultimate goal is the abode of permanence and all education points to the permanent world of eternity" (p. 7).

Education for all is the motto in Islām. However, the acquisition of knowledge in Islām is not an end in itself but a means for the purification of the soul (*Tazkiyah al-Nafs*). It is narrated by Abu Ad-Dardā' (may Allāh be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said:

> He who follows a path in quest of knowledge, Allāh will make the path of Jannah easy to him. The angels lower their wings over the seeker of knowledge, being pleased with what he does. The inhabitants of the heavens and the earth and even the fish in the depth of the oceans seek forgiveness for him. The superiority of the

learned man over the devout worshipper is like that of the full moon to the rest of the stars (i.e., in brightness). The learned are the heirs of the Prophets who bequeath neither dinar nor dirham but only that of knowledge; and he who acquires it, has in fact acquired an abundant portion. (Abu Dawud & At-Tirmidhi)

The above Ḥadīth sheds light on some merits of the pursuit of knowledge and it is an obligation to seek authentic knowledge. Anas (may Allāh be pleased with him) stated that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: "The search for knowledge is an obligation laid on every Muslim" (Mishkat al-Masabih). As Cook (n.d.) stated "Education in Islām is twofold: acquiring intellectual knowledge (through the application of reason and logic) and developing spiritual knowledge (derived from divine revelation and spiritual experience)." That is the basis of goal of education in Islāmic psychology.

## Philosophy of education in Islāmic psychology

As an educator in Islāmic psychology there is a need to have a philosophy to guide the curriculum development. It is the beliefs, values, and understanding of the curriculum approach that is conceptualised in the teaching and learning activities. Effective educational practice has to be based on a philosophy. Rayan (2012) suggested that

> The philosophy of Islāmic education is looking at the principles and concepts underlying education in Islām; it is analysing and criticising, deconstructing and disintegrating of the existing educational infrastructure and strives to produce new concepts continuously or displays what should be the concepts. In this sense, it is philosophy that beyond what is existing constantly toward absolute values and is working in the space of Islāmic knowledge and who is humane and moral essence. (p. 150)

In essence, Islāmic philosophy of education in psychology seeks to understand human nature from a holistic approach based on matching between the three dimensions of mind, body, and religious faith (Islām). This relationship is based on the ethical authority of the Qur'ān and Sunnah. Halstead (2004) argues that the social and moral dimension of education in Islām is to understand and adhere to the *Shari'ah* or divine law, which contains not only universal moral principles, but also detailed instruction relating to daily human activities. Rassool (2021) proposed that the goal of Islāmic education in the study of psychology should be:

- To impart Islāmic ethics and sciences so to enable Muslims to develop ethical intelligence.
- To be clear in its aims in developing the individual professionally and personally in the service of the *Ummah*.
- To impart authentic Islāmic knowledge 'that lead human beings towards the consciousness of the Creator in order to obey His commands' (Al-Ghazâlî).
- To provide an increased awareness and recognition of the holistic needs (Bio-psychosocial and spiritual) of Muslim (and non-Muslim) patients or clients.
- To enhance knowledge and evidenced-based intervention strategies required to provide high quality counselling and psychotherapeutic care.

- To develop conceptual framework and curriculum approaches for under-graduate, postgraduate and continuing professional development pro-grammes.
- To develop research skills and cultivating a research-based approach in the provision of evidence to effect change in education and therapeutic interven-tions. (p. 587)

## A new model in curriculum approach in Islāmic psychology

When it comes to educational development in Islāmic psychology, there is a dearth of the literature on this subject relating to curriculum approaches and development and evaluation of educational programmes. For an emerging discipline, there seems to be a dissonance between educational development and clinical practice (Rassool, 2019). A Vertical and Horizontal Integrated, Embedded Curriculum Model of Islāmic Psychology was developed and implemented by Rassool (2020) to enable the in-tegration of Islāmic psychology and Islāmic ethical values in psychology knowledge.

The Vertical and Horizontal Integration Model is presented in Figure 28.2. The two dimensions of the model are the horizontal and vertical integration which are key aspects in curriculum design and development. The horizontal integration refers to the relations among various contents, topics, and themes involving all domains of knowledge. That is both evidenced-based knowledge, the classical and contemporary work of Islāmic scholars and knowledge based on the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth. Horizontal integration may also mean the integration of basic concepts from one discipline into another. Rassool (2021) suggested that, for instance,

In the case for biological bases of behaviour course, themes that may be included are, for example, the Islāmic contribution to biological psychology; Islāmic epistemology; evolution psychology from an Islāmic perspective; role of the soul in the nature vs nature; determinants of human behaviours; bio-ethics from
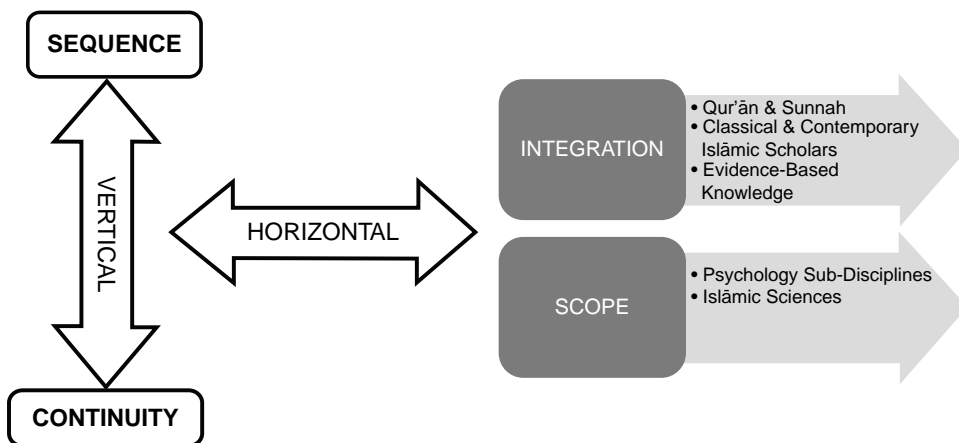


*Figure 28.2* Rassool's vertical and horizontal integration curriculum approach.

Source: Rassool (2020).

an Islāmic perspective; hearing as a gift (Al-Mu'minun 23:78); creation of hearing in the foetus comes before sight (Al-Insan 76:2); hearing is constant linking with the outside world (Al-Kahf 18:11); hearing as a blessing and are a responsibility; and the study on how Qur'ānic recitation affects the brain. (p. 592)

The scope is the dimension that focused on the breadth and depth of the curriculum content. The horizontal curriculum integrates knowledge across different classes or sub-disciplines of psychology and the psychological works of prominent classical and contemporary scholars. Knowledge of the scope of the curriculum assists in the selection of methodology of teaching and learning experiences. In the vertical integration, the educational contents tend to be organised with regard to the sequence and continuity of learning and teaching processes. Rassool (2020) suggested that the "identification of the sequence of the learning experiences is a building block for the transmission from basic to more advanced knowledge (cognitive), and skills (psychomotor)" (p. 490). According to this perspective, the process of curriculum organisation represents an effort to enhance the scope, integration, sequence, and continuity of the Islāmic psychology curriculum. For a more comprehensive account of this model and the general principles that should be adopted for the Islāmic psychology education, see Rassool (2020, 2021).

## Note

1 An idiom deriving from Greek mythology, which has been associated with "to choose the lesser of two evils."

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# 29 Islāmic Psychology
## Promising Past and Challenging Future

## Introduction

The chapters of this book have shown us the richness and valuable legacy of knowledge and clinical application of psychological sciences by both classical and contemporary Muslim thinkers and scholars. The work of classical Muslim scholars in the field of psychology and mental health is perhaps the one field that has been given the least consideration by Eurocentric and orientalist psychologists when writing the historical narratives of the development of psychology. That is, little attention is paid, if any at all, to the great contribution of Muslim classical scholars through their theories, classifications, and interventions which help us better understand how people feel, think, and behave. For too long and due to colonisation, and now globalisation, it is unfortunate that Islāmic psychology as a discipline got completely overshadowed by mainstream Western psychology.

What is totally incongruous is that they did not even make a significant impact even in the Muslim-majority countries. This is now changing as there is a growing interest in Islāmic psychology on a global scale (Haque & Rothman, 2021), matching the growth in clinical services and educational provisions. Recent trends of growth in the literature of Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy are also an added reassurance that the future growth of the discipline of Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy is bright. However, despite the bright and optimistic future of Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy, it faced many indigenous and exogenous challenges to emerge as a force "majeure" within the discipline of psychological sciences. This chapter examines the problems, issues, and challenges faced by Muslim academics and clinicians and identify some of the solutions to overcome the barriers encountered.

## Challenges and solutions

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُواْ مَا بِأَنفُسِهِم (الرعد 11)

- *Indeed, Allāh will not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves.* (Al-Ra'd 13:11)

There is a major challenge in changing the convictions of our scholars, academicians, clinicians, and students in order to instil Islāmic ethics and sciences in both academia and clinical practice. This is no meagre task as the dilemmas facing Muslim psychologists (Badri, 1979) are still with us and will remain so for some time to come. The

role conflict for some Muslim psychologists in the context of being pulled between being a Muslim and being a "secular" psychologist or those Muslim psychologists still in the "Lizard hole." For others there is no role conflict at all between personal and the professional obligations and fulfilling the two statuses in one role. It is plausible that both role adequacy and role legitimacy may constitute important predictors of Muslim psychologists' willingness to engage in the development and teaching of Islāmic psychology and applying spiritual interventions in clinical practice. In essence, Muslims need to go back to the Qur'ān and *Sunnah* and gain authentic knowledge in both theoretical and practical matters.

The most significant conundrum in psychology departments in Muslim-majority countries is the Eurocentric orientation of psychology curricula and pedagogy in both undergraduate and postgraduate educational programmes. However, the decolonisation of psychology knowledge in educational institutions in Muslim-majority countries is restricted to a few "Centre of Excellence." One of the academic institutions is the Riphah Institute of Clinical and Professional Psychology (RICPP), Riphah International University, Pakistan, that since July 2019, initiated the development of a Centre for Islāmic Psychology, resourced with the first Chair in Islāmic Psychology, Professor Dr G. Hussein Rassool, and associated personnel.

The vision of the Centre for Islāmic Psychology

> is an initiative towards advancing development of a global 'Centre of Excellence' in Islāmic Psychology in Pakistan with an aspiration to strengthen the theory and practice of Islāmic Psychology and Islāmic Sciences at global level through its scholarly contributions, evidenced-based practices, innovative curriculum, and rigorous educational preparation of health and social care practitioners.

The Centre for Islāmic Psychology launched a course on '*Ilm al-Nafs* in October 2019 over one semester. More recent development is the first globally university accredited Advanced Diploma in Islāmic Psychology & Psychotherapy (ADIPP) (an online course covering three semesters).

One of the important tasks faced by Muslim psychologists is to decolonise psychological knowledge and its application in clinical practice. Rassool (2021) maintained that "Western psychology has for so long dominated the production of theoretical psychological knowledge and therapeutic intervention, and its imposition is reflected in the curricula contents of psychology programmes, textbooks and clinical applications of tests and other psychosocial interventions" (p. 583). The Centre for Islāmic Psychology adopted the concept of "upstream" approach. That is instead of the "downstream" approach in training graduates of clinical psychologists with topping up courses in Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy, we look at the "upstream" approach in attempting to modify the undergraduate and postgraduate psychology curriculum. On a long-term basis, this approach in educating psychology students in Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy would ultimately go on to influence the clinical application of Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy in a profound way. In this context

> the Centre of Islāmic Psychology and RICPP undertook a review of all the undergraduate and postgraduate psychology curriculum and embedded Islāmic psychology, and Islāmic ethics in the curriculum base on the core values of Riphah International University. The core values are: *Muhasabah* (Accountability);

*Ijtimaiyyah* (Teamwork); *Mushawarah* (Consultation & Harmony); *Rahmah* (Compassion); *Itqan* (Pursuit of Excellence); and *Al-Akhirah* (Al-Akhirah Oriented Decisions). (Rassool, 2021, p. 603)

One of the main issues in the development of courses at all levels is the dearth of curriculum approach in the development of educational programmes in Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy. There is a burgeoning of pseudo courses on Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy but how do the course developers arrive at the curriculum contents is a complete mystery. Rassool (2020) highlights, at least, three approaches in curriculum development which have been labelled as "Sprinkle" approach, the "Bolt-on" approach, and the "Integrated or Embedded" approach. The "Sprinkle" approach is based on the principle of randomising the Islāmic contents within the curriculum. This is due to the constraints imposed by external validation and accrediting non-Islāmic bodies or professional organisations in Western countries. This is clearly depicted in course aims and contents of the course. The second approach is the "Bolt-on" approach where knowledge about Islāmic psychology and sciences is developed independently of the core discipline and, generally, added at the end of the course programme or each module. Another variation of this approach is to teach Islāmic psychology and sciences in parallel with secular modern psychology. In this context, there is a lack of integration and Islāmic psychology and sciences are not embedded in the educational programmes. A third approach identified in the Islāmisation of psychology is the embedded or integrated approach to curriculum development. This approach seeks to break down the barriers of the traditional curriculum in psychology based on segmentation and isolation of Islāmic sciences and psychology from an Islāmic perspective. This approach is one where subjects are taught through a range of themes, disciplines, and various mechanisms of delivery, as opposed to studying subjects in isolation such as the "Sprinkle and Bolt-on" approaches. However, most approaches to the courses examined fall in between Sprinkle and Bolt-on approach and only a limited number of courses exist that fall on the classification of embedded-integrated approach. There is a need to develop a philosophy of knowledge in Islāmic psychology and curriculum designs and development.

On a global level, many educational institutions face enormous challenges in the integration of Islāmic sciences in undergraduate, postgraduate, and professional development courses. Rassool (2021) suggested that

> In most countries, due to institutional and professional regulations in psychology, counselling and psychotherapy courses, educational institutions are restricted in their attempt to integrate Islāmic psychology in their curricula. Perhaps, that is the rationale behind adopting the 'Sprinkle or Bolt-on' approaches in their curriculum. (p. 602)

Wherever it is practical, Muslim psychology teachers must inform their students that there are alternatives in the psychology of understanding human behaviours and experiences. An alternative would be to offer more elective courses in Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy.

Against this background, we are faced with other challenges to overcome. Muslim psychology teachers are generally trained to teach sub-disciplines of secular psychology, and Islāmic sciences; and Islāmic psychology does not come "naturally."

Besides most Muslim teachers, no matter how religious they are in their personal lives, they have not been adequately prepared to integrate or teach Islāmic sciences and psychology. In fact, some may even explicitly reject such inclusion because of their secular attitudes, on the mixing of psychology based on Western scientific paradigm with Islāmic ethical values.

There is also the issue of attitude, knowledge, skills, and commitment (Islāmic commitment) of Muslim psychologists. This "Islāmic commitment" incorporates the evaluation of whether Muslim psychologists have adequate knowledge, training, and experience to decolonise psychology knowledge. Aswirna & Fahmi (2016) have identified several issues during the process of integration on Islām and science (Psychology); these include lecturers having a lack of capability to understand about psychological phenomenon from an Islāmic point of view; lecturers could not give any logical explanation about connection between Islām and psychology; the lack of understanding between the connection of al-Qur'ān and psychological phenomenon; and the integration of Islām and Science were limited (pp. 111–112). Rassool (2021) maintained that

> Muslim teachers, no matter how religious they are in their personal lives, have not been adequately prepared to integrate or teach Islāmic sciences and psychology. In fact, some may even explicitly reject such inclusion because of their secular attitudes, on the mixing of psychology based on western scientific paradigm with Islāmic ethical values. (p. 603)

Rassool (2021) has also identified problems and issues related to role legitimacy, role adequacy, and role conflict.

> Role legitimacy is the belief that whether they have a legitimate right to change and modify psychology knowledge and integrate Islāmic psychology and ethics. In most cases, this particular role is not part of their job descriptions or responsibilities. Role adequacy refers to how knowledgeable Muslim psychologists are about Islāmic psychology and Islāmic sciences.

Figure 29.1 illustrates the relationship of role adequacy, role legitimacy, and role conflict in Islāmic psychology. There is an urgent need to address the problems and issues associated with the role legitimacy and role adequacy through institutional policy changes and educational preparation.

There is also the possibility of Muslim psychologists' having a deficit in "ethical intelligence"[1] which is based on *Taqwa* [God consciousness] and *Itiqan* [Pursuit of Excellence]. It has been suggested that

> The Muslim psychologist as a therapist or counsellor is a reflection of *Taqwa* and *Itiqan*, which also means focusing on briefer approaches of therapeutic interventions based on Islāmic principles. This creates good will in the light of Islāmic values which is more profitable to the Islāmic therapist, and to reject commercialising the sanctity of this healing profession. (Ahmad, 2020)

The other challenges facing Islāmic Psychology Movement are to study and incorporate in the contents of the educational curriculum the early work of the classical
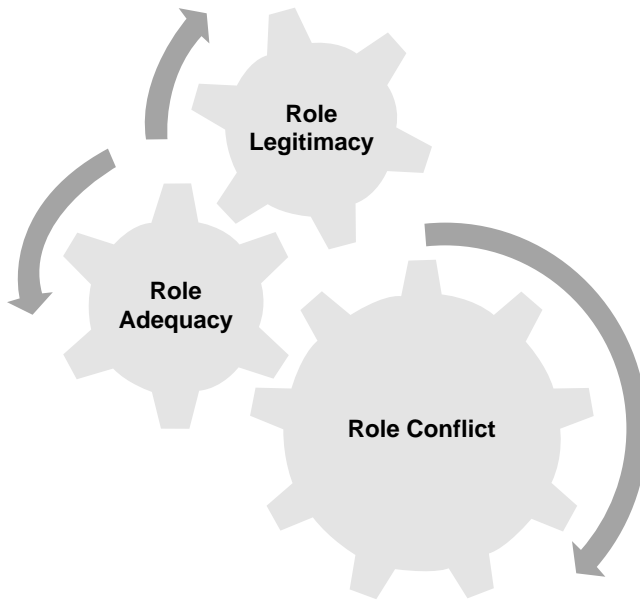
*Figure 29.1* Role legitimacy, role adequacy, and role conflict.

scholars and modern contemporary thinkers. This book has added contributions from scholars including Ibn Taymīyah al-Ḥarrānī's on diseases of the heart and their cure; Ibn Qayyim's methodology of understanding the psycho-spiritual diseases and their cure; Al-Rāghib Al-Aṣbahānī's understanding of educational psychology; Ibn al-Jawzī's cognitive development; Ibn Khaldūn on understanding of human cognitive development and educational psychology; Ibn Rajab's understanding of social psychology; and Iqbāl's concept of Khudī (personality development).

Research in Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy is another area that needs more focus on further development and should be multi-disciplinary. Postgraduate students are now undertaking investigations into the clinical investigations in Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy and this is reflected in the number of theses being submitted for Master and PhD. However, we need to move away from the obsession of studying the nature and state of the soul as if Al-Ghazâlî failed to contribute anything meaningful in this domain. More clinical-oriented research needs to be supported through scholarships by the International organisations. Religious theologians or research psychologists work together in helping inform the role of traditional Islām in modern psychology.

## Conclusion

There are many challenges faced by transformational leaders in the evolution of Islāmic psychology and psychotherapy. These include self-purification of the soul and awareness of Muslim psychologists; the deficit in ethical intelligence; decolonise psychological knowledge; adopting new model in curriculum design and development;

role legitimacy, role adequacy, and role conflict; research and development; over-coming the resistance and the negative attitude of Muslim psychologist; the urgent need for the preparation of Muslim psychologists; and overcoming institutional and professional constraints placed on academic establishments. However contextual factors, organisational support, and lack of clear policies need to be addressed at institutional level. Rassool (2020) suggested that "if there is no sense of urgency and low expectations within an organisation culture, this may inhibit the emergence of Islāmic Psychology as a discipline" (p. 494).

There is a need to be proactive in the evolution and development of Islāmic psy-chology. Educational development at undergraduate and postgraduate levels should be a priority. Unless there is a sense of collective action to enact change, the status quo will prevail. Ultimately, the challenges remained with policymakers, educationalists, academics, Islāmic scholars, and clinicians that need to serve the Ummah rather than their own particular intuitions and their particular ideology of Islāmic psychology. The solutions remained with all of us. Above all, we should be producers of knowledge rather than consumers of knowledge.

## Note

1 This concept is coined by Professor Dr Anis Ahmad, Vice-Chancellor, Riphah International University. "Ethical Intelligence" is based on the Islāmic concepts of what is acceptable (Halal) and what is unacceptable (Haram) and is solely based on the Qur'ān and Sunnah. The lecture on "Psychology: An Islāmic Approach" was delivered at the Workshop on "Islāmic Psychology Curriculum Development," 10 February to 13 February 2020, Riphah International University, QIE Campus, Lahore, Pakistan.

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